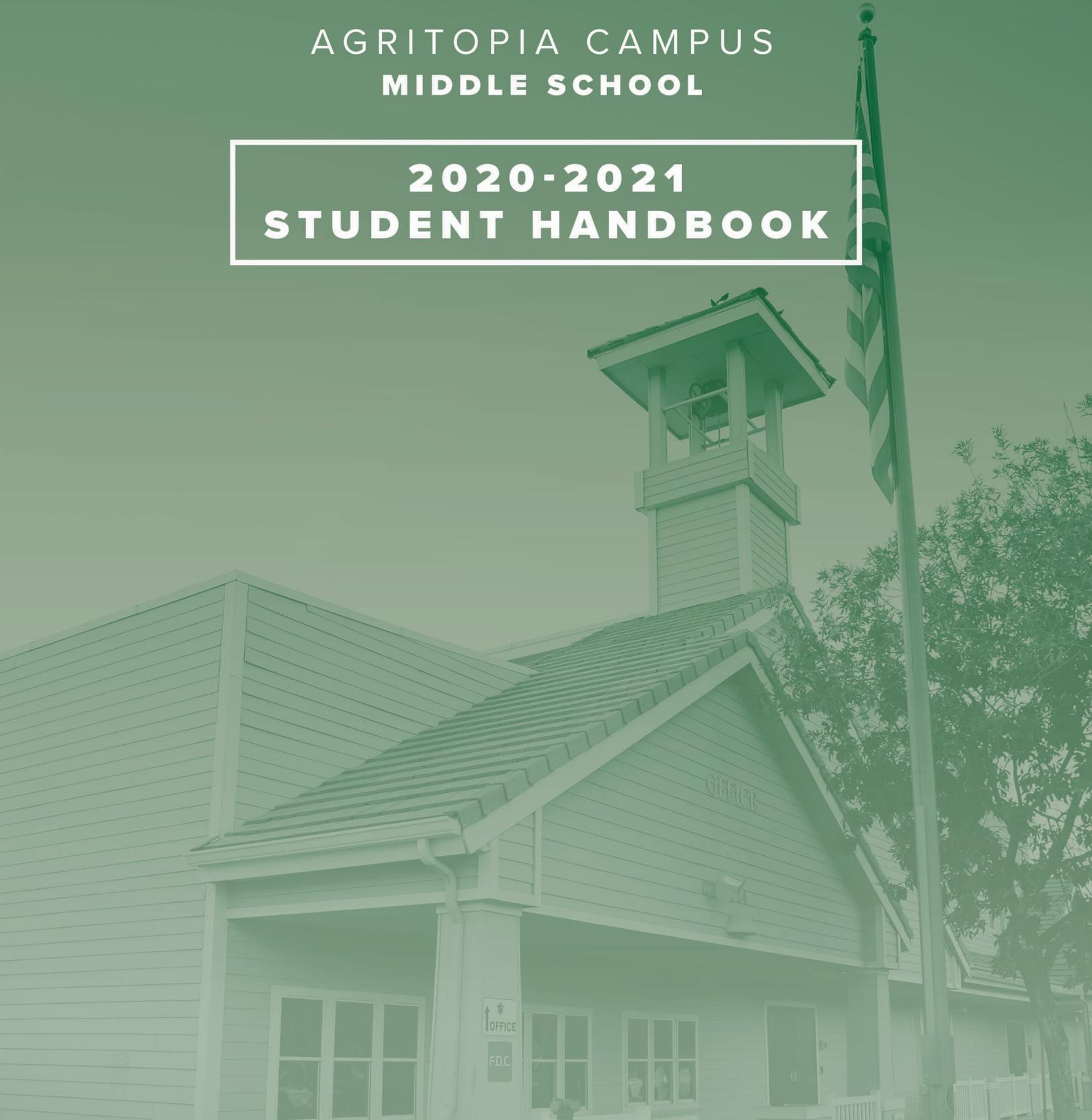




# GILBERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

AGRITOPIA CAMPUS  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

**2020-2021  
STUDENT HANDBOOK**



## Letter from Our Principals

Dear GCS Agritopia Families,

Welcome to our amazing and unique PK-8 campus! What a gift to be next to a beautiful organic farm in a community designed for building closer relationships with neighbors. It is an ideal place to continually be reminded of the importance of faithfully tending the soil and caring for the precious plants so that a fruitful harvest results.

At Gilbert Christian Schools, our committed faculty and staff love Jesus Christ and desire to make His gospel and His glory known to the next generation. Daily tending the soil of growing hearts, minds, and souls, we prayerfully seek to train students to live lives worthy of the Lord as they develop academically, physically, and spiritually during their time here.

Please take the time to review the handbook as a family to be prepared for the upcoming school year. All of the information in our handbooks is updated annually to help our school community grow in excellence while upholding high GCS standards of honor and love towards one another. Working together, we keep our campus a place where optimal learning thrives within a loving, Christ-centered community.

Our spiritual theme this year is Love God. Love People. --which comes from Matthew 22:36-40. We will spend this year focused on learning what it means to obey the commandments Jesus considered the greatest of all: To love God with our heart, soul, and mind and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Will you join us in praying this year that our students will deeply understand this truth in a life-altering way?

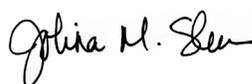
Parents, with your valued partnership, we will continue to develop the very real gifts and talents of all of the students at Gilbert Christian Schools. Together, we will make this the best year yet for you and your child as we lift up the name of Christ each and every day.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Grateful to serve you,



Michele Cunningham  
PK-8 Principal



Jolina Shue  
PK-8 Vice Principal

**“Love the Lord your God. Love your neighbor as yourself.”  
Matthew 22:36-40**



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Updated July 20, 2020



# Gilbert Christian Middle School

## Introduction

Gilbert Christian Schools (GCS) was founded in 1996 as Surrey Garden Christian School and is a private, non-profit, non-denominational Christian school. GCS, not affiliated with any particular church, is operated by administration officials who are under the authority and direction of a Board of Directors. Members of the GCS Board come from a variety of professional backgrounds and are leaders in the evangelical community. Parents and students of GCS attend a variety of different Christian churches and have diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds. While most GCS families are residents of the East Valley, we are also proud to host many international students.

## Mission Statement

Partner with parents to prepare the next generation to impact the world for Christ.

*“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.” Psalm 145:3-4*

## Core Values

**Know** that God has you here to make an impact.

**Nurture** healthy, God-honoring relationships.

**Inspire** a passion for learning.

**Grow** your skills to be a more effective teacher.

**Help** every student reach their academic potential.

**Train** students to use their God-given gifts and talents.

**Show** the love of God to every student, every day.

## Accreditations and Memberships

GCS is accredited by and is a member of Cognia (formerly AdvancED), Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), and a candidate school with the Council on Educational Standards & Accountability (CESA). GCS also is a member of the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) and other organizations that help to accomplish the mission of the school.



# **Statement of Faith**

## **The Scriptures**

We believe the Scriptures, both the Old and the New Testaments, to be the verbally inspired Word of God, written by men in God's control, inerrant and infallible in the original manuscripts, and the final authority in faith and life. We accept the grammatical-historical system of interpretation of the Scriptures and accept the historical record of the Bible as accurate.

## **The Godhead**

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are identical in essence, equal in power and glory, and possess precisely the same attributes and perfection.

## **The Person and Work of Christ**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God; that He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, in order that He might redeem sinful man. He accomplished this redemption by voluntarily giving Himself as a sinless substitutionary sacrifice on the cross, thereby satisfying God's righteous judgment against the sin of the elect. He gave proof that He accomplished that redemption by His bodily resurrection from the grave. He then ascended to the right hand of His Father where He intercedes on behalf of His people.

## **The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Divine Person who convicts the world of sin; that He alone brings new life to those who are spiritually dead; that He places all believers into the one true church, which is the Body of Christ and that He indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption and bestows spiritual gifts upon them.

## **The Condition of Man**

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, in innocence and without sin. But in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited the guilt of his sin, a sinful nature, becoming spiritually dead and alienated from God so that man is a sinner both by nature and by choice. Man, of himself, is incapable of remedying his lost and depraved condition.



## **Salvation**

We believe that salvation is the gift of God's grace given to all whom God has elected to salvation. It includes all that God does in saving the elect from the penalty, power, and presence of sin and in restoring them to a right relationship with God. As such, it is solely the work of God from initiation to completion. The regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is the cause, not the result, of the believer's saving faith. It cannot be gained by good works, but is a free gift for all who put their trust in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. All who trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are forgiven and saved from their sins and made righteous before God and are born into the family of God. God's purpose for saving His elect is so that they bring glory to Him by their lives.

## **Security, Assurance, and Responsibility**

We believe that all saved, those in whom God has accomplished His transforming work of grace, are kept by His power and thus secure in Christ forever. This assurance, however, is not the occasion for sin, for God, in holiness, cannot tolerate persistent sin in His children, and in infinite love, He corrects them. True faith in Christ is expressed by a fruitful, God-pleasing life that endures until death.

## **Sanctification**

We believe that God, in the Scriptures, has given us everything pertaining to life and godliness. This includes salvation from the penalty of sin and, just as surely the provision of sanctification (separation) from sin. Sanctification from sin affects both the positional and practical aspects. Positional sanctification is a result of the continuing work of the Spirit using the Word of God to provide nourishment for growth into maturity in Christ. While the process of practical sanctification is assured by the Word and the Spirit, it is yet imperfect in this life. There is some element of corruption in every part of the fallen nature that is the source for the war between the flesh and the Spirit. Spiritual growth occurs as believers feed on the Word and are in fellowship with other believers for encouragement and service.

## **Ordinances**

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ instituted two ordinances to be observed by all believers as a matter of obedience, not as a condition for salvation: Water Baptism (subsequent to the believer's profession of faith) and the Lord's Supper.



## **The Eternal State**

We believe that at death the souls of those who have trusted Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and remain there in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body of Christ's coming for the Church when the soul and the body will be reunited. We then shall be with Him forever in glory. We also believe that at death the souls of unbelievers remain in conscious misery until the final judgment when the soul and body will be reunited and cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be separated from God forever in conscious punishment.

## **Eschatology**

We believe, according to His promise, that Jesus will physically return for His people. This truth has been revealed to provide the believer comfort and encouragement in his life.



# Position on Critical Issues

Gilbert Christian Middle School (GCMS) is a biblically-based school, holding to the biblical standards of morality. As such we will abide by those moral standards regardless of current social norms. We will continue to strive to communicate this to families and will expect that families who are part of GCMS will support the school and its teaching of these biblically-based beliefs.

## Biblical Authority

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. For purposes of school doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our school board is the school's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application. Parents and students undermining the statement of faith may be asked to leave GCS.

## Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18, 7:2-5; Heb 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of GCS as a local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Gilbert Christian community, it is imperative that all persons employed by GCS in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of GCS.



# Campus Hours

The Agritopia campus day begins at 7:50 a.m. and ends at 3:20 p.m. Campus gates open at 7:30 a.m. and will remain open until 4:00 p.m.

Office Phone (480) 279-1366

[office@gcsaz.org](mailto:office@gcsaz.org)

[athena.scheina@gcsaz.org](mailto:athena.scheina@gcsaz.org)

If a student is going to be absent or late for school, the parents or guardians must email or call or email campus office by 7:45 a.m.

Please note there is no supervision before and after campus hours.

## Driveline

Driveline is the process utilized for a safe and efficient student dismissal. At the beginning of each school year, families are assigned a unique driveline number. Each family will receive two driveline tags, a map, and a pick-up time slot. Contact your campus office for additional information.

## Parent Deliveries

Deliveries by parents are welcome any time during school hours. Students will be notified before the end-of-period bell rings to pick up their delivery, but parents may not deliver items to classrooms.



# Absence and Tardy Policy

## Attendance

School attendance is very important. Missing direct instruction puts the student at a disadvantage. The primary responsibility for school attendance rests with students and their parents. It is important that parents teach their students the value and importance of regular and on-time attendance. The school's responsibility is to join with parents in teaching students the value and importance of regular attendance. Through these combined efforts we hope we can instill lifelong constructive attendance habits and attitudes that carry over to college and the workplace.

## Absences

Parents must notify the office in the morning to excuse students for sickness or doctor appointments.

If a student must leave campus for any reason during school hours, the student must check out at the office. Upon returning to school, the student must check back in at the office. Students are allowed to leave the campus only with parent or administrator permission.

Any period a student is not in class shall constitute an absence, except for school-related activities, such as field trips, performances, school-sponsored retreats, missions, service projects, athletic contests, etc. Teachers will keep a record of all excused and unexcused absences.

## Excused Absences

Absences for the following reasons will be excused:

- Personal illness
- Family emergencies
- Appearances in court when required by law
- Religious observances
- Doctor or dental appointments

In order for an absence to be excused, the parents must contact the school office with the following information: date, name of student, reason for absence, and the parent or guardian's name and contact phone number. If the absence has not been communicated with the office, it will be counted as unexcused.

Parents or documented and approved emergency contacts may pick up students who need to leave school early for medical, personal, or other legitimate reasons.



In general, students will have one day for each day missed to make up classwork and other assignments missed due to excused absences.

## **Unexcused Absences**

- Absences for reasons not listed in the excused absence section are unexcused.
- Students returning to school without a valid excuse from a parent will have the absence recorded as unexcused.

## **Parent Request for Student Absence**

If a middle school student is going to miss more than two consecutive school days for a reason other than illness, parents must contact the vice principal at least one week prior to the planned absence date. The request will be reviewed by the administration, and each teacher will be notified, so the necessary assignments can be prepared and given to the student. Parents are urged to schedule such parent requested absences around the school calendar as attendance/participation in classroom learning cannot be duplicated. As with other excused absences, students will have one day for each day missed to make up classwork and other assignments missed and arrange with the teacher to make-up missed quizzes and tests within the allotted make-up days.

## **Excessive Absences**

Classroom lectures, discussion, and interaction are important to the learning process. Therefore, a student must attend classes on a regular basis. A parent conference or phone call will be required when a student has been absent ten or more days from any one semester class. This includes excused or unexcused absences. Previously communicated medical circumstances do not require a conference.

Students arriving more than 20 minutes late to any class will be marked absent for that class. It is the student's responsibility to clear this absence by providing a written note from their parent or teacher with explanation of their late arrival. Classroom participation is a significant part of a student's grade. For this reason, a student missing 10 or more days in any one semester is at great risk of a lower grade or not passing the course. Additionally, students with chronic and excessive absences and/or tardies may be dismissed from GCMS.

## **Tardy to School**

All students who are tardy to school must report to the school office for an admit slip. In order for the tardy to be excused, the student must have a written note from a parent or guardian, or verbal statement giving the reason for the tardy by a parent or guardian at the time of arrival. Any student arriving late to school must check in at the office before going to class.



## Tardy to Class

- Any student entering the classroom after the bell has rung and who does not have an excuse from a faculty member or the administration will be considered tardy.
- Students will receive a one point Knights' Honor deduction for unexcused tardies between classes. Excessive tardies may be subject to further point deductions.

FACTS keeps a record of all absences and tardies and will send out notifications.



# Community Life

## Bible

The overall philosophy of our Bible program at Gilbert Christian Middle School is to "present every man [and woman] mature in Christ" (Col 1:28) through the knowledge, wisdom, and practice of the Scriptures.

In 6th grade, students learn the core doctrines of the Christian faith by investigating key questions.

In 7th grade students explore the Old Testament as pointing toward Jesus Christ. While, in 8th grade students will cover the New Testament as the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

## Chapels

The goal of Gilbert Christian Middle School's chapel is to help students understand the character and attributes of God, and the plan He has for their lives. In Ephesians 3:16-19, the apostle Paul prays that believers would "be strengthened with power in the inner man," that they may be "rooted and grounded in love", and that they may be able to "know the love of God which surpasses knowledge, in order to be filled up to all the fullness of God". From an individual standpoint, chapel is used for personal sanctification; from a corporate standpoint, chapel is used to draw the school into unity as we seek the presence of the Lord while addressing relevant issues.

## Community Service

Community service is a natural component of a Christian school's co-curricular and extracurricular program. Each student will participate in S.A.L.T (Service and Learning Together) days. This program provides opportunity for middle school students to: serve the campus, serve the community, and serve the church.

## Discipleship Groups

Students are placed each year in a small group with a leader and peers. Small groups allow students to investigate the Bible, their faith, and their daily struggles.

## Morning Break

GCMS students have a morning break. Students may bring their own snack or purchase one from the Snack Shack run by the student council.



## **Heart Start**

Every morning, middle school students gather in the courtyard for a time of prayer and daily encouragement. The teachers and staff share scripture and speak life into the students, given them tangible ways to live out the truth.

## **Omega-Hour**

Omega Hour is a protected block following 7th period. This is a time for students to attend yearbook, student council, study hall, or receive additional help from teachers. Students will be allowed to ask for a pass during normal class periods to move from their assigned Omega Hour class to another teacher where they need assistance.

## **Signature Trips**

GCMS students go on annual signature field trips to enrich their educational experience and build relationships. Field trips will be announced during the school year with all relevant details.

## **Student-Teacher-Parent Communication**

GCMS is committed to God-honoring and timely communication. Students need to communicate directly with their teacher (in person or email) if struggling or needing additional help in classes. If a student is still struggling, parents may contact the teacher directly, either in person or by email.

Parents should not come to an administrator with a problem unless it cannot be resolved directly with the teacher. All communication should follow the Matthew 18 principle, addressing the involved party directly before going to someone else for help.



# Grading Guidelines

## Grading System

The GCMS curriculum is designed for college-prep requirements and academic rigor. Grades are calibrated to reflect skill, achievement, and effort relative to competitive standards and distinguish peer accomplishment. Grades must be given with academic integrity according to published criteria approved by the Administration. Grade point values and the percentages used to determine each grade are listed below.

Courses which cannot establish differentiable letter grades will issue “Pass” or “Fail” designations. These are not calculated in the GPA.

High school classes taken during middle school will appear on a student’s high school transcript and count towards their high school GPA, except when calculating Valedictorian and Salutatorian rankings.

The 6th grade semester grades are calculated with the average of the two consecutive quarters. The 7th & 8th grade semester grades are calculated as cumulative between the two consecutive quarters and are not averaged. Grades are calculated using the FACTS system, based on the categories and requirements in the teacher’s syllabus. Finals will be counted outside of normal grades for a maximum of 15% of the semester grade for 6th. GCMS grading scale is listed below and applies to all classes. Rounding up of grades is up to the teacher’s discretion and the policies in his/her syllabus.

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value
90-100	A	4.0
80-89	B	3.0
70-79	C	2.0
60-69	D	1.0
0-59	F	0.0

## Grade Reports & Transcripts

GCS reports to the parents and students through FACTS with weekly progress reports. Report cards are issued at the end of every quarter. Letter grades are earned on all courses at those times. Throughout each semester students are monitored weekly by their teachers. Parents are encouraged to contact the student’s teachers with any questions.

Parents and students are expected to meet with the teachers at conferences held following the quarterly to provide communication between parents, students, and teachers.



## **Academic and Behavioral Probation**

Students are placed on probation to allow formal monitoring of their progress either academically or behaviorally.

### **Academic Probation**

The student who earns a grade of 69% or below (D or F) at quarter or at the end of a semester will be put on an academic probation contract. The teacher and the administrator will meet with the student and parents to establish a plan of action for the student to bring his or her grade up to a C. If this plan is not fulfilled and the student earns a D or F for the semester, the student will be required to retake the semester class during summer school. The student must earn a C or better to demonstrate readiness to continue at GCS. Failing to bring the grade to a C or better during summer school may result in the student not being able to reenroll at GCS for the following school year.

### **Behavioral Probation**

Probation is a disciplinary response to a student's misconduct and may involve a written behavior contract. During the probationary period, decided by the vice principal, the student may be prohibited from participating in all extracurricular activities and from serving in all school-related positions to which he/she has been elected or appointed. Fulfillment of the behavior contract will be required to remain enrolled.

### **Semester Finals**

Students who are absent for semester finals will be required to make up their finals when they return to school. Grades will be filed as incomplete until the family makes arrangements with the school to retake their semester finals. Our school policy is not to conduct early finals to maintain exam integrity. Contact the administrator for extenuating circumstances.

### **G.E.A.R. Program**

Students enrolled in our GEAR program receive instruction in classes where curriculum is modified and accommodations made to meet the learning needs of the student. Report card grading will indicate these subjects.



## **Academic Honors**

### **Principal List**

Students who earn all A's for the semester.

### **Honor Roll**

Students who earn A's and B's for the semester.

## **Standardized Testing**

GCMS assesses 6th through 8th students annually to help determine his/her progress towards college readiness using the CTP5 summative assessment. This will be used to determine if a student is making adequate progress and if he/she is on track to perform well in college courses and the ACT/SAT college entrance exams.

## **Homework Assignment Policy**

GCMS defines homework as unfinished classwork from the school day and quiz/test preparation. The amount of evening study is greatly affected by effective time management during the school day. The nightly minimum homework standard for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade is 10 minutes multiplied by the grade level. Although homework assignments are left up to the discretion of each teacher, some courses may require more homework than others, and all students are expected to have assignments completed on the date due. Teachers are responsible for communicating with students the expectations for each homework assignment and for returning corrected homework assignments in a timely manner. Our school policy is not to accept late work, however, teachers can evaluate any special circumstances that may result in partial credit for late work.

Parents are responsible for supporting their child with their homework by providing a time and place that encourages work to be completed. Parents should also be careful to monitor other activities that may conflict with time needed for quality homework and study.

For pre-arranged absences such as athletics trips, concerts, medical/dental appointments, etc., it is the student's responsibility to obtain all assignments prior to the absence, and all work must be turned in by the normal assignment day unless otherwise coordinated with the teacher. When a student misses class due to an excused absence, he/she has one day to make up the missed work for each day absent.



## **FACTS, Google Classroom & Email**

GCMS provides parents and students the ability to electronically monitor students' grades, coursework, and progress. Through the GCS Parents Web and FACTS app, parents and students can check grades from home and see missing assignments.

### **Google Classroom**

The online learning platform that teachers at GCS utilize to post work, resources, and assignments. This allows students to access work they began at school, to work on missed assignments due to absences, and submit work remotely.

### **FACTS**

This is Gilbert Christian Schools' learning management system that allows parents and students to check grades, missing assignments, and communicate with other parents via the school directory. Students and parents will receive their logins for FACTS, Google Classroom, and their student email once they are enrolled and can contact the school at any time with questions about access and resources of FACTS.

### **Activities & Fundraising**

In order for a school club, organization, or group to participate in a fundraiser, it must first be approved by the K8 Principal. Fundraising for organizations not associated with GCS are not permitted. Students are not permitted to sell any items on campus unless for an approved GCS fundraiser.

## **Cell Phones, Computers, and Electronic Devices**

- Any electronic items brought to school are at the students' own risk.
- Once a student enters campus, cell phone use is not allowed. All phones must be kept off (not on silent or vibrate) and kept in the student's backpack or locker during the day. Students are not permitted to use their cell phones while in the restroom, locker room, or during break time.
- Any visible cell phone is subject to confiscation. In case of an emergency, or if a student feels ill, students must go to the office to place a telephone call. Parents should not contact children via cell phone during school hours, but call the office, who will then notify the student. Cell phone violations will be subject to Knights' Honor point deductions as well as the consequences listed below.
  - First Offense – a middle school student who uses a cell phone, has it on their person, or has it ring on campus in their backpack during school hours will have it confiscated and held for that day in the office, and their parents will be called.

- Second Offense – will result in the student being required to drop off his/her phone in the office upon arrival at school for two weeks, and then pick it up each day after school.
- Repeated Offenses – repeated offenses may extend the check-in/check-out of a student's phone up to a full school year at the administration's discretion.
- If students need to contact parents after school, students must walk outside the campus gates to use their cell phone.
- Students are not allowed to videotape or audio record during class time without teacher permission. Any student caught recording will have consequences as outlined under Major Conduct Violations. Administration and/or teachers are not allowed to listen to any student's audio recordings and/or watch student video recordings.
- Wrist watches (Apple/Smart Watches) with phone or cell capabilities fall under the same rules as cell phones and may not be worn in middle school, but must be placed in a backpack or locker.
- Music devices including earbuds and headphones diminish the sense of community at GCMS and may not be used during campus hours. Exceptions will be made for student spectators watching sports events after school.

## Computers or Tablets in Classroom

Students should not bring or use their own PC's, laptops, or tablet computers to school as they will be unable to connect to the school wireless internet. These items should be left at home.

## Student Acceptable Use

GCMS provides internet access for student use with these provisions:

- Internet use is for educational purposes only.
- Students are expected to access only their GCMS account.
- The system has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The school has a right to place restrictions on the material accessed or posted through the system. Students are expected to follow the rules and regulations in this handbook.
- Students are expected to respect the integrity of school networks by honoring privileges, and abstaining from the unauthorized review, duplication, dissemination, removal, damage, or alteration of files, passwords, computer systems, or programs.

## Student Unacceptable Use

- Students may not use each other's accounts. Accessing another person's account will be considered either theft or cheating, depending on how access of the academic materials was obtained.
- Providing personal information about yourself or others. Personal information is your address, phone number, cell phone number, etc.
- Accessing or exchanging obscene or graphic material.
- Vandalism or hacking of school computer systems will result in discipline up to and including expulsion from school. Vandalism is defined by any malicious attempt to alter, harm, or destroy the data of another user. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of a virus and physical damage of a computer. Hacking includes, but is not limited to, trying to gain unauthorized access to files or systems.
- Any attempt to get beyond your authorized access.
- Sharing your password.
- Downloading files without teacher authorization.
- Use of obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language is not allowed at any time.
- Harassment of another person is not allowed. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If someone requests that you stop sending messages, you must stop.
- Knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
- Chain letters and spamming is not allowed.
- Re-posting a message that was sent to you privately cannot be done without permission from the person who originally sent the message.
- Pictures and videos may not be taken in restrooms or locker rooms for any reason.
- Audio recordings, pictures, and videos may not be taken during class time without the permission of the teacher.
- Students may not access websites and content without permission.
- Students may not use any Google platform (Docs, Presentations, etc.) for personal use; as an instant messaging forum by sharing documents, "chatting" via a live document, and creating personal documents and slideshows at school.

## Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

Students are expected to abide by copyright laws and properly cite the intellectual property created by others. Plagiarism is expressly forbidden at GCMS and will result in disciplinary action. Works that are found on the internet cannot be plagiarized.

Plagiarism is taking ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours. Copyright infringement occurs when a copyrighted work is inappropriately reproduced. All expressed requirements must be followed. Copyright law is confusing; therefore, ask a teacher if you are in doubt.

## Student's Personal Responsibility

- One must make a conscious effort to be a good testimony to all with whom you communicate via the internet. You must strive to act in all situations with honesty, integrity, and respect for the rights of others.
- When you are using the school's electronic communication system, it may feel like you can more easily break a rule and not get caught. This is not necessarily true. Whenever you are on the internet, you leave "electronic footprints," so the odds of getting caught are really just about the same as they are in the real world.
- The fact that you can do something or think you can do something without getting caught does not always make it right to do so. Even if you don't get caught, there is always one person who will know whether you have done wrong – that person is you. Your use of the internet will mirror what kind of person you are.

## Official School-Sponsored Functions

- Administration must approve, in advance, the details regarding any school-sponsored function.
- School is responsible for students participating in all officially sponsored activities such as field trips, athletic events, choir appearances, class trips, etc.
- School rules apply at all school-sponsored functions. This includes dress code, use of cell phones, music, following all state laws, and public displays of affection.
- Student field trips that are outside of school hours shall dress modestly according to the guidelines set by the GCS employee in charge, in which case they may wear appropriate non-uniform clothes (meets dress lengths and modesty standards). All students who are part of a performance or sports team may travel in uniform, as long as it is appropriate.
- Student participants must be transported in school vehicles and by school drivers. School rules apply when traveling on school transportation.
- Teachers, staff, or administration cannot transport students in their own personal vehicles without prior administration approval.

- A parent must sign a travel waiver form provided by the coach, teacher, or advisor in order for their student to leave the official travel party.
- No meeting of any group, committee, or organization is to be held without the knowledge of the advisor.
- Each responsible adult is charged with enforcing these policies, specifically: coaches, parent volunteers, community volunteers, staff, teachers, and administrators.
- While students who are off campus may have access to their cell phones for personal use, sharing of music or videos is not allowed. While one student's parents may allow him/her to listen or watch something, other parents' modesty standards may not concur. In this way indirectly the school may subject the student to inappropriate content without the parent's consent. It is highly encouraged for coaches to limit cell phone use. If a student is in violation of this rule, his/her cell phone should be confiscated and returned to a parent.
- Drivers will ensure that students are wearing seat belts in vans and seated correctly in buses. In addition, drivers will follow all posted speed limits and other driving laws.
- Students are expected to remain buckled in their seats. Students will be held responsible for their conduct and disciplinary action will be taken for disrespect and disobedience.
- Just as public displays of affection are not allowed while students are on campus, they are not allowed to engage in this contact while off campus for a school event. This includes but is not limited to: holding hands, extended hugs, sitting on laps, straddling, massaging, or kissing. At no time should students of the opposite sex be allowed to be in a room alone, or to have extended "alone time" while away from campus. In addition, on trips where boys and girls are attending the same event, the responsible adult shall ensure that boys and girls are not sitting next to each other on the school's or chartered buses.



# Expectations

Every student should understand that attendance at GCMS is a privilege. Therefore, students are obligated to be familiar with the responsibilities of being a student at GCMS as reflected in the contents of the Student Handbook. Fulfilling the Knight's Honor Code of Conduct and those requirements outlined in the Student Handbook is essential to maintaining the privilege of attendance. We ask that parents review the Knight's Honor Program, as well as other policies outlined in the handbook, on an annual basis with their children.

Knights' Honor Code of Conduct

<http://honor.gcsaz.org/>

## Cafeteria Rules

- It is our desire that Gilbert Christian Middle School students respect the facilities that God has blessed us with. With that in mind, the following are guidelines for the lunchroom.
- Follow instructions of cafeteria staff and parent volunteers using a respectful tone of voice
- Walk at all times
- Students must remain in the cafeteria or outside patio during lunch
- Students are responsible to clean up their own trash before going to the playground
- No screaming or yelling
- No throwing any items in the lunchroom
- Students need to push chairs in if sitting at a table with chairs
- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Be polite and kind and willing to serve others by letting them go first, helping them with trash, etc.
- Failure to comply with the cafeteria expectations; inappropriate lunchroom behavior, or leaving food or trash on the tables will result in disciplinary action.

## Closed Campus

Gilbert Christian Middle School is a closed campus. Students may not leave campus unless a note or phone call from the parent or guardian has been presented to the administration requesting permission to leave or the parent comes to the office. If permission is granted, the student must sign out at the school office prior to departing campus. Students are not permitted to be released to anyone, including the non-custodial parent, without the approval of the custodial parent.

## Visitors to Campus

- Any visitor to the GCMS campus must check in at the office. Visitors will be given passes that are to be visible at all times while on campus.
- Students are not allowed to bring friends or relatives to school unless prearranged with administration. We arrange official tours for students who are interested in attending Gilbert Christian Middle School.

## Language and Inappropriate Items

The language that we use on campus and elsewhere, written or spoken, should be consistent with what God expects of us. Ephesians 4:29 tell us to “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification (building up) according to the need of the moment, that it may give good grace to those who hear.” Profanity, gossip, filthy, and hurtful words proceed from an unkind heart and grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Students using inappropriate language will be referred to the administration. In addition, any items deemed to be obscene or inappropriate in any way will be confiscated immediately by Administration. Parents will be notified, and the offending student may be given Saturday school and, in more severe situations, suspension or expulsion.

## Student Publications and Public Speech

Any and all student publications, flyers, speech content, petitions, etc., must be approved by Administration before distribution or delivery to members of the student body or general public. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

## Campus Appearance

GCMS is a beautiful campus, and everyone works hard to make it a clean and safe environment for staff, faculty and students. Students must do their part in picking up after themselves. Vandalism and/or property damage will not be tolerated, and anyone who violates this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion.

## Fines and Fees

If sports equipment or GCS merchandise (such as books) are lost a fine (varied at the market value of the equipment/merchandise) will be charged to the student/family account. All fines are all due in a timely manner.



## Lost and Found

It is a student's responsibility to keep track of his/her personal belongings. All lost and found clothing is donated to a non-profit at the end of each quarter if not claimed.

Lost and found items will be displayed for the students to claim items before they will be donated. For more valuable items (such as keys, glasses, wallets, and cell phones), please check the office.

## Classroom Passes

Students must have a pass to go to the office, restroom, or office. In addition, when a student is arriving late or on the occasion is going to be late back to class for any reason, he/she must have a tardy slip to go back to class.

## Lockers

All lockers made available for student use on the school premises, including lockers located in the hallways and athletic dressing rooms, are the property of GCS.

- This locker is a place to keep coats, books, and personal items. Lockers need to be kept clean.
- Students may not use any other locker without permission of the office. Students are not to trade lockers or share locker combinations.
- Students must use the lock provided by the school.
- Lockers are to be kept locked. GCS is not responsible for items taken out of lockers.

## Locker Searches

- While each student is assigned a locker and is entitled to privacy with respect to that locker, the locker remains the possession and control of the school.
- Students are to expect that lockers may be inspected from time to time without prior notice to ensure that such areas are not being used for an unauthorized purpose.

## Locker Room

- Students may only enter locker rooms designated to their biological sex.
- Students are strongly urged not to bring valuables of any kind into the locker room.
- Students are provided lockers and locks to secure their clothes during their PE class and sports. Students are not to trade lockers or share locker combinations.
- Students are not to be in locker rooms without staff member permission and knowledge.
- Students are not allowed to videotape and/or take pictures in the locker rooms

## **Bathrooms**

- Students may only enter bathrooms designated to their biological sex.
- Students are urged not to bring valuables of any kind into the bathrooms.
- Students are not allowed to store backpacks, gym bags, or any other personal items in the bathrooms.
- Students are not allowed to videotape and/or take pictures in the bathrooms.

## **Classrooms, Building, and Property**

- No food or drink, other than water, will be allowed in any classroom unless permission is given by the teacher.
- Students who are found defacing, vandalizing, or destroying school property will be disciplined.
- Students will be assigned to cleaning duty and held financially responsible for any damage.

## **Prohibited Items**

- Video games and game players
- Skateboards
- Laser devices
- Any weapon of any kind including nerf guns, airsoft equipment, paintball guns, etc.
- Playing cards or toys

These items will be confiscated, and in some cases, they will not be returned until the end of the school year. Parents will be notified. Other prohibited items can be added to this list by Administration as needed throughout the school year.



## Dress Code

GCMS seeks to maintain an appropriate educational environment, so modesty, neatness, and cleanliness is essential. Clothing or hairstyles that distract from the educational process or that draw attention are not appropriate. Christians are encouraged in the Bible to observe the principles of modesty, to avoid drawing attention to themselves, and to glorify God in all their behavior.

Extremes in fashions are considered inappropriate and distracting. Parents are expected to monitor their student's dress. If the student's clothing does not reflect modesty or neatness, they may be required to remain in the school office until they can change into appropriate clothing or their parents can bring appropriate clothing. In cases where parents have questions or have not monitored the student's dress which leads to violation of the dress code, the administration will be the final authority.

GCS offers a regular uniform exchange program to help make uniform compliance affordable for all.

## Tops

Uniform tops are available for purchase at <https://gcsaz.org/uniforms/>.

- GCS uniform polo is to be worn Monday – Thursday.
- GCS “Spirit” Shirts including themed shirts, GCS provided trip shirts, GCS sport shirts, etc. may be worn every Friday.
- Any shirt worn to school must extend below the waistband. Shirts do not need to be tucked in, but must be long enough so midriff does not show at any time. If the shirt is not long enough when raising your arms up don't wear it to school.
- Long-sleeved t-shirts under short-sleeved polo shirts are allowed, but no logo, brand, or striping on the sleeves is permitted.
- All tops must be in good repair. No holes, rips, or excessive are permitted.

## Bottoms

- Navy blue denim jeans, cotton blend pants or shorts in black, khaki, navy or grey. or black slacks.
- Shorts: khaki, black, grey, or navy 100% cotton, “Bermuda” length.
- Capris (Girls) – blue jeans only, must be below the knee. No skorts or skirts are permitted for middle school students.
- All pants or shorts must be hemmed and in good repair. No holes, rips, or frayed hems, cut-off shorts, or cuffing is permitted. However, cuffs sewn and hemmed by the manufacturer are permitted.
- Denim that is distressed so as to create thin spots or holes is not permitted. Jeans must be modest in cut, style, and fit. No colored embellishments, camouflage, or patterned bottoms. Solid only.



## Outerwear

- Hoodies or crew sweatshirts with GCS logos can be worn inside or outside of class.
- Hoodies or crew sweatshirts without GCS logos are not permitted to be worn
- Heavier jackets can be worn to school on cold days, but may not be worn inside the classroom.
- A solid colored zippered sweatshirt without a GCS logo must remain unzipped within the classroom.

## Footwear/Shoes

- Shoes permitted – flip flops, running shoes, sandals, etc.
- Excluded shoes – anything with a heel, wedge, pump, or slipper. Boots are not allowed.
- Socks of any color are permitted.

GCMS administration, teachers, and staff reserve the right to dress code any student who is not in compliance with the GCMS dress code. At that point, the student will be given instructions on how to correct the violation. If a student is required to change into approved uniform clothing, loaned uniformed clothing must be washed and returned for the student to receive his or her personal clothing back.

## Grooming and Accessories Standards

### Boys

- Boys must be well groomed and clean cut. Hair must be trimmed above the collar with eyes and earlobes visible. Unkempt and shaggy hair is not permitted.
- Hair sweeping across the face that must be constantly adjusted hinders learning. Those with “fade” haircuts must keep the longer hair out of eyes and above the ears.
- Only a natural hair color will be allowed.
- No ponytails, man buns, or hair adornments allowed for boys. It is the administration’s prerogative to require changes.
- Facial hair is not allowed. Administration reserves the right to require changes.
- Extreme hairstyles are not acceptable. (Example: “Mohawks,” shaved words or symbols, man buns, unnatural colors - including shades of natural colors).
- No visible tattoos or body piercings.
- No headbands for boys.



## Girls

- Makeup may be worn in moderation.
- Jewelry may be worn in moderation.
- No visible tattoos or body piercings other than earrings.
- Extreme hairstyles are not acceptable. No shave patches or symbols, or unnatural colors are permitted.
- Hair sweeping across the face that must be constantly adjusted hinders learning. Those with “fade” haircuts must keep the longer hair out of eyes and above the ears.

## Accessories

- No scarves
- No ties
- No hats
- No vests
- No sunglasses
- Girls may wear jewelry in moderation
- No jewelry with inappropriate terminology or design

## Spirit Week Dress Code

- The Student Council will set the guidelines for the spirit dress days.
- Students are to follow these guidelines or be in regular school dress code.
- No matter what, students may not wear the following items for Spirit Dress.
- No matter what, students may not wear the following items for Spirit Dress:
