

# *PARENT – STUDENT HANDBOOK*



**2009-2010**

**Northern Virginia Christian Academy**

11000 Berry Street  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Dear Parents/Guardians:

First, let me greet you in the Name of our Lord and WELCOME you to the Northern Virginia Christian Academy school community. I consider it a privilege to be part of a Christian school that is committed to Biblical World View Education. I trust that you feel the same way.

Since NVCA opened its doors in 2006, it has never wavered from its commitment to the mission of preparing young people to represent Jesus Christ in all walks of life. To that end, all of the school's employees consider the work that they do at the school a ministry for the Lord. We also serve the Lord by serving you. You may let us know how we can do that by communicating with us.

Successful organizations need policies and rules in order to run smoothly and to fulfill their mission. That is why NVCA is making available to you the "Parent - Student Handbook." This handbook has been prepared to provide you and your family the information you need to fully participate in the life of the school. The value of this handbook is only as good as your understanding of its content. So, I encourage you to read it in its entirety. If you need clarification on anything that you have read, you may call me to have your questions answered. You can be confident that the basic school policies and practices, that affect you and your family, are in this handbook or another document referenced by it. Since this handbook is always a work in progress, it may be updated at anytime. If this should happen during the school year, you will be informed of any changes that affect you.

Lets pray that together we will fulfill our mission in the children God has entrusted to us.

Rejoicing in what God is doing,

C. Michael Reed  
*Headmaster*

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The mission of  
Northern Virginia Christian Academy  
is to provide a spiritual and educational  
environment where students will be fully  
prepared to fulfill God's purpose  
for their lives*

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

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

## ADMINISTRATIVE

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

**Address:** Northern Virginia Christian Academy  
11000 Berry Street  
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

**Phone Numbers:** Office: 703-273-0803  
Fax: 703-273-0805

### STAFF:

<b>Headmaster:</b>	Dr. C. Michael Reed
<b>Building and Grounds:</b>	Ted Saunders
<b>Secretary:</b>	Becky Nestor
<b>Director of Athletics/Registrar:</b>	Lori Henry
<b>Receptionist/Attendance Secretary:</b>	Judy Kinas

### OFFICE HOURS:

**School Year:** 7:30 am – 4:00 pm  
**Summer:** 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

**SCHOOL HOURS:** 8:10 am – 3:10 pm - Full day  
8:10 am - 12:00 pm - Half day

**CARPOOL TIMES:** **Morning:** 7:45 am – 8:10 am  
**Afternoon:** 3:10 pm – 3:30 pm

## MEMBERSHIP

Northern Virginia Christian Academy is a member of the **Association of Christian Schools, International (ACSI)**. The primary mission of ACSI is to enable and equip Christian educators and schools worldwide to effectively educate children and young people with the mind of Christ. Thus, students will be prepared for life because Christ, the creator and sustainer of the universe, possesses "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). The life and mind of Christ is nurtured in the lives of students through redemptive relationships with faculty who recognize that reconciling the heart and mind to God is the foundation of their work.

## ADMISSIONS

Northern Virginia Christian Academy is an independent, non-church related private Christian school. As such NVCA's primary focus is the admission of students from Christian families while remaining consistent with its "Non-Discrimination Policy." NVCA reserves the right to 1) not admit students that may not fit into the school's academic programs and whose life style and attitudes may not support the school's mission, Christian philosophy of education, vision, and goals and objectives; and 2) admit a student who has not trusted Christ as savior or who is not being raised by a Christian family provided their presence in the student body does not negatively impact NVCA's campus culture, academic program and mission.

# 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

## Address/Telephone Changes.

Parents should immediately notify the school office in writing of any address or telephone number changes during the year. Updated information is vital should there be an emergency.

## Before and After School Care

If it is necessary for any student to arrive at school before 7:45 a.m., or remain at school after 3:30 p.m., they must be registered in the Growing Footsteps program. This service is available from 6:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. and from 3:15 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. There is a charge for this service. Please contact Growing Footsteps at 703-273-0110 to enroll your child.

## Cell Phones, IPODS, and Electronic Equipment

Students may bring cell phones to school. They are to be turned off when they come into the building and placed in their lockers before first period. The cell phone will remain in the student's locker until students are dismissed from school at the end of the day. Students caught with a cell phone in their possession during the school day will experience the following response:

- **First Offense:** They will surrender the phone and pick it up at the end of the day in the office.
- **Second Offense:** They will surrender their phone, pick it up at the end of the day in the office and pay a \$5.00 donation to the community service fund.
- **Third Offense:** They will surrender their phone, pick it up at the end of the day in the office and pay a \$10.00 donation to the Mission Trip Fund.
- **Fourth Offense:** They will surrender their phone, a parent will pick it up in the office and the student will be restricted from bringing a phone to school for an indefinite period of time. This restriction will run for a minimum of 10 school days.

**Note:** The above applies to IPODS, electronic games and similar electronic equipment.

## Chapel

Chapel is a formal time committed to worship. Chapel can be a highlight of a student's experience at NVCA. A group worship time that speaks to the immediate and long-term needs of the student has a ministry from the Word of God, good Christian music, student participation, several changes of pace and is conducted in an orderly, respectful manner.

## Computer/Printer Usage by Students:

- Students may not use the NVCA administrative network computers for any reason.
- Students in grades 7-12 will sign a student computer lab "Code of Conduct" agreement at the beginning of the school year.
- Students are not to bring computer software/games from home, or install any software on school computers.

- All assignments are to be printed at home, or with permission, e-mailed to the instructor. Students may bring the assignment to school on a labeled CD if a printer is unavailable at home.
- Students may not use laptop computers for any reason unless part of an assignment or project presentation. Teacher and administrator approval is required.
- Students are not permitted to play computer games on school premises, including non-class hours.

### **Injury and Illness**

If a child becomes ill or is injured during the school day and is unable to attend class, office personnel will call a parent or other emergency contact to pick the child up as soon as possible.

- The student should report the illness/injury to a teacher or staff member.
- This staff person will be responsible for sending the student to the office.
- The office personnel will contact the parent/guardian if it is necessary for the student to go home.
- School personnel will administer minor first-aid.  
In case of an emergency, 911 will be called and the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.
- All students are required to have up to date emergency/medical forms on file in the school office.

### **Leaving Campus**

Northern Virginia Christian Academy is a closed campus, and students are not allowed to leave the school premises during class hours without permission from school personnel. This includes lunch and after school when they are on campus under the supervision of school personnel.

Parental request: If a student needs to leave school during school hours, a parent must notify the office by sending a note. The student will be given permission to leave, and if the absence from class meets the criteria, it will be excused. Students must be signed out in the office before they leave. Failure to sign out results in the absence being "unexcused." Parents will sign out their children in the school office before they leave campus.

Student request: If students become ill during school hours, they are to notify their teacher and, with permission, go to the office. School personnel will call a parent or other emergency contact, who will arrange to pick the student up as soon as possible.

Students who leave the school building and/or campus without the knowledge and permission of school personnel will be subject to corrective discipline.

### **Lockers and Locks**

Each student in Grades 3 – 12 will be issued a locker.

- Adhesives (scotch tape, stickers, etc.) are not permitted on the lockers.
- The student is responsible for the care of their assigned locker and the materials contained therein.
- Lockers are the property of the school; therefore, they are subject to inspection at any time by school administrators.

- Students are responsible to keep their locker organized and clean it at the end of the school year.
- It is required that locks on lockers be locked during the day and before leaving school each day.
- All students in Grades 3 – 12 will purchase their own combination locks.
- The combination must be given to their homeroom teacher. Combinations should be kept confidential.
- Students are asked not to bring unnecessary items of substantial monetary value to school to decorate their lockers.
- NVCA is not liable for a student's personal items lost, stolen or damaged while on school property.

### **Lost and Found**

Students should not leave items at school in any place other than their assigned locker or desk space. Items found left at the end of the school day will be taken to the lost and found in the cafeteria. Items not claimed from the lost and found will be donated to charity on a periodic basis.

### **Lunch**

As part of its "Closed Campus" policy, NVCA students will eat their lunch on campus. They are to bring their lunches except when the school arranges to bring lunch onto the campus for the students. Students may also arrange to get extra academic help from a teacher during lunch time. However, during lunch, students may not leave the NVCA cafeteria, building and campus without prior permission.

Our lunchroom staff offers several choices.

- Students may bring their lunch from home.
- Three days per week, students may order from outside vendors. These orders are made on a quarterly basis. Payment is at the beginning of the quarter.
- Ala carte items are available in the cafeteria should a student forget lunch. **Per item prices are posted in the cafeteria.**
- Noodle soup and a drink will be available for students that forgot their lunch and do not have money to buy lunch. The charge will be \$2.00.
- Microwaves are available for student use. Microwaveable items should require one minute or less and not require additional bowls, plates or water. **The lower school students, grades K5-4, will not have access to the microwaves without adult supervision.**
- Food and drinks are not to be consumed outside of the cafeteria during school hours. The one exception is bottled water.
- In order to insure that the students keep the lunchroom reasonably clean, students will be periodically assigned clean up duties at lunch time.

### **Medications**

- Any medications, prescription or nonprescription, taken by students while on campus must be accompanied by a written note or a completed "Permission for Administering Medication" form from the parent or a doctor giving permission to school staff to dispense the medication.
- Information about medications taken on a consistent basis during the class day should be on file in the school office at the beginning of the academic year.

- Students will not be permitted to carry medication with them. When requested by parents in writing, an exception may be made for an inhaler for asthma. Repeated violations may result in the student being dismissed from NVCA.
- Parents may give permission for the student to have over-the-counter medication available in the office by sending such medication (Tylenol, Advil, Sudafed, and the like) to the school office in the original container with the student's name on the container.
- Directions for administering medication are to be clearly written on the container.
- School personnel cannot dispense medication unless parents grant permission in writing.

### **Office Equipment**

**Telephone:** All students must obtain permission to use the school phone. Calls should be of short duration and limited to critical needs such as to report illness or to arrange an unanticipated transportation need. The phone will not be used for personal calls or to request homework or other supplies, including lunch, left at home.

**Copier:** Students are not to use the copier unless they are trained. Personal copies cost ten cents per page.

**Fax Machines:** Students generally may not use the fax machine.

**Computers/Printers:** Students may not use the office computers.

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

The Academy values its partnership with parents. Parental involvement is vital to the life of the school and to each child's education. Volunteer opportunities are outlined on the PTF volunteer form. Service opportunities are varied and numerous, including tasks that can be done at home or at the Academy. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend scheduled parent meetings and events.

### **Parking**

1. Visitors will park in the lot to the right of the building beyond the circle. This parking lot must be clear by 2:45 to allow carpool to use that area.
2. Visitors who will be at the school later than 2:45 should park in one of the other parking areas.
3. Faculty will park in the lot to the left of the building by the swings.
4. Students will park in the lot directly opposite the front door of the building.
5. Please drive slowly and carefully in the parking lot at all times.
6. Students who fail to observe these rules will lose the privilege of driving to school.

**NOTE: The speed limit on campus is 10 miles per hour. The neighborhood speed limit is 25 miles per hour.**

### **Playground/Gym Use**

Students may not use the gym or playground without staff supervision. Outdoor recess is meant to be a daily experience for lower school students, weather permitting.

Going outdoors in the middle of the day promotes a healthier and more effective learning environment for students. NVCA's policy for outdoor time is that it is the rule rather than the

exception. The only time there will be no outdoor time is in the event of rain and frigid cold temperatures. We will use 36 degrees as a general guide, but will leave the decision up to the discretion of the administration and teaching staff. The temperature and wind chill will determine the amount of time that is spent outdoors.

Students must come to school prepared to go outside during the day with appropriate clothing for the forecasted weather. This will mean when it is cold, children are expected to come to school with a winter coat, hat, mittens or gloves and if there is snow on the ground and your child likes to play on the snow, he / she must bring boots. When there is snow on the ground and a child does not come with boots, the child will not be permitted to play in the snow.

## **Promotion of Activities and Ministries**

### **Church Ministries**

NVCA is an interdenominational Christian School. Our students represent numerous churches and denominations in Northern Virginia. Therefore, it is the practice of NVCA not to promote or publicize the activities of individual churches.

### **Mission Trips**

NVCA sponsors short-term mission activities for students and staff. We strongly urge school personnel to participate in these activities. NVCA also endeavors to recognize such efforts by having individuals and groups report their experiences to the student body during classes, class meetings and chapels. As indicated under "Promotion of Church Ministries," it is the general practice of our school not to publicize individual church activities or offer opportunity to individual students to solicit financial support for their own activities. Raising individual support, through the school family, for school sponsored short-term missionary trips, is permissible.

### **Academic Trips**

Academic trips may be sponsored by the school and may be promoted in the school family by employees chaperoning the trips. Funds may be solicited from the staff and students to cover the cost of trips for students and employees.

## **Recording Devices**

Any type of electronic recording device will not be permitted for use in class by students to record notes and class lectures. Any exception to this policy will only be granted in situations when a student demonstrates they need the accommodation in order to succeed academically.

## **School Pictures**

School pictures are taken twice during the school year and made available to all parents. These include individual and class pictures, as well as senior cap and gown pictures.

## **School Closings and Delayed Openings**

In the event of inclement weather, as a general rule Northern Virginia Christian Academy will follow the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) closing announcements. NVCA will announce decisions on the WTOP web site, Channel 4, Channel 5 and Channel 9 news. Please do not call

the faculty or headmaster to verify the announcement.

In all cases, it is up to the parents to determine whether travel to and from school can be safely accomplished. Always err on the side of caution.

### **Student Conduct**

Since Scriptures teach that the home is the primary source of discipline in a child's life, the final responsibility for the student's behavior remains with the parents (Eph. 6:1-4). The school, therefore, looks to the parents to train their children in appropriate and respectful behavior. The school's disciplinary measures, in cooperation with the home, seek to maintain respectful, orderly and safe student conduct in all school activities.

Consistency is important in discipline. There must be clear communication and consistency between school and home regarding behavioral expectations and the administration of discipline. Faculty members and administrators will do all that is possible to support and help the student, but the final responsibility for the student's behavior remains with the parents.

### **Classroom Standards**

- **Promptness:** Arriving late for class is inappropriate behavior for those who respect others' time and attention.
- **Attentiveness:** Students are to listen attentively during all instruction, and give the teacher their full, undivided attention. All speakers, whether in chapel or the classroom, are giving of their valuable time for the students' best interest and learning.
- **Tone of Voice:** Students are to make certain that their tone of speech is respectful at all times. When speaking to any member of the school community, a student's words are to be gracious.
- **Speaking in Turn:** When students have a question during class, they should raise their hands and wait to be called upon.
- **Working Independently:** When an assignment involves working at their desks, students are to work quietly and independently. They are not to seek help from another student unless explicitly told to do so.
- **Classroom Responsibility:** If the teacher is called out of the room momentarily, students are to remain quiet and diligent at whatever task they were engaged with at that time. They are to follow temporary instruction given by the teacher; they are not to view this as a time to socialize.

### **Student Government**

Student government in the middle school and upper school consists of two separate organizations in both divisions, Student Government Association (SGA) and Class Executive Officers. The SGA leaders are responsible for representing the interests and concerns of students to NVCA Administrators and for providing leadership in student activities and programs. Student Government Association officers will consist of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain and two members at large from each grade. Election of class officers and SGA officers will take place in the spring for the next school year.

Qualifications for Student Government Officers and Class Officers are as follows:

Students must:

- Have an overall grade point average of 2.0 or above during the previous semester and not be carrying an "F" in any subject.
- Not run for office while on behavior or academic probation. If a Student Council Member is placed on probation while in office, the student will resign from office.
- Be in harmony with the spirit and direction of the school
- Have a positive testimony on and off campus.
- Willingly represent and support their class and school in interclass or interscholastic activities.

### **Supply Lists**

Students should come with their grade level/subject supplies the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school. Lists can be found on the website. Teachers may request replenishments during the year. Students are expected to have some duplicate supplies at home, e.g., paper, scissors, glue, coloring items, NIV Bible.

### **Textbooks**

Students will be issued textbooks and literature books for classroom and home use.

- Students should practice good stewardship in their treatment of the books they have been issued.
- Students shall cover all hard-bound books with a non-adhesive cover. Book covers that wear out or fall off during the year should be replaced promptly.
- Student's names must be written in their books, according to instructions, for identification during the class year. Books may not be otherwise marked in.
- At the end of the school year, students will turn in their books. If new damage or writing is present, the student will be required to pay a fine to make restitution for the repair or replacement cost of the book.

### **Transportation**

Parents determine how their child will be transported to and from school.

- Student drivers must review the Student Driving Policy, complete the Permission to Drive form and be given a Student Parking Permit prior to driving to school.
- Responsible adult drivers utilizing vehicles in good repair shall transport students from the NVCA campus to Northern Virginia Christian Academy sponsored events.
- Parents who want their children to ride with another student to such an event must send written permission to the school office. The parents of the student driver must also authorize such an arrangement by sending a written note to the school office.
- No driver is permitted to use a cell phone, or other device while driving. Phone calls shall be made while stopped to better ensure the safety of passengers.

### **Tuition and Fees**

- Tuition is paid monthly or semi-annually through FACTS; or it is paid in full prior to the first day of school.
- When sending checks, please indicate the purpose of the payment with a note on the memo line of the check ("athletic fee," "spirit wear order," "yearbook," etc.). To help us with our accounting, please do not combine different types of payments - write separate checks.

- All financial obligations, including textbook fines, must be met before final report cards or transcripts will be issued.

### **Visitors to NVCA Campus**

All visitors must check in with the office upon arrival on campus and receive a visitor's badge. Visitors will not be allowed in class without prior approval. Parents wishing to visit classes may schedule this through the office.

Parents who wish to provide food during lunch for a special celebration such as a birthday or visitors wishing to participate in such events should arrange this with the office and/or respective teacher in advance.

For student guests, students must obtain permission from the Headmaster to bring a guest to visit the school. **This permission must be secured 24 hours in advance for secondary students.** Guests may attend classes for one (1) day only. For security and liability reasons, drop-in guests are not allowed on campus without prior permission. All guests must check in at school office and they must be wearing apparel consistent with the school dress code

## **II. ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is one of the keys to successful academic achievement. Therefore, perfect attendance is strongly encouraged. The school **strongly discourages** the taking of extra days before or after a scheduled vacation and any time while school is in session, including before or during examinations periods.

Parents should make every effort to have their children in class by 8:10 a.m. each morning. Being on time to school insures the orderly start of each day. The benefits of being prompt are many including maximizing the time allotted for learning, and listening to Scriptures and important school announcements.

When arriving late, students shall report directly to the Attendance Secretary. A pass will be issued allowing the student to enter class. Teachers will not admit a student who is late to homeroom or first period class without an office pass from the Attendance Secretary or the Education Office. It is the parent's responsibility to write a note if the tardy is excused under the tardy policy and guidelines. If the excuse does not fall within the guidelines or the parent does not write a note, the tardy will be recorded as unexcused.

### **ABSENCES**

Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children out of school. It is challenging for children to make up missed work and impossible to make up missed instruction, which adds undue pressure to a student's already full schedule.

Students who do not complete half of their school day (leaving prior to 11:30 or arriving after 11:30) will be counted as absent for the entire day.

Teachers are not required and cannot be expected to provide extensive help or tutoring outside of class. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for the completion of make-up work and missed assignments with the teacher.

1. If a student will be absent due to illness or any other unexpected circumstance, the parent

- shall call the school before 9:00 a.m. the morning of the absence.
2. A student that has a dentist or doctor appointment during the day must bring a note to their teacher who will release them from class. The student will bring the excuse note to the office when it is time to be signed out and leave. A student is responsible for any class work missed and for getting all homework assignments prior to and following the absence.
  3. If a student comes to school during the school day or leaves before the end of the day, he/she must check in/out through the Attendance Secretary. Before leaving school, the parent coming for the student must sign the student out in the school office. Students will not be permitted to sign themselves out and meet their ride in the parking lot. Student drivers may sign themselves out.
  4. Make-up work for lower, middle and upper School students may be requested for students who have had excused absences for two or more days. Contact needs to be made with school office personnel as early in the day as possible in order to get the assignments that are to be picked up on the following day.
  5. **As a general rule, students have one day for each day of an excused absence to make up work missed.**
  6. A student involved in any co-curricular or extra-curricular activity must be in attendance at least a half-day, which is classified as 3 ½ hours, in order to participate in that day's activity. Exceptions may be made for the "excused absences" listed below.

### **Parent responsibilities**

1. Call the attendance line at 703-273-0803 ext. 1 by 9:00 a.m. in the event of a student absence. Please leave the student name, grade level, and reason for absence. Students returning to school following an absence **without a phone call to the attendance line** will need a written note explaining the absence, signed by a parent. If a call or note is not received the absence will be unexcused
2. Request class work and homework before 10:00 a.m. and arrange for pick-up no earlier than 3:10 p.m. for absences of more than two days. Please leave instructions as to who will pick up the assignments.
3. For planned absences notify the school office in writing at least one week prior to the planned absence.
4. Prepare students for missed quizzes and tests.
5. Contact the teacher via email **prior to the day of the student's return** if an extension of the due date(s) of missed work/tests is necessary. Each teacher's address is comprised of his/her first initial, a period, and last name, @nvchristianacademy.org.

### **Student responsibilities**

1. Students have one extra day for each day absent to make up all class work, homework, tests, and quizzes assigned during their absence.
2. Students are to turn in previously assigned work and take previously announced tests and quizzes on the day of their return (or the first meeting of each class), except in cases of an extended or severe illness.
3. Arrangements for extensions of due date(s) for make-up work/tests or previously assigned work/tests must be made with the individual teachers.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

#### **The following qualify as excused absences:**

1. Sickness
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Dentist, doctor, or other health appointment

4. Court Summons
5. Family emergency - must be specified in a note to determine if it qualifies
6. Inclement weather – determined by school administration if it qualifies
7. Other emergency or set of circumstances which, in the judgment of the Headmaster or his/her designee, constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school:
  - a) Five days will be allowed (no more than three consecutive) for travel with parents for college visits by juniors and seniors and church and para-church related activities, provided that the student is in good academic standing (no grades below a 70%).
  - b) If an absence is needed, but is not covered in the above list, parents must discuss the nature and length of the absence with the Headmaster at least a week prior to the trip. A week in advance is preferable to obtain all necessary assignments.
  - c) If prior approval has not been obtained, the absence will be considered unexcused and will have a penalty of one point deducted per class per day at the end of the quarter.
  - d) Students are expected to request, in advance, make-up work for a planned absence.
  - e) Consideration for approval will be based on the nature of the request and the current academic standing of the student.

**Note:** Make-up work for absences is the responsibility of the student and their parents.

## **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

An unexcused absence is being absent from school for reasons other than those stated above. A student's absence is also unexcused when it is without the knowledge and/or consent of the parent(s) or their guardian(s). Unexcused absences also include skipped classes. Excuses not determined acceptable by the administration will be considered unexcused. Schoolwork missed due to unexcused absences and truancy may be made up for credit with penalty. The standard grading policy for assignments turned in late will apply.

### **Lower School Absence Policy**

If a lower school student is absent twenty (20) days during the year, including absences due to tardies, NVCA may either retain or not allow the student to return the following year. A student who achieves passing grades will be promoted if the parents withdraw and place their child in another school. Absences due to extenuating circumstances, such as extended illness, will not apply if the parents keep in constant communication with appropriate school personnel and provide the school with necessary medical documentation.

### **Secondary Absence Policy**

If a student misses a class ten (10) or more times during the semester, credit **may not** be issued for that class unless unusual circumstances warrant an exception by the Headmaster. The number of absences allowed includes **all** absences from school – excused and unexcused.

## TARDINESS

### Excused Tardies

1. Medical appointments
2. Vehicle problems, breakdowns, accidents, etc.
3. Inclement weather – as determined by Administration
4. Other excuses determined acceptable by the Administration.

### Unexcused Tardies

#### To School

Oversleeping, heavy traffic, and other excuses determined not acceptable by the Administration are considered unexcused.

#### During School

Failure to be present in the classroom at the sound of the bell or by the designated time to begin class constitutes being tardy to class.

### Lower School Tardy Policy

A student, who has a total of forty (40) tardies to school (excused and unexcused), may not be permitted to return to NVCA. Students will be counted as on time if they are in their classrooms by 8:10 AM each day. After tardy students are signed in by their parent they will be given a pass that admits them to class.

### Middle School and Upper School Tardy Policy

Students are expected to arrive on time for first period. Admittance to school/class for students arriving after this time is only with a "pass" from the school office. Parent verification will be required. When a student receives four (4) unexcused tardies to school, he/she will receive an after-school detention. Students in the Middle and Upper Schools will receive an **after-school detention when they receive their third "tardy" to class.**

## III. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The academic program at NVCA is designed to fulfill the school's mission, to exceed minimum state requirements and to honor God. Therefore, NVCA endeavors to integrate the *Christian faith* and the *Christian World-View* with the learning process in the classroom and school activities.

In the lower school and middle school, the program is skill oriented, with emphasis on mastery with opportunities for individual exploration and creative activity. In the upper school the academic program is largely college preparatory. "College Preparatory" means that a student is prepared, when they graduate, to pursue post-secondary education.

The faculty and administration has developed an academic program that covers traditional liberal arts, fine arts, performing arts, Bible, chapel, history, language, literature, life, physical and social sciences, mathematics, technology and physical education. A wide range of student activities complements this array of academic opportunities.

The goal is that students who are graduated from NVCA will be effective, caring, responsible adults who have learned how to learn, who are self-disciplined, spiritually fruitful and well equipped to pursue their vocational calling as faithful stewards of the grace of God.

## **LOWER SCHOOL**

The academic program in the lower school is designed to provide students with a balanced foundation of skills essential for mastering future academic studies. Bible is a core subject of the curriculum, is taught daily and integrated into the whole curriculum. In addition to the strong emphasis on skill mastery in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies; art, music, computer, foreign language experience and physical education are integral parts of the lower school program and are taught by educational specialists. Field trips, special programs and projects enhance the student's academic experience.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

The academic program for students in middle school consists of required "core" courses and electives. This program provides a foundation of knowledge, skills mastery and study habits. Middle school is the final step in preparing students for a rigorous academic program in the upper school.

## **UPPER SCHOOL**

The upper school academic program is predominantly college preparatory. "College Preparatory" suggest that regardless of what courses a student may take, graduation from NVCA means that a student is prepared for higher education. Our goal is to graduate students with a Christian World-View who are prepared to be faithful stewards of their God-given talents, abilities and skills. Through it's three academic diploma programs NVCA is able to address the academic needs of students with average academic ability to the academically talented and gifted.

## **Secondary Doctrines**

Secondary doctrines are those, which are not addressed in the Northern Virginia Christian Academy Statement of Faith. The goal is for classroom discussion of secondary doctrines to be informative and non-partisan while presenting all sides of the issue being discussed. NVCA teachers seek to address secondary doctrine issues with the students in a manner that would not cause offense to the parents. The teachers will encourage students to follow up any questions they have with their parents and church leaders.

## **Homework Guidelines**

NVCA seeks to provide a rigorous education experience for its students. However, rigor is not achieved by requiring the students to complete an unreasonable amount of daily homework. Rather, an environment of academic rigor will happen when there is stimulating classroom instruction and homework that reinforces that instruction.

Homework has substantial positive effects on the achievement of middle and upper school students. This effect is irrespective of subject matter. Homework for lower school students also has a positive effect when used to reinforce skills that have been taught.

While homework assignments provide practice and review of lessons ***already taught***, they may also include introductions to material about to be covered, i.e., reading assignments to be

discussed subsequently in class. Homework assignments also need to be given that require students to integrate skills across the curriculum.

The general guideline is 10-20 minutes per night times the student's grade level. The actual amount of time that a student spends doing homework is influenced by a number of factors, which includes their homework environment and their ability to stay focused.

Students who have been absent and have make-up work to complete and students who are academically deficient and need extra work to maintain a satisfactory level of learning may have to spend more time completing homework than other students do.

**Lower School Homework Time Guidelines:** 20 minutes to an hour per night  
**Middle School Homework Guidelines:** 60 minutes to two (2) hours per night  
**Upper School Homework Guidelines:** 90 minutes to three (3) hours per night

## Grading Guidelines

### Grades K-2

Students in grades K-2 will be evaluated and graded using the following scale:

E	Excellent	90-100
G	Good	80-89
S	Satisfactory	70-79
N	Needs Improvement	<69

### Grades 3-12

Students in grades 3-12 will be evaluated and graded using the following scale.

A+	98-100	C+	77-79	F	64 or less
A	93-97	C	73-76		
A-	90-92	C-	70-72		
B+	87-89	D+	68-69		
B	83-86	D	66-67		
B-	80-82	D-	65		

Note: Upper school courses taken in middle school for upper school credit will be factored into the students upper school GPA

### Incomplete Grades

In the event that a student is unable to complete work by the end of a grading period due to excusable reasons, an "I" for INCOMPLETE will be recorded on the report card. Students then have up to **two weeks to complete the required work.**

### Communication of Grades

Interim grades are sent home at mid-quarter. These should include averages of current work but should also include comments about tendencies/direction and specific strengths and weaknesses of the student. Report cards are sent home at the end of each quarter.

### **Additional Grading Guidelines**

1. The grade on the midterm exam will be calculated as part of the second quarter grade. The grade on the final exam will be calculated as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter grade. Both exams will be 15 % of the semester grade.
2. All graded work will be returned to the students as soon as possible, no later than one week after the date on which it was turned in. Homework and quizzes need to be returned by the next time the class meets.
3. Extra credit may not be offered to individual students to raise low grades. An alternative assignment may be given to the entire class if a significant number of students did poorly, or if a test was poorly designed.

### **Late Assignments**

1. Assignments are "due" at the beginning of the class in which they are due. Any assignment turned in after the assignments are collected is late. Students will not be permitted to complete assignments during the period and turn them in that period for full credit.
2. Every school day an assignment is late the grade is reduced by **10% of the value of the assignment.**
3. Assignments turned in late due to an excused absence are not assessed a late penalty unless the lateness extends beyond the grace period of one day for each day absent.
4. Students involved in extra-curricular or co-curricular activities that take them off campus will submit assignments that are due before leaving campus. Failure to do so will result in the assignment being late and the student being assessed the normal late penalty.

### **Assignments Missed During a Suspension**

1. Students are expected to complete all assignments given to their class during their suspension.
2. Assignments will be graded in a manner consistent with the policy and procedure used for the rest of the class.
3. Students will receive a per day penalty of 10% of the 100% value of the assignment for all assignments whose deadlines were missed because of the suspension.

### **Semester Exams:**

1. Only for students in grades 7-12
2. Applies to core subjects taken for upper school credit.
3. Exams will not be permanently returned to students.

## Achievement Tests

1. Stanford 10 - Students will take the Stanford 10 Achievement Test in the spring. The test results will be used by school leaders to evaluate the progress students are making in terms of national norms.
2. PSAT testing is required of all students in grades 10 & 11. Students in grade 9 will also be permitted to take the PSAT test. This test is administered in the fall.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM A CLASS

1. A withdrawal before the conclusion of the first two weeks of school WILL NOT BE RECORDED.
2. Students dropping a course after the first two weeks of school will receive "Withdrawn Passing" (WP) or "Withdrawn Failing" (WF). This will be reflected in their cumulative numerical average for class ranking purposes.
3. Students may not drop a course after the first interim progress reports are issued, approximately 4 ½ weeks into the year.
4. Partial credit will not be granted for any course not completed in its entirety.

## COURSE CHANGES

Requests to add or drop a course will be considered on an individual basis. Students may not drop a course without parental agreement. Course changes, requested by the student after the **first two weeks of school**, will not normally be granted. **Course changes may take place during the academic quarter only with teacher recommendation and approval of the Administration. After the first week of school the fee for executing a course change is \$25.**

## DUAL ENROLLMENT

Students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades may request dual enrollment with a local college or university under the following conditions:

1. NVCA is not able to offer a course required for graduation due to lack of student interest or a teacher is not available.
2. A student needs a course to graduate but the student cannot take the course at NVCA because of an unresolved scheduling conflict.

**NOTE:** Students granted permission to dual enroll will arrange to take their dual enrolled course(s) at a time that does not conflict with their NVCA course schedule.

## BIBLE CLASSES

Bible classes are a requirement for students at Northern Virginia Christian Academy. Upper school students are required to pass Bible classes as a prerequisite for graduation. Bible class is treated the same as all other academic courses. The New International Version (NIV) of the Bible is used as the textbook in all Bible classes. Daily class work, homework assignments and memory work will be from the NIV.

## ACADEMIC INTERVENTION/CORRECTIVE

### Grades 5-12

This program applies to grades 5-12 and is intended to target those students who have difficulty completing homework assignments.

#### **Missing homework assignments will be treated in the following manner:**

1. 1<sup>st</sup> missing assignment is an unwritten warning and a call to parents by teacher.
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> missing assignment results in a supervised Academic Intervention with school administrative staff or teacher to make up the assignment. This is to allow the student time to complete a missing homework assignment. Once the assignment is completed the student will return to class.
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> missing assignment in the same subject **may** result in a Saturday Academic Corrective. This is a quiet homework time to help bring the student in line with the rest of the class. It is served for three (3) hours from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Each Saturday Academic Corrective costs the student \$25.

Before the Saturday Academic Corrective is applied, efforts will be made to help the student resolve the issue of delinquent homework.

#### **Note: The missing assignment count will start over every quarter**

#### **Parents will be notified of missing assignments through the following means:**

- On the first missed assignment of the year, a phone call will be made by the teacher.
- After the first notification, the teacher will notify the student's parents by the method that the teacher and parents have agreed upon.

The Academic Corrective is **initially** held separate from the detention for discipline. However, on the fourth, and subsequent Academic Interventions and Correctives, the student will begin the regular disciplinary process. The Academic Interventions and Correctives will then be considered an after-school detention and will contribute to any behavior record the student may have.

For the purposes of academic probation, the Academic Interventions and Correctives will accumulate quarterly. The fourth Academic Intervention and/or Corrective within a quarter, combined with a GPA of less than 3.0, will result in the student being immediately placed on academic probation.

However, for the purposes of dismissal, Academic Correctives accumulate annually. Upon accumulation of five (5) Academic Correctives for the year, a student may be recommended for dismissal. In the case of Academic Interventions or Academic Correctives, the "Precedence of Commitments" applies. Academic Interventions and Correctives hold precedence over all other scheduled activities, except for previously scheduled after school detentions.

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of academic probation is two-fold. First, it gives a student experiencing academic difficulty a chance to improve. Second, it warns the student and their parents of the possibility of non-continuance at NVCA if the student's grades do not improve.

### **Students are placed on probation because of the following:**

1. Previous records of below average academic achievement, i.e., a GPA of less than 2.0 or 75% for the prior school year.
2. All new students will be placed on academic probation for a minimum of one quarter
3. Two consecutive quarters with a grade for one course below 75%
4. Student's over-all average for the current school year drops below a 75%
5. At the end of a quarter the student has one or more failing grades.

### **Length of probation**

At the end of each quarter, the report card of a probationary student will be reviewed. If the student is passing all subjects at the conclusion of the previous grading period, he/she will be removed from academic probation. A student may be recommended for dismissal if he/she is not passing all classes after the completion of two academic quarters.

### **Limits of probation**

Academic probation beyond two consecutive grading periods requires approval from an administrative committee appointed by the Headmaster. If this committee does not approve a third grading period of academic probation, the student will be withdrawn from school.

### **Role of Guidance Counselor during the probation period**

The Guidance Counselor/Student Advisor will assist with monitoring the student's academic progress during the probationary period and will employ specific strategies to help the student focus on improving their academic performance. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, homework contracts, parent-student contracts, signing of daily homework pads, and required tutoring. These and other strategies will be used to support student and parent accountability in meeting the goal of the student passing all subjects and performing up to their potential.

### **How summer school affects probation**

The passing of summer school classes, to make up deficits for the previous school year, will not remove a student from academic probation. A student may be removed from academic probation only after passing all classes in a grading period, during the regular academic year, with no grade below a "C-"

## **HONORS and AWARDS**

Northern Virginia Christian Academy maintains a system of formal honors and awards for the following reasons:

- To increase the academic motivation of all students by demonstrating that good work and good behavior are rewarded;
- To recognize and show appreciation to those students qualified to be listed on the honor rolls.

## Lower School Honor Roll – Grades K-4

Students in grades 3-4 will earn academic recognition based on the criteria for honor roll recognition established for students in grades 5-8

## Middle and Upper School Honor Roll – Grades 5-12

The honor roll is an incentive program that gives recognition for individual academic progress. A listing of honor roll categories follows:

<b>Highest Honor Roll</b>	97 – 100 numerical average with no grade below an 85%.
<b>High Honor Roll</b>	90 – 96 numerical average with no grade below an 80%.
<b>Honor Roll:</b>	85 – 89 numerical average with no grade below a 75%.

To qualify, a student must be enrolled in a minimum of 5 courses on campus. All courses are averaged to determine eligibility.

## Headmaster's Honor Roll

NVCA has established the Headmaster's Honors Program to recognize students who have excelled academically and spiritually. This award is given to students at the conclusion of first and second Semester. To qualify students must be enrolled in the upper school take a minimum of five courses on campus and maintain a "Good Report," both on and off campus regarding their Christian testimony. This program is broken into three divisions:

<b>LEVEL I -</b>	students must maintain a 4.0 GPA (all A's), a conduct grade of satisfactory or better and a good report from their sphere of influence.
<b>LEVEL II -</b>	students must maintain a 3.5 - 3.9 GPA, a conduct grade of satisfactory or better and a good report from their sphere of influence.
<b>LEVEL III -</b>	students must maintain a 3.0 to 3.4 GPA, a conduct grade of satisfactory or better and a good report from their sphere of influence.

Once inducted, failure to maintain an A or B average, inappropriate conduct, and/or excessive visits to the school office for disciplinary reasons can result in probation or dismissal from this program. Students qualifying for the Headmaster's Honors Program will not be placed on the regular Academic Honor Roll.

## Subject Awards

At the conclusion of the academic year an award may be presented to a student who has shown not only mastery of the subject matter in a given course but who has also exhibited a degree of interest, enthusiasm and excellence that has surpassed the high level of performance expected from every student. The recipient of the Subject Award may not necessarily be the student who has achieved the highest mark in the course. The Award is designed to recognize not only academic excellence but also commitment and perseverance and the ideal of excellence in both performance and attitude.

## **NVCA Outstanding Awards**

Awards may be given at the end of the academic year to students who have shown exemplary performance and/or conduct in any area involving school academics and/or activities. These awards will fall into three categories:

1. Overall Academic Excellence
2. Spiritual Growth
3. Individual Accomplishment and Personal Improvement

## **Graduation Academic Awards**

*Students in 12<sup>th</sup> grade may be graduated with one of the following honors:*

<b>Cum laude:</b>	3.5 GPA
<b>Magna cum laude:</b>	3.7 GPA
<b>Summa cum laude:</b>	3.9 GPA

## **Valedictorian Requirements**

Being declared a Valedictorian is an honor that is bestowed upon one senior at the conclusion of each senior year. It is one of the highest academic honors NVCA bestows on a student. For students wanting to earn this recognition, they need to make note of the following information as they begin the course selection process:

Students must attend NVCA for three (3) years of high school and must attend 12<sup>th</sup> grade full-time at NVCA. Students transferring into NVCA at grades 11 and 12 **will not** be considered for Valedictorian. The Valedictorian will be chosen following the mid-point of the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) quarter. For the purpose of assigning class rank and choosing the Valedictorian, each senior's class rank will be calculated to within two decimal places of their numeric averages. In the event of a tie, students will share the class rank and the honor of being Valedictorian. Home-schooled students will not be considered for Valedictorian. The student with the highest numerical average is selected as Valedictorian.

## **PROMOTION/RETENTION**

In the lower school, a combination of factors influences the decision to promote or retain a student. They are age, maturity, class work, grades earned, skill mastery and standardized test scores. Consideration of retaining a student needs to include the student, their parents, the teacher and the Headmaster. Retention is a choice of last resort.

Students in the middle school must pass all core subjects to be promoted. Students may resolve failing grades through an approved summer school or by repeating the course the next school year.

Upper school students may advance to the next grade when they earn the following credits:

1. Sophomore – seven credits in 9<sup>th</sup> grade
2. Junior – fourteen credits in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades
3. Senior - twenty credits in 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grades

Upper school students, one or more credit short of the requirement to graduate, will not walk in graduation and will receive their diplomas when the academic requirements are satisfied.

## **TUTORING**

If students are unable to meet the academic requirements for a particular class, parents may find it necessary to provide extra tutoring for their child. Parents may seek help from a qualified individual not associated with the school, or ask the teacher of the class for additional assistance. It should be understood, however, that it is left to the teacher's discretion as to whether, when, and how much help will be provided to the student. Parents and students should be aware that this extra help is above and beyond the duties prescribed in the teacher's job description and should keep this in mind when making requests.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued four times per year at nine-week intervals. Four and one-half weeks into each grading period, progress reports are issued. Students having difficulty in one or more subject areas, are to return the progress report, signed by one of their parents, to the office with.

Grades earned in class must be reflective of the student's mastery of the subject matter. It is not acceptable to factor behavioral patterns or attitude/mood shifts into the student's grade. Teachers are to use appropriate conduct notations to reflect the student's behavior and/or attitude in class.

Parent/teacher conferences are held, for grades K-8, schools following the conclusion of the first grading period of the school year. Once parents receive their child's report electronically they are to confer with their child's teacher. Upper school teachers will initiate conferences with parents of students who are under achieving at the conclusion of the first grading period.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are an important part of our education program. Note the following guidelines:

1. A signed, parental permission slip is required for all trips.
2. Appropriate dress for students will be determined by the teacher prior to the trip.
3. All students are expected to go on these trips.
4. Parents may volunteer to assist in the supervision of students on field trips.
5. Parents are required to supply car seats/booster seats, in compliance with the law, by 8:00 a.m. on the day of the field trip.
6. Adult drivers on field trips should not use cell phones, computers, keyboards, apply make-up or do any activity that distracts from driving safely. Phone calls should be made while stopped to ensure the safety of all passengers.
7. Adult drivers should fill out a driving form and allow the office to make a copy of their driver's license. Students are not permitted to drive on field trips.

## **IV. COMMUNICATION**

Communication is very important for the success of every student. The school has several ways in which we communicate with parents. These do not take the place of phoning and talking directly with your student(s) teacher(s) or the Headmaster. However, we wish to respect everyone's time at home with their families. Please do not call faculty members at home unless given permission to do so by the teacher you want to call.

**Conferences:** Academy parents and teachers share the responsibility of providing a Biblical foundation and solid education for each student. Teachers receive delegated responsibility from parents, therefore, each student must submit to the teacher's leadership in the same way he/she would submit to their parent(s). Likewise, when a parent enrolls a student in the Academy, the parent must submit to the teacher's authority and judgment concerning educational matters. It is essential that each parent uphold the student's respect for the teacher. A parent should always sincerely support the teacher and encourage the student to do the same.

Parent/Teacher conferences are designed to ensure good communication between parents and teachers. Conferences will be scheduled at the end of the first quarter. Teachers are also available by appointment. Please contact the teacher by the method agreed upon between you and the teacher. Available times for conferences are before and after school or during the teacher's planning period.

**RenWeb:** RenWeb is our School Management System. Information which may be found on RenWeb includes homework, classroom grades, family directory, calendar, sports events times and locations, teacher contact information and much more.

To access RenWeb, parents must have an e-mail address registered with the school. Students may have their own access by providing the school with their e-mail address. Students may use their parents' access password as well. New Parents should go to the "New Parent Login". complete the prompted information and RenWeb will e-mail you an individual password through which you may access all information relating to your student(s).

## Handling Grievances

### Students/Parents to Faculty

- All concerns about the classroom must first be presented to the teacher by the parents, or if the student is mature enough, by the student. A respectful demeanor is required at all times.
- If the problem is not resolved, a parent should bring the concern to the Headmaster.

### Parents/Patrons to Headmaster

- If parents or patrons have a grievance or dispute about the general operation of the Academy, they should bring their concerns to the Headmaster.
- If the problem is not resolved, a parent should request, in writing, a hearing from the NVCA Board.

### Volunteers to NVCA Employees

- If any volunteer has a concern about the volunteer work, he /she will present that concern to the Northern Virginia Christian Academy employee responsible for oversight (faculty, Headmaster, secretary, etc.) or the PTF person responsible for the work.
- If the problem is not resolved, the volunteer should bring the concern to the PTF President or Headmaster as appropriate.
- If the problem is still not resolved, the volunteer may request in writing a hearing with the NVCA Board Executive Committee.

There will be times when those in a school community need to resolve a personal offense. Scripture acknowledges this option and offers the principles that are to guide the sequence of such communication and the temperament that should be manifested by those engaged in resolving the concern. The phrase, "Matthew 18 Principle" is often used to identify the sequence of such communication. Other passages of Scripture indicate the temperament of those involved in resolving a conflict.

1. Go directly to the person with whom you have the conflict.

**PRINCIPLE: KEEP THE COMMUNICATION PRIVATE, SIMPLE AND DIRECT, INVOLVING ONLY THE PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE.**

2. If the initial communication does not accomplish the desired resolution, you are to communicate with the appropriate administrator to accompany you on a second visit to resolve the concern. The administration should not become involved until step one has taken place.

**PRINCIPLE: CONFIRM THE DETAILS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE CONCERN TO THOSE ASSEMBLED.**

3. If the above two attempts do not bring forth the desired resolution then you are to proceed to the next step in the process and take the matter to the Headmaster.

**PRINCIPLE: IN ADDRESSING CONCERNS BIBLICALLY, THERE IS A SEQUENTIAL INCREASE OF THE AUTHORITY/RESPONSIBILITY RESPONSE MECHANISM UNTIL THE CONCERN IS RESOLVED.**

4. There may be times, albeit infrequent, when concerns are not positively resolved. When this happens, it may result in the removal from the school family those who are the focus of the concern.

**PRINCIPLE: GOD DESIRES UNITY OF HIS PEOPLE AND WILL REMOVE THOSE WHO ARE THE CAUSES OF STRIFE.**

5. The ultimate purpose of the exercise of the "Matthew 18 Principle" is reconciliation. Reconciliation may involve parents and/or faculty members saying, "I am sorry, please forgive me." Such action is to be regarded as rooted in Scripture and thus helping us model the highest level of integrity and respect for one another.

**PRINCIPLE: GOD DESIRES UNITY OF HIS PEOPLE. WHEN THIS UNITY IS A REALITY, HE WILL BLESS AND BE WITH HIS PEOPLE.**

The sequence of communication outlined above may be accomplished rapidly and in an orderly manner. Phone calls, notes and meetings coordinated by the school official holding the most responsible position in the communication cycle will implement the "Matthew 18 Principle" successfully.

## V. STUDENT DISCIPLINE

### Philosophy of Discipline

The philosophy of discipline and its application at NVCA is grounded in Scripture and tempered with grace and compassion. (See Ephesians 4:32, 5:14; I Peter 3:8, 9; Proverbs 12:1, 13:18, 24 and 22:15; Hebrews 12; I Corinthians 13; and Revelation 3:19.) The source of discipline is God and is

for the development of Godly character and behavior.

### **Purpose of Discipline**

1. Establish a clear description of the type of behavior that will be considered acceptable or unacceptable.
2. Set forth the disciplinary measures that will be taken against unacceptable behavior.
3. Provide for communication to all involved, parent, student, teacher, and Administration regarding the cause for discipline and the action taken.
4. Assign responsibility for the disciplinary action.
5. Provide for accurate record keeping of disciplinary action so that the discipline may be administered throughout the school in a firm, fair and consistent manner.
6. Establish the principle that discipline must be seasoned with grace if it is to be Godly.
7. Train and lead the student into maturity and self-discipline.

### **The Objective of Discipline**

1. Develop and maintain the best environment for learning.
2. Train students in behavioral patterns that will be helpful to them individually and to the school community in supporting and achieving the commonly-held goals of spiritual, intellectual, physical and social development.
3. Correct behavior which is disruptive or destructive to the learning environment.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

God has given to parents the responsibility for the discipline of their children. NVCA parents have conferred this authority on teachers and administrators during the school day and at school activities.

It shall be the responsibility of teachers and administrators to work with parents in the matter of discipline, informing them in a prompt manner of disciplinary action taken and making themselves available to the parents and students involved for discussion and counsel. The objective of this involvement is to foster understanding, to encourage parents and students alike to embrace supportive behavior, to enlist student cooperation, and to build a like-minded attitude.

### **Manners and Courtesy**

Students are expected to be courteous to one another and to their teachers, conducting themselves in a way that demonstrates respect and consideration for others. In doing so, we reflect Christ's command to love one another.

#### **The following are specific directions on showing good manners and courtesy:**

1. Students should approach visitors to assist them with directions to the receptionist or where they will be helped.
2. Student visitors are to be introduced, by the host student, to the teacher of the class they are visiting.
3. Students carrying a message to another classroom are to knock on the door, step inside, and wait to be recognized by the teacher before delivering a message.
4. Talking in the halls is to be in a conversational tone. Conversations of others are not to be interrupted by talking or by walking between those conversing.
5. There is to be no horseplay or whistling in the building.

6. Gum chewing is not permitted because it ends up on the furniture and carpet.
7. No hats or head coverings are to be worn in the building.
8. In chapels and assemblies, food and drink are not permitted and attention will be directed to the participants without distractions.
9. Respect and care will be shown for all school property.
10. No equipment is to be brought to school which could disrupt the educational process.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS**

Discipline may be administered by a member of the faculty, the administration, staff, or any other person who has been given authority to administer discipline. However, because of his/her contact with students, it is the classroom teacher who most often is in a position to discipline a student. The various levels of discipline are noted below.

### **Classroom Level**

Discipline at this level may involve teachers speaking to students, so that their behavior is consistent with NVCA standards and a proper educational environment.

### **After School Detention**

Detention is given when school regulations or rules have not been consistently followed. Teachers, staff, and administrators may assign detentions. Any student receiving an after school detention will be given a detention slip which must be signed by a parent/guardian of the student and returned to the staff member who issued the detention. It will include the reason and date for each detention.

Twenty-four hours notice will be given when such an infraction occurs. Parents need to provide transportation home for the student. Inconvenience to the parents is not an excuse for missing an after school detention. It is to be served on the day it is assigned. A school game or extra-curricular activity is not a valid reason for missing detention. If the parents have an emergency or important doctor's appointment on the day of the detention, they need to arrange an alternate detention date with the Headmaster. If a student skips an assigned detention, he/she will make up the one skipped and serve an additional detention. If both detentions are not served, the student will attend a **Saturday Detention**. Repeated detentions in a quarter will necessitate further discipline.

### **Suspension**

The Headmaster makes the decision for this level of disciplinary action. Suspension may be the result of repeated behavior contrary to NVCA standards, a number of detentions, or a single serious act. Following suspension, a student may be required to continue his/her attendance on behavioral probation. The details of this probation will be set by the Administration and, if broken, may lead to the student's expulsion.

Suspended students may not be on school property while school is in session, nor attend school functions and activities until they have returned for a full day of classes. Suspended students must make up all missed assignments.

### **Academic Penalty for Suspension:**

For each day a student is suspended, his/her grade will be lowered two (2) points per class up to

a maximum of ten (10) points for a five day suspension. The student is expected to make up all work and will receive full credit for that work; however, at the end of the marking period the teacher will deduct points off the final average by using the above formula. Students will receive a zero (0) for work that is not turned in. If a student serves an indefinite suspension, there will be **no** academic penalty for day six and beyond.

### **Expulsion**

The fifth and final level of disciplinary action is expulsion. A student may be expelled from school anytime he/she is found out of harmony with the rules and policies of the school. It may be the result of repeated behavior contrary to NVCA standards, a number of detentions or a single act. The Headmaster, in consultation with the President of the Board of Directors, will make the decision to expel students.

Unless expelled students qualify for restoration, they are not eligible for readmission for one (1) year following the date of their expulsion. Expelled students may not be on school property while school is in session, nor attend school activities without advance approval from school Administration. Except in the case of a major violation of the "Secondary School Pledge", a student facing expulsion is aware of that possibility because of detentions and/or suspensions served under the normal discipline process.

If a student is expelled or not able to return to NVCA due to unacceptable behavior, he/she will not be permitted to attend NVCA sponsored or hosted summer programs.

### **Precedence of Commitments**

#### **Guidelines for governing precedence of after school commitments for students are:**

1. Suspension
2. Detention
3. Academic Intervention
4. Classes and scheduled after school academic extra-help sessions with faculty members.
5. Extra-curricular activities
6. Transportation

The above means, for example, that if a student has an after school detention (2), this scheduled responsibility must be kept before participation in afternoon school activities (5), or keeping prior arrangements for after school transportation (6). Saturday detentions are held one Saturday per month from 9:00 a.m. to noon. The student will pay \$25 to cover the cost of hiring someone to monitor the detention.

### **UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR**

Unacceptable behavior differs in its severity and should receive different disciplinary responses. The examples listed in each category are representative and are not meant to be all-inclusive. Offenses that are not listed will be dealt with at the discretion of Administration consistent with these examples. **Please note:** Under serious offenses, students may be suspended or expelled, especially in cases of severe rebellion, mistreating or placing others in danger, criminal activity or sexual immorality.

## **Serious Offenses**

1. Mistreatment of others, which includes, but is not limited to sexual harassment, tormenting, being habitually cruel, persistent teasing, making fun of or spreading rumors, mocking, belittling or encouraging exclusion
2. Causing a disturbance in class or study hall
3. Failure to accept responsibility for academic work
4. Frequent critical or derogatory remarks
5. Disrespect, insolence shown toward authority
6. Acts of rebellion against school norms
7. Cutting class or school/leaving campus without permission
8. Cheating, lying and stealing
9. Swearing or using obscenities
10. Defiance, willful disobedience of authority
11. Abuse or willful destruction of school property
12. Possession, use or distribution of: Alcohol, Marijuana, Prescription Drugs, Controlled Dangerous Substances, Imitation Controlled Substances, Inhalants, other Intoxicants, and Controlled and Drug Paraphernalia
13. Fighting or having possession of a weapon of violence
14. Extortion
15. Arson, false alarms, bomb threats or other serious threats
16. Sexual immorality
17. Habitual committing of less serious offenses
18. Becoming pregnant or causing a pregnancy. In this case, the student(s) will be dismissed. If this occurs near the end of a school year, the students(s) may qualify to finish under the Alternative School Program.

## **Less Serious Offenses**

- Unexcused lateness to school
- Three unexcused tardies to class
- Failure to stay after school to complete an assignment
- Failure to keep a scheduled appointment
- Disobeying school specific rules

## **PROCEDURES FOR LOWER SCHOOL DISCIPLINE** **Grades K3-4**

It is the parents' responsibility to send their children to school disciplined and ready to learn. Although the school seeks to educate and minister to each child, an atmosphere conducive to learning must be maintained for all children. Parents should discipline their child at home after receiving notice from the Administrator or classroom teacher that a behavioral problem exists. Behavior warnings are used in elementary as a means to track a student's behavior. Behavior warnings are given for unacceptable behavior. The following warning scale will be used to determine a student's behavior grade for the quarter.

Grade Levels	K - 2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Behavior Grade</b>	<b># of Warnings</b>	<b># of warnings</b>	<b># of Warnings</b>
Excellent	0-9	0-7	0-6
Satisfactory	10-16	8-15	7-13
Improvement Needed	17-24	16-22	14-18
Unsatisfactory	25+	23+	19+

Each written warning is preceded by two (2) verbal warnings with the following exceptions:

- the student is a chronic offender
- there is a set routine in the classroom that must be followed without verbal notification (placing papers in the appropriate space, raising hand to be called upon, etc.)

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: written warning #1

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: written warning #2; time-out or other appropriate reminder

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: written warning #3; ten-minute time-out, silent lunch or time out during recess

4<sup>th</sup> Offense: written warning #4; discipline office visit

### **Referral to Discipline Office**

Students are referred to the Discipline Office for the following reasons:

1. 4 warnings in one day
2. 10 warnings in one quarter
3. Committing a Serious Offense

### **Referral to Discipline Office from Classroom - Per Quarter:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Student will meet with administrator in charge of discipline. Parents will be called.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Student will meet with administrator in charge of discipline. Parents will be called. Students in 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> grades will write down their misbehavior & how to correct that behavior.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Conference will be scheduled with the parents and classroom teacher to establish a behavior modification plan.

4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Parents called and informed that the next referral to the discipline office will be a one-day suspension.

5<sup>th</sup> Offense: A one-day suspension. Conference with parents is necessary to re-admit student to school.

At the discretion of the Headmaster, the above process may be abbreviated in order to produce the desired result.

### **Multiple Referrals to Discipline Office from Classroom**

If, during the course of the entire school year, a child has been referred to the discipline office ten (10) times, the student may be dismissed or denied admission to NVCA the following school year. At the discretion of the administrator in charge of discipline, for students in grades K5 – 2<sup>nd</sup>, one step may be added to the above process.

**PROCEDURES FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL  
AND UPPER SCHOOL DISCIPLINE**

**Grades 7-12**

**Classroom**

The following steps include the general guidelines for administering discipline; however, they do not preclude a teacher from issuing a detention or sending a disruptive student to the office without issuing a warning or requiring a student to sign a behavior log. This option is necessary as the school year progresses to hinder students from disrupting class on a regular basis.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense in one week: verbal warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense in one week: after school detention
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense in one week: referral to the discipline office

**Behavior Grade**

The number of offenses committed determines the behavior grade for the quarter. The scale below corresponds to the number of warnings with the behavior grade. When behavior grades are issued, the following scale will be used

Grade Levels	7-8	9-12
<b>Behavior Grade</b>	<b>#of Warnings</b>	<b># of Warnings</b>
Excellent	0-5	0-3
Satisfactory	6-12	4-7
Improvement Needed	13-18	8-10
Unsatisfactory	19+	11+

**Severe clause**

If a student is disrupting the educational process with negative behavior, such as fighting, vandalism, defying a teacher or leaving campus without permission, the student loses the right to proceed through the above steps. He/she is referred immediately to the discipline office. One or more of the following consequences will be given depending on the offense: after school detention, telephone call to parent, suspension, behavioral probation or referral to the Headmaster. Depending on the nature of the offense, the student may be expelled.

**Chronic Clause**

Students who chronically disturb other students and/or consistently do not do their work will lose the right to proceed through the above steps and will be referred to the school office. Students receiving after school detentions will be closely monitored. The following chart clarifies the consequences for a specific number of detentions in one marking period:

Number of Detentions	Consequence
2	Letter of concern to parent
3	Possible conference with parents
4	Saturday Detention is assigned and student is required to Attend. Student is fined \$25, and may be placed on behavioral probation. Saturday Detention will be held at least once a month. NOTE: The fine is used to pay the person who supervises the detention.
5	Suspension

The detention count starts over with each new grading period. However, the number of after school detentions are recorded and compiled at the end of the semester and the end of the year. Any student who has been suspended or received five (5) or more after school detentions in one marking period will be immediately placed on behavioral probation for the remainder of the current quarter (no less than four weeks). Any student who previously has not been suspended for reaching five (5) detentions in a quarter will be suspended upon receiving a tenth (10) detention. The school reserves the right to dismiss or not allow students to return after they reach a tenth detention. **Important note: Any student receiving ten (10) or more detentions in one semester or fifteen (15) for the year may be expelled. Furthermore, the student may not return the following year.**

## INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS

Students are expected to be honest in all dealings with the school. Violations of integrity include, but are not limited to cheating, forgery, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts, chronic lying, and the like. The first offense for being dishonest will result in an after-school detention. A second offense will lead to suspension. On the third offense, the student will be recommended for expulsion.

### Cheating

NVCA views cheating as Biblically and morally wrong. Cheating includes, but is not limited to the following guidelines:

1. Looking at another person's test, quiz, homework/class work assignment, project or report, and taking those answers as one's own.
2. Copying another person's work or allowing someone to copy or use your work.
3. Telling others what is on a test/quiz or receiving information about what is on a test/quiz.
4. Bearing false witness in any way, which includes portraying to others that something is their work when it is not.
5. Plagiarism

### Penalty for Cheating

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: After school detention and a zero (0) for daily assignments and quizzes, and a 25-50 point reduction for tests and papers/projects. A judgment will be made by the Headmaster based on the severity of the cheating incident. The Headmaster will require a parent conference.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Indefinite suspension from school requiring a parent conference with the Headmaster to determine if it is possible for the student to return. The

student will experience the normal grade reductions associated with suspension.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: The student may be recommended for expulsion.

### **Common Areas**

If a student is not observing school rules regarding the common areas, the school personnel monitoring that area will give the student a verbal warning. If the student does not respond appropriately, he/she will receive a detention. If the behavior is in the "serious offense" category, the student will be referred to the school office immediately.

## **THE APPEAL PROCESS**

### **Appeal to a teacher**

When students feel school personnel unjustly discipline them, they need to appeal, rather than be confrontational. The appeal process requires time to elapse, after which the student should arrange a time to talk privately with the person involved. Students are expected to not be argumentative and to show courtesy and respect at all times. If the person involved agrees with the student, the discipline will be withdrawn. If the person involved does not agree with the student, the discipline should be accepted graciously. Students needing help developing their appeal may meet with any member of the school staff they believe can assist them.

### **Appeal of a Suspension**

When students disagree with the evidence presented which leads to a suspension from school for three (3) to five (5) days, they may appeal, in writing, to the Headmaster. The appeal must be made within three (3) school days of the notification of suspension. They shall be given the opportunity to tell their view of the incident to a hearing panel appointed by the Headmaster. The decision of this panel is final and there is no right to make a further appeal.

### **Appeal of an Expulsion**

When students disagree with the evidence presented which leads to their expulsion from NVCA, they may request an opportunity to present their point of view and appeal the expulsion decision. Students must appeal in writing within five (5) school days of the notification of expulsion. They may have the opportunity to tell their view of the incident to a hearing panel appointed by the President of the Board of Directors. Students have the right to present a witness and to be supported by their immediate family; however, they do not have the right to legal counsel or to cross-examine witnesses at the hearing. The decision of the panel is Final.

## **MERCY POLICY**

NVCA believes that the Word of God teaches that our Lord showed mercy and that we are encouraged to do the same (Matt. 5:7; Hebrews 4:16; James 2:13). NVCA also believes that students may not make wise choices in every circumstance and that without help from spiritual counselors, these unfortunate choices can have life-long consequences. With these truths in mind, NVCA has adopted the following mercy policy:

If a student voluntarily comes to a teacher or staff member for help and counsel because of involvement in an incident that violates school rules, and this is a first time incident involving the

student, the staff member is not required to report the incident as a matter of discipline. The staff member and the student must immediately advise the Headmaster of the matter. If the student did not break public law or commit an offense that requires immediate expulsion from school, the parents will be informed of the incident and the status of their child. In addition to this, the student will receive further counsel. If parents discover that their student is involved in any activity, at school or away from school that could lead to school discipline, they should call the Headmaster as soon as possible. If the school has no prior knowledge of the offense and was not involved in any investigation of the problem, a first time offender is generally shown mercy.

Generally, if a member of the school staff or a parent handles a problem in the above way, disciplinary action by the school may not be necessary for a first time offense. The response of the school will also depend on the response and attitude of the student.

For example, if a parent discovers that their student has skipped school, the parent will counsel the student and administer punishment at home. Following the discovery, the parent and student should contact the Headmaster. At this point, the school will become involved in the counseling process even though punishment is not administered for the first offense. The response of the school will also depend on the response and attitude of the student.

If a similar situation occurs a second time, the parents should contact the school. The Headmaster will take punitive action. The school's response will be based on the discipline process and the written policy and procedures for responding to student misconduct on and off campus. In the above illustration, the student would still experience the normal academic penalty for skipping school. If the school discovers the problem and is already investigating it, or if a criminal act is involved, the school will have to take disciplinary action through the established discipline process. Though mercy is shown, in some instances a student may be required to resign positions of leadership and relinquish opportunities in extra-curricular activities.

## **RESTORATION POLICY**

The ultimate goal of discipline in a Christian school is to shape the character of each student. The Bible instructs us to be like Christ, i.e., *to be conformed to the image of His Son*, and *not to be conformed to this world*. The Bible indicates that with repeated offenses a person is not committed to altering their character. In these cases, the Bible instructs us to separate such individuals from the group. The Bible also indicates that when the desired result of discipline is spiritual formation, then we are expected to follow a path that leads to restoration (Matt. 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1; Luke 15:11). When a student is genuinely filled with remorse and repentance for a violation of school rules that resulted in their expulsion from school, consideration will be given one time to restore the student to NVCA. The normal time period for reapplication is one year of successful attendance at another school. Any exceptions to this policy will require a meeting with the Headmaster to explore the possibilities of following a strict step-by-step program with specific guidelines that the student and his/her parents must follow to allow consideration for re-entry before the one year period expires. If an exception is granted, the final decision will rest with the Headmaster in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

## **ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Unfortunately, students from good Christian homes sometimes make careless choices that bring about strong consequences. NVCA recognizes that for a student who has never been enrolled in any school except a Christian school, or for whose parent there is no alternative for Christian education, the possibility of being in a public environment is not acceptable for many reasons. In some cases, NVCA will offer an alternative program for students who have been expelled from NVCA for the first time. Generally, to be considered, a dismissal must occur in the second semester, close to the end of the year. If this happens, a student will be permitted to finish his/her schoolwork at home. It is the responsibility of the parents to pick up their child's assignments and return the completed work in a timely fashion. Arrangements must be made with the Education Office for scheduling tests and quizzes with approved tutors. Parents will be required to make tuition payments and cover all fees still due before records are released to the next school.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The NVCA Substance Abuse policy applies to unlawful possession, use or distribution of any Alcohol, Marijuana, Prescription Drugs, Controlled Dangerous Substances, Imitation Controlled Substances, Inhalants, other Intoxicants, Controlled or Drug Paraphernalia, on or off school property, including while in attendance at any NVCA sponsored and supervised activity.

Students who possess, use, or distribute substances represented as or intended to be used as alcohol or a controlled dangerous substance will be treated by the rules and regulations of these procedures as if they were possessing, using, or distributing alcohol or a controlled dangerous substance even though the substance itself may ultimately be determined not to be alcohol or a controlled dangerous substance.

### **POSSESSION**

Implies that a student has any of the above substances on his/her person or with his/her personal property, or has under his/her control by placement of and knowledge of the whereabouts of the substance on NVCA property or other property on which he/she is presently, by virtue of being within the jurisdiction of school authorities.

### **USE**

Implies that a student is reasonably known to have assimilated any of the above substances (*e.g., drinking alcohol, smoking marijuana, taking a pill, etc.*) or is reasonably found to be under the influence of a substance while under the jurisdiction of school authorities.

### **DISTRIBUTION**

Implies the transfer of any of the above substances to any other person, with or without the exchange of money or other valuables.

## **Disciplinary measures for above offenses**

NVCA views the possession, use or distribution of alcohol, controlled dangerous substances, controlled or drug paraphernalia by students, as defined above, as warranting the following disciplinary actions:

## **1. Student Possessors of Small Amounts**

Students having in their possession alcohol, controlled dangerous substances or other substances listed above in this section in a small quantity (*i.e., quantities typically for individual use*) or controlled or drug paraphernalia in any quantity shall be charged with Possession and be subject to the disciplinary guidelines outlined for student users.

## **2. Student Users**

### **1<sup>st</sup> OFFENSE:**

If a student has been found to have committed a first offense of using alcohol, controlled dangerous substances, other substances listed above, and/or controlled or drug paraphernalia, the student will be expelled, notwithstanding any mitigating circumstances. However, the Administrative Team may readmit the student after at least five (5) days of expulsion if both the student and at least one of his/her parents/guardians have enrolled in an appropriate school or community alcohol/drug-counseling program. The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) must furnish proof that they have scheduled at least two (2) sessions with the program.

These sessions must be completed no later than four (4) weeks after the date of the student's readmission to school. When the Headmaster has been furnished proof of completion of the program within the four (4) week period, the expulsion may be rescinded according to the Restoration Policy.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> OFFENSE:**

If a student has been found to have committed a second offense under the provisions of this section, the student shall be expelled unless there are mitigating circumstances. The Administrative Team, however, may rescind the expulsion after the student's absence from school for the length of one year, if the student provides documentation of satisfactory participation in an appropriate accredited alcohol/drug treatment program.

## **3. Student Possessors with Intent to Distribute**

Students having in their possession large quantities of alcohol, controlled dangerous substances (*i.e., quantities in an amount which the Headmaster could reasonably infer was intended to be available for distribution*) shall be charged with Possession with Intent to Distribute and be subject to the disciplinary guidelines outlined for student distributors.

## **4. Student Distributors**

If the student has been found to have committed a distribution offense under the provisions of this section, the student shall be expelled, notwithstanding any mitigating circumstances.

## **5. Second Expulsions**

If a student is readmitted under the Restoration Policy and there is a further offense under this section, the student will be expelled and will not be permitted to return to NVCA.

# **BEHAVIORAL PROBATION**

***Middle School and Upper School - Grades 5–12***

This is a period of time given to a student to resolve a discipline problem. It is normally instituted after a suspension, serious infraction of the rules or chronic disobedience. The Administration has the option of not permitting a student to participate in extra-curricular activities during this period. All positions of leadership, trust and responsibility must be relinquished. Counseling is recommended during the probationary period. Reinstatement will require approval from the Headmaster.

A student who is accepted to NVCA and placed on behavioral probation at the beginning of the school year is expected to follow all school rules. A student may be placed on probation for the following reasons:

1. Receiving an unsatisfactory behavior grade on a report card.
2. Serving a suspension.
3. Earning five or more detentions in one quarter.
4. Entering the school with behavioral concerns from the previous year.
5. Continued, deliberate disobedience.
6. A rebellious spirit that is unchanged after counseling and prayer with school personnel.
7. Committing a serious breach of student conduct inside or outside the school that has an adverse affect on the reputation of the school.
8. Failure of the parents to comply with the disciplinary procedures of the school.
9. Chronic disobedience in the classroom.

The period of probation will last one marking period and the student's status will be reviewed when report cards are issued. The following guidelines will apply to students on behavioral probation.

Number of Detentions	Consequence
1	Letter of concern to parent
2	Possible conference with parents
3	Saturday detention is assigned and student is required to attend. Student is fined \$25, and Behavioral Probation may be extended. <b>NOTE:</b> The fine is used to pay the person who supervises the detention.
4	Suspension, probable dismissal

A student may remain on behavioral probation for a maximum of two (2) consecutive quarters. If after the second consecutive quarter the student remains on probation, the student may be dismissed pending a review by the discipline committee.

If a student on probation makes it through the first quarter without serious discipline problems, he/she will be removed from behavioral probation and normal procedures and consequences will apply. The child may be kept on probation for another quarter if some problems occur during the first marking period. Any single, serious offense can lead to automatic expulsion of a child on behavioral probation.

## **Lower School – Grades K-4**

A child, who is accepted to attend NVCA and who is placed on behavioral probation, is expected to follow all school rules. A student may be placed on probation for the following reasons:

1. Receiving a "U" for a behavior grade.
2. Serving a suspension.
3. Entering the school with behavioral concerns from the previous year.

The period of probation will last the equivalent of one marking period and the child's status will be reviewed when report cards are issued.

### **The following guidelines will apply to students on behavioral probation**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Meet with administrator in charge of discipline. Parents will be called. Students in grades 3-6 will write down their misbehavior and how to correct that behavior.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: A conference with the parents and classroom teacher will be scheduled to establish a behavior modification plan.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Parents will be called, followed up with written notice, notifying them that their child will be suspended if another office visit occurs during the quarter.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Indefinite suspension and referral to Headmaster for possible expulsion. If the child is allowed to stay, the parents will have to show proof that they are taking the steps necessary to help their child modify his/her behavior. However, when the child returns to school, there must be evidence of a significant, positive change in behavior. A fifth referral to the office will lead to expulsion.

When a student's negative behavior is a threat to the safety and well being of other students and staff and/or is without remorse, the Headmaster has the option of skipping the first three (3) responses above and moving to the response for the fourth offense, which is indefinite suspension with consideration for expulsion.

## **VI. Dress Code**

**The purpose of the dress code is two-fold:**

1. to promote the qualities of cleanliness, neatness, and modesty;
2. to promote a learning environment with a minimum of distractions.

It is the student's responsibility to wear the appropriate attire and maintain a well groomed personal appearance within these guidelines. Parents are expected to help students comply with the dress code. The Administration will be the final authority in the interpretation of the dress code. Any clothing considered by the Administration to be outside the boundaries of the school dress code will not be permitted. The guidelines that follow are the minimum standard for dress at NVCA.

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES:**

**Shirts/tops-Acceptable:**

- A collared shirt/top is required at all times. It can be a dressy, polo and/or golf style shirt/top with short or long sleeves and must be relaxed fit
- Regular and mock turtleneck shirts are acceptable as collared shirts
- Solid colors, stripes and plaids
- All shirts/tops, regardless of style must be tucked in
- As a minimum, shirts with buttons are to be buttoned up to but not including the top button at the neck
- Manufacturer logos and monograms

**Shirts/tops-Unacceptable:**

- Flannel shirts and the like
- Tight or oversized shirts and tops
- Writing, advertisements, slogans, pictures, and the like
- Patterns and designs other than stripes or plaid
- Except for regular and mock turtlenecks, shirts/tops without collars and /or without buttons

**Pants-Acceptable:**

- Casual pants and dress slacks
- Capri pants for girls
- "Relaxed Fit"
- Color choices are khaki, off white, black, navy, brown, and gray
- Subtle pin stripes with one of the above dominant colors
- Must be worn above the hips
- Pants that have belt loops require a belt
- No longer than the instep

**Pants-unacceptable:**

- Jean/denim material of any color
- Frayed edges, tattered, faded, holes
- Tight or form fitting
- Over-sized, baggy

**Skirts/skorts – Acceptable:**

- Color choices are khaki, off-white, black, navy, brown, gray
- No more than two inches above the knee when kneeling, even with leggings
- Leggings and tights are to be modest and solid color with the same color choices as skirts
- Skirts must be worn above the hips
- Skirts with belt loops require a belt

**Skirts/skorts-Unacceptable:**

- Jean/denim material of any color
- Frayed edges, tattered, faded, holes
- Skirts worn with leggings that are fishnet, bright colors or have holes in the material

**Shorts – Acceptable:**

- May be worn during the months of September, May and June
- Color options are khaki, off white, black, navy, brown, gray, and plaid madras
- Length can be no more than two inches above the knee when kneeling
- Must be worn above the hips
- Shorts with belt loops must have a belt

**Shorts – Unacceptable:**

- Jean/denim material of any color
- Frayed edges, tattered, faded, holes
- Tight or form fitting

**Sweaters and Jackets – Acceptable:**

- With permission, sweaters may be worn over a collared shirt/top on cold days
- Pullovers and zip-up jackets made of fleece or lightweight fabric may be worn over a collared shirt/top on cold days

**Sweaters/Jackets – Unacceptable:**

- Wearing outdoor coats and jackets in school
- Wearing sweatshirts of any type, hooded and non-hooded, in school
- Wearing hooded outerwear of any type in school
- Wearing outerwear over collared shirts made of jean /denim material

**Footwear – Acceptable:**

- Leather shoes, walking shoes and sneakers
- Sneakers are to be low-cut, no higher than the ankle with laces tied
- Dress sandals
- Socks are to be worn at all times

**Footwear – Unacceptable:**

- Military style boots/shoes, work boots/shoes, hiking boots/shoes, and the like
- Except for the above sandal, all other sandal styles and clogs
- Flip flops, regardless of the style and material

**Hair/Makeup/Jewelry:**

- Hair - Acceptable
  - neatly trimmed, well groomed
  - Natural color
  - Boy's hair, when it is naturally groomed, must be above and off the collar and bangs must be above and off the eyebrows.
- Hair - Unacceptable
  - Pink, blue, green, unnatural red, bleached, and the like
  - Faddish haircuts and styles
- Jewelry/Accessories - Acceptable
  - Girls – maximum of two earrings in each ear
  - Boys – no earrings or studs
  - Wallets must be kept in the pockets
- Jewelry/Accessories - Unacceptable
  - Gauges
  - Sunglasses, hats, caps, hoods and the like will NOT be worn inside the school building
  - Studded belts
  - Chains
- Make-up - Acceptable
  - Natural looking

- Make-up - Unacceptable
  - Extremes
  - Visible tattoos and body piercings

**Spirit Day** – Spirit Day/Falcon Day will be earned by students for compliance with the dress code. Frequency is not guaranteed. Jeans may be worn provided the student is wearing Falcon Spirit Wear that falls within the guidelines of modesty and neatness in the dress code. Spirit Wear must be visible and worn all day.

### **Response to Dress Code Violations**

1<sup>ST</sup> Violation in a week: Student receives a warning and loses the opportunity to participate in the next Spirit Day. If the student still dresses down for Spirit Day that student will receive a detention and lose the Spirit Day privilege indefinitely.

2<sup>nd</sup> Violation in a week: Student receives an after-school detention.

Once a student receives three dress code violation referrals, regardless of the time between the violations, they will receive an after-school detention.

Certain dress code violations will require parents to bring a change of clothes to school before the student will be allowed to go to class. This includes, but is not limited to, a shirt/top without a collar, jeans, clothing with holes, immodest clothing, clothes imprinted with inappropriate messages and the like.

## **VII. ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION and ELIGIBILITY**

In order for a student to participate in any sport they must secure and fill out the appropriate permission forms from the office prior to the first practice. The **\$125 per sport participation fee** shall be paid before a uniform is issued to the student athlete.

Permission to participate in the sport must also be approved by the student's physician. Students should use the VHSL Physical Form on the NVCA website, [www.nvchristianacademy.org](http://www.nvchristianacademy.org), also available in the school office.

Parents must agree not to hold the school liable for injuries received in volunteer sports activities. Also, they must be willing to grant permission to the school to provide appropriate medical care to the athlete in case of emergency, including calling 911.

Parents are responsible for having their student athlete picked up promptly after practices and/or games at the designated location. Failure to comply will jeopardize player's eligibility.

### **GUIDELINES FOR SPORTS ELIGIBILITY**

1. Eligibility will be based on a student having a 2.0 GPA or better and no "F's" on their report card at any time.
2. **Mid-term Grade Report:** If a student athlete receives an "F" on their mid-term grade report, while maintaining a 2.0 GPA or better, that student, at the coach's discretion, may practice with the team but that student cannot play in games, dress with the team, sit with the team

on the bench or travel with the team until the "F" grade is remediated to a "C" or better. When the student's GPA is below a 2.0 they also lose the privilege of practicing with their team.

3. **Report Card:** If a student receives an "F" on a report card, even if they have a 2.0 GPA, that student is suspended from their team. They may not practice, play, or travel with their team until the "F" is remediated to a "C" or better. That student will be placed on academic probation and must obtain weekly grade averages, in the course carrying the "F," until the next report card is issued.
4. A student athlete is reviewed for eligibility each time grades are reported.
5. It is a privilege to belong to a Northern Virginia Christian Academy sports team. All athletes are expected to adhere to the code of conduct as prescribed by the Academy Handbook. An administrator may withhold eligibility for any athlete prior to try-outs solely on the basis of repeated poor conduct. Any player who is temporarily suspended from a team for disciplinary reasons or violation of team rules may not practice, play or travel with the team for the period of suspension.
6. Student athletes, if they expect to play, must attend all of their classes on the day of their game. They also are expected to be on time the next day. Exceptions can be approved for excused absences. If there is a week-end game, the student athletes must attend all of their classes on the Friday before the game.
7. Students are to take their books and belongings with them to practice. They will not be allowed to return to their lockers or be in the hallways after 3:30 p.m., or once practice begins.

## **VII. STUDENT DRIVERS**

Driving an automobile to school is a privilege and not a right. Students must drive in a careful and safe manner at all times. Northern Virginia Christian Academy is located in a secluded neighborhood with a speed limit of 25 miles per hour. Students must behave responsibly in accordance with the law and out of respect for the community.

Northern Virginia Christian Academy shall not be responsible for any damage, injury, loss, or expense of any kind, including loss by fire, theft, vandalism, and acts of God. The student and parent hereby agree that the use of the parking lot is at the student's and parents' own risk.

The privilege to drive to school shall be granted so long as the following regulations are met:

- All students must park on the designated school parking lot. Students are prohibited to park on the street near the school. If a student violates this directive, the car will be towed at the owner's expense.
- Before a student is permitted to park on school grounds, he/she must complete a "Permission to Drive Form" signed by the parent or guardian and provide a copy of the student's driver's license. All student cars parked on the school parking lot during the school day must display a "Student-Parking Permit." These forms are available in the school office.
- Drivers must exercise caution at all times and observe the 25 mile per hour speed limit in the surrounding neighborhood, observe the 10 mile per hour speed limit on the NVCA campus, and show courtesy to pedestrians. Violation of these legal requirements will result in immediate loss of driving privileges to school. Further violations will result in suspension or possibly expulsion.
- Student parking is permitted in the parking area facing the entrance of the school

- All vehicles must be parked within the marked spaces at the back of the parking lot.
- Students are not permitted to go to their cars during the school day without permission. Students should remove any items that might be needed during the day before leaving the car each morning.
- Students are not permitted to drive automobiles / vehicles on field trips or other activities during school unless permission is secured in advance from the administration and the parent.
- School officials who have established reasonable suspicion may search a vehicle on campus. The school will try to contact the student/owner prior to the search, if practical to do so. Articles that are found that violate school rules or state and federal law may be used when applying disciplinary action.
- Students arrive and depart from school at the proper time, following attendance and dismissal policies.

## **IX. APENDIX**

### ***Beliefs, Mission, Vision, Objectives***

#### **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The statement of faith adopted by Northern Virginia Christian Academy is limited to primary Christian doctrine, which is considered to be central to all Christian denominations, and which sets Christianity apart from other faiths.

We believe that the God of the Bible is the source of all truth; thus, all genuine intellectual pursuits lead logically to God. The Bible is the infallible Word of God, and as such it, and not man, is the standard of truth. Furthermore, we consider the primary goal of all of life and education to be the glory of God and the revelation of Jesus Christ, the hope of glory.

We are in agreement with the following historic, evangelical, Christian tenets: Salvation comes by grace alone, through faith alone, because of Christ alone, for the glory of God alone. Salvation, the free gift of God, is provided not because of any works of man but because of Christ's finished work of atonement on the cross. We seek to promote unity and charity among those affirming these truths.

When we talk about the essentials of Christianity, we refer to the basic doctrines characterizing our faith and personal relationship with Christ, separating Biblical Christianity from other beliefs. We express these doctrines as follows:

We affirm the existence of a triune God, or one God in three distinct Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This God is self-existent, eternal, unchanging, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, righteous, and loving. God created the universe from nothing, and He is sovereign over His creation.

We believe in the authority of Scripture, affirming the Bible as God's inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word. It is the ultimate source of truth and knowledge about God, as well as the definitive guide for our daily lives.

We believe man is a spiritual and physical being created in God's image. Because of sin, however, man lost his fellowship with God, and apart from salvation in Christ, will suffer God's judgment and eternal condemnation in Hell.

By God's grace, Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, was sent to save us from our bondage to sin. We believe Christ was born of a virgin, died for our sins, physically rose from the dead, and will one day return to judge the living and the dead, and deliver His people. Presently Christ is in Heaven, exalted at the right hand of God. At death the believer's soul passes immediately into the presence of God, and the unbeliever's soul is eternally separated from God unto condemnation.

We believe a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and not man's religion leads to salvation. Our justification includes the forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life because of the exchanged life and Christ's imputed righteousness. Through the indwelling Holy Spirit, we are sanctified by God's grace and called to pursue a life of holiness in Christ.

#### **VISION STATEMENT**

NVCA seeks to train children to look at the world through the lens of God's truth, which is revealed in the Holy Scriptures. By recognizing God as the source of all knowledge, children

develop a proper perspective about themselves, others and the world around them. We integrate biblical principles in every class, subject and discipline, encouraging students to pursue academic excellence for God's glory and their good. We strive to develop young people who demonstrate servant leadership, reflecting the nature, character and attitude of Jesus Christ. Our desire is for all children to realize their full potential in whatever area they are gifted by God. Our goal is to graduate students who will engage and shape their culture according to God's Word, who will embrace their role as God's ambassadors, and who will choose to fulfill God's purposes for their lives.

### **How NVCA will look in the future**

The school's vision is to strengthen and develop the Academy as a distinctive, comprehensive, innovative and Christian K-12 school dedicated to excellence in the preparation of young people for their college entrance, careers and callings in the service of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God.

1. The school shares responsibility with the church and the Christian home in developing the lives of students. The school intends to be a supporter of the Christian home and be a responsive listener to it. The school will also work in a cooperative manner with local churches, respecting various doctrinal differences.
2. The school will select faculty, staff and administrators who possess the highest levels of Godly character and professional preparation.
3. The school will strive to produce, as the Holy Spirit enables, students who choose a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, desire godly character, think and act Biblically, embrace a Biblical World-View and achieve levels of excellence in curricular and extra curricular programs.
4. The school will be focused on providing a strong college preparatory program. Students will be challenged to work to their potential. Therefore, the school curriculum will include AP courses in the core subjects; honors courses for core and elective academic subjects; specialized academic tracks in life science; physical science; social science; literature; foreign languages; technology; engineering; the visual arts and the performing arts; programs for the gifted student; resource rooms and services for students with diagnosed learning disabilities through the Discovery Program.
5. The school is committed to a well-rounded education and will develop and maintain strong programs in art, music, drama and interscholastic athletics. This includes Marching Band, Orchestra, theatrical productions, Young Artist and Young Writer programs, nationally ranked teams, numerous annual academic and mission trips abroad, student government, national honor society, and involvement in the I-20 foreign student program.
6. The school will encourage the development of career stewardship through specific programs and counseling services. The school will provide a guidance staff to assist students with facing day-to-day issues and preparing for college.
7. The school community will be characterized by denomination, racial, and socioeconomic diversity.
8. The school will provide ministries that bring a Christian view of life and service to the non-Christian community. We seek to be an involved participant in the local geographical

and international community. This will be accomplished in part by service projects and short-term mission trips.

9. The school will use its leadership position in the Christian community to support the development of quality Christian school education in the Washington area, the nation and the world. We will seek to be a model in policies, programs, personnel, facilities, organization and strategic planning.
10. The school will keep the cost of Christian education as reasonable as possible so that it will be an option for all Christian families committed to Christian education. This will be achieved through careful stewardship of resources, an effective development effort, and a financial aid program.
11. The school is committed to operating a school that maintains and promotes a Biblical Christian culture.
12. The school will provide facilities that are more than adequate to support the academic, extra-curricular and athletic programs of the school for the long-term.
13. The school will be fully accredited, which will include: Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), Middle States/Southern States Associations of Colleges and Schools, The National Institute for Learning Disabilities, and The Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation (CITA).

## **CORE VALUES**

1. Teach from an integrated biblical world view. All subjects are taught as part of an integrated whole, with Scripture at its center (II Timothy 3:16-17, Colossians 1:15-20).
2. Provide a clear model of the biblical Christian life through the Academy teachers, staff and Board of Directors (Matthew 19:13-15, Mark 12:29-31).
3. Encourage young people to develop their relationships with God the Father through Jesus Christ – to love God with all their hearts, souls and minds (Matthew 22:37-39, II Corinthians 10:5, Romans 12:1-2).
4. Value each student as created by God for a purpose (Psalm 139:13-18).
5. Help each family to remain the primary influence in the student's life. The calendar provides plenty of time for family traditions and activities at holiday times (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Ephesians 6:4, Proverbs 23:24-26).
6. Develop time management, self discipline, and strong work ethics in our students through all of our academic and extra-curricular programs (II Timothy 2:15, Galatians 5:22-23, II Peter 1:5-11).
7. Encourage every student to develop a love for learning and the desire to reach his or her academic potential.
8. Provide an orderly atmosphere conducive to attaining these goals.

*“Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” (Colossians 3:17)*

## School Goals

**To be Christ-Centered** at all levels, programs, and teaching, Northern Virginia Christian Academy seeks to do the following:

**A. Teach all subjects as parts of an integrated whole with the Scriptures at the center.  
(2 Timothy 3:16-17; Colossians 1:15-20).**

In order to be Christ-centered, Christian education must be more than a baptized secularism. It is not enough to take the curricula of the government schools, add prayer and a Bible class, and claim the result is somehow Christian.

Secular education places man at the center of all things. Christian education places God at the center. There is no such thing as neutrality in education. Every fact, every truth is understood in the light of a certain world view. This means that history, science, literature, art, music, mathematics, etc., must all be taught in the light of God's existence and His revelation of His Son, Jesus Christ. Because the Scriptures occupy a crucial role in teaching us about this revelation, they must also occupy a critical role in Christian education.

Because all truth comes from God, the universe is coherent. Without God, particulars have no relation to other particulars. Having a Christian world view, based on the Scriptures, we are able to give the students a unified education. That unity is only possible because of the centrality of the Scriptures in the educational process. Without that centrality, true education will wither and die. With it, all subjects will be understood, and more importantly, they will be understood as parts of an integrated whole.

**B. Provide a clear model of the biblical Christian life through our staff and board.  
(Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 5:13-16).**

Education occurs when information is transferred from one individual to another. If the subject matter is in line with the Scriptures, but the life of the teachers is not, a conflict is created in the mind of the student. This same conflict can be created in the minds of the students and teachers if school leaders are living in a manner inconsistent with the Bible.

When hypocrisy is tolerated, it leads to greater problems. At best, the integrated Christian world view becomes a dead orthodoxy—true words, but only words. At worst, anti-Christian living leads to anti-Christian teaching. The hypocrisy is removed by making the instruction as false as the life.

As Christian educators, we recognize that hypocrisy on our part will place a stumbling block in the path of the students. The flow of information from teacher to student will be seriously hindered. Because we are in the business of transmitting a Christian worldview, we must also be in the business of living exemplary Christian lives.

**C. Encourage every child to begin and develop his relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ.  
(Matthew 28:18-20; Matthew 19:13-15).**

We have the responsibility to plant and water. We also have the responsibility to recognize that growth comes from God. God initiates growth in the life of the individual when he is born again. From that time on, the nourishment of instruction results in genuine growth as the Christian puts what he learns into practice.

It is our goal to bring every child who does not have a relationship with the Father into such a

relationship through Christ. Then, and only then, will the rest of the education we offer be fully understandable. If the child already knows the Lord, it is our goal to encourage him to develop that relationship. As he grows, the education he is receiving will further that growth.

#### **D. Emphasize solid teaching in all subjects**

The structure of our curriculum is traditional with a strong emphasis on the “basics.” We understand the “basics” to be subjects such as mathematics, science, history, and language studies. Not only are these subjects covered, they are covered in a particular way. For example, the students will not only read their textbooks, they will read also from primary sources.

In English, a singular noun does not take a plural verb. In logic, A does not equal ~A. In history, time is linear not cyclic. Each subject has its own fundamentals which we require the student to learn. This enables the student to learn the subject from the inside out.

Each subject refers to the ordered relationship of that subject’s particulars. What is the relationship between the Reformation and the colonization of America? What is the relationship between the subject and object of a sentence? As the students learn the underlying rules or principles of a subject along with how the particulars of that subject relate to each other they are learning to *think*. They are not simply memorizing fragmented pieces of knowledge.

We want our students to be able to express clearly everything they learn. An essay in history must be written as clearly as if it were an English paper. An oral presentation in science should be as coherent as possible. It is not enough that the ‘history’ or ‘science’ is correct. This must also be expressed well.

#### **E. Encourage every student to develop a love for learning and live up to his academic potential.**

This goal is impossible to realize unless the teachers have a real love for the subject. If the teacher is not excited about having this knowledge, then why should the student be excited about acquiring it? Necessity may induce the student to learn the material; it will not induce the student to love it. Students that do not develop a love for their course material will be content with a minimum standard of learning. The origin of this travesty of education is a teacher who also is content with a similar minimum standard.

Teachers who are excited about the subjects they teach will be extremely sensitive to those students who are bored and will take steps to encourage those students to become more involved and enthusiastically embrace the course material.

#### **F. Provide an orderly atmosphere conducive to the attainment of the above goals.**

In addition to being well prepared and engaging their students, there is another important factor in maintaining an orderly atmosphere in the classroom and that is by means of consistent and loving discipline. It is possible for discipline to be strict without ceasing to be fair or loving. Indeed, when there is a lapse in this level of discipline, consistency and love are usually the first casualties. It is not possible to consistently love or instruct a child in the midst of chaos.

NVCA personnel understand that some children who are discipline problems have deep-seated difficulties which cannot be solved by means of discipline at school. Our primary obligation is to the majority of students who require an orderly atmosphere in which to learn. We will not tolerate the ongoing presence of disruptive students. They must either submit to the standards of the school, or they will be subject to expulsion.

## Conclusion

Any one of the above goals taken in isolation would be an inadequate basis for education. Taken together, we believe they establish a remarkably firm foundation and a campus environment that supports NVCA in fulfilling its mission.

## STUDENT OUTCOMES

The following outcomes have been established for students who attend and will graduate from NVCA. They define and clarify the school's mission statement and provide a basis for evaluating how well the school is doing in fulfilling its mission.

### **In order to successfully fulfill its mission, NVCA seeks to graduate students who:**

1. Are well prepared in all academic disciplines, and are skilled in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking.
2. Are proficient in mathematics and science.
3. Have knowledge and understanding of people, events, and movements in history and the cultures of other people and places.
4. Appreciate literature and the arts and understand how they express and shape their beliefs and values.
5. Have a critical appreciation of languages and cultures of other peoples, dispelling prejudice, promoting inter-ethnic harmony, encouraging Biblical hospitality for the "alien" (stranger).
6. Personally respond to carry out the Great Commission locally and around the world in a culturally sensitive manner.
7. Know how to utilize resources, including technology, to find, analyze, and evaluate information.
8. Are committed to life-long learning.
9. Have the skills to question, to solve problems, and to make wise decisions.
10. Understand the worth of all humanity as created in the image of God.
11. Can articulate and defend their Christian worldview while having a basic understanding of opposing worldviews.
12. Understand and commit to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
13. Know, understand, and apply God's word in daily life.
14. Possess apologetic skills to defend their faith.
15. Pursue the fruits of the Spirit in their everyday lives.
16. Treat their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit.
17. Are actively involved in a church community, serving God and others.
18. Understand, value, and engage in appropriate social (community) and civic (political) activities.
19. Embrace and practice justice, mercy, and peacemaking in family and society.
20. Value intellectual inquiry and are engaged in the marketplace of ideas (open and honest exchange of ideas).
21. Respect and relate appropriately with integrity to the people with whom they work, live, and play.
22. Have an appreciation for the natural environment and practice responsible stewardship of God's creation.
23. Are prepared to practice the principles of healthy, moral family living.
24. Are good stewards of their finances, time (including discretionary time) and all other resources.
25. Understand that work has dignity as an expression of the nature of God.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Summary of "Schools That Are As Christian As Possible"  
by Peter K. Haile

The "Christianness" of an institution can be measured by the degree of Christian thinking and behavior it exhibits from day-to-day. The only way we can talk about a school, or any other institution, being Christian or non-Christian, is in comparative terms, in terms of it being "more Christian" or "less Christian" in its thinking and behavior.

"Schools that are as Christian as possible" share similar characteristics. Some of them are noted below:

1. Strong faith in the hearts of the teachers who believe in God as a real Person who is powerful, active, and able to change human hearts. They must believe in Him deeply enough to leave issues in His hands. When we try to cajole or coerce children into becoming Christians, we show that we don't really believe in God and in the reality of His persuasive Spirit.
2. Biblical teaching that is committed to studying the whole Bible. It is Bible teaching that concentrates on getting the student to read the Bible thoughtfully, intelligently, and analytically. Students will be encouraged to read it, reread it and then write about it. Staff and students will honor the intrinsic power and integrity of God's Word and demonstrate belief in the fact that it is the Word of the Living God. Discussions will arise spontaneously from the reading of the text. Each year some students will quietly come to know and love Jesus Christ and their behavior will change.
3. Besides calling for strong day-to-day faith on the part of the teachers, Christian thinking and behavior in a school also demands the hourly demonstration of Christian love. This means:
  - a. The full acceptance of each student, however disrespectful, deceptive, unkempt, thoughtless, irresponsible, or unattractive he/she may be, without condoning inappropriate behavior.
  - b. True Christian love also means that we don't threaten students. Doing so implies that love is conditional, and Christian love never is. If a student is told, "You do this or else..." that student may assume that if it is not done we will change our attitude towards him/her. Discipline is to be enforced and punishment administered by clarifying, beforehand, what the rules are and what will be done if they are broken. It is imperative that when the occasion arises, to simply and calmly follow through on what has been said.
  - c. Christian love also listens. It not only listens, but it really hears. Some students cannot talk to the significant adults in their lives because these adults do not listen to them. As soon as they raise an issue, it is met with a value judgment, shutting off further discussion. This is not God's way. His ear is always open to what we have to say, however inane and unreasonable it may be. To be Christian, we are to be like God in this matter.
4. Christian thinking and behavior will always be imbued with hope. When talk about how bad everything is today: the economy, the world, our colleagues, our facilities, and of course, some of our students, how unlike Christ are we being? Unless I talk in terms of

hope and of belief in a God who loves to redeem what's gone wrong, and to turn evil into good, then I'm not talking in a way that honors God.

5. Christian thinking and behavior is always concerned with excellence. God sees us as whole people when we study, play games, do chores, spend money, practice the piano, join in fellowship, or study the Bible. All must be done unto Him and for His glory. His standards are high, but His grace is sufficient.
7. We need to be a school:
  - a. Where there is no gossip. The Biblical teaching against tale-bearing must not be forgotten or ignored even when we are informally gathered in small groups.
  - b. Where there is the kind of love that reproves and rebukes gently, but firmly. God doesn't rebuke us without giving us a clear way of turning around and making things right again. A school that is truly Christian does this.
  - c. Where young people are supported in the awesome responsibility of making choices for themselves.

## **CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

**I Corinthians 8:6 - But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.**

**Colossians 1:16-17 - For by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him.**

Northern Virginia Christian Academy seeks to equip the next generation of adults with an understanding of their world using teaching methods based on a Christ-centered world view. All instruction will be consistent with the knowledge that God is the creator and sustainer of life, is the source of all truth, and that He demonstrates His purpose and His influence in all areas of study. Understanding God's purposes and His design for creation leads students to know God's character and offers a deeper relationship with Him.

The educational process is dependent on the institution's philosophy of education. A Christian philosophy of education provides NVCA a Biblical viewpoint for teaching all subject areas and establishing appropriate behaviors and attitudes in school activities. NVCA believes that the following concepts are foundational to a Christian philosophy of education.

1. God is the creator and sustainer of all things.
2. God is truth and the source of all truth.
3. God maintains control over the universe.
4. True meaning and value can be determined only in the light of God's person, purpose and work.
5. Since all truth comes from God the Father, His son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit,

- they must be at the center of all education.
6. God has given to parents the responsibility for educating their children and the Christian school continues and augments the training begun in the Christian home. The family, the Church and the Christian school are to be complementary in educating the student for a life of fellowship with God and service to man.
  7. A Christian climate of love, understanding and respect between student and teacher will develop a student's self-esteem through an appreciation of their infinite value to God.
  8. Students should be provided an educational program that emphasizes basic academic skills and an appreciation of the arts to enhance the development of God-given abilities.
  9. Students learn best by active participation in the learning process.
  10. Moral standards and a value system based on the Bible best prepare a student for being a responsible citizen.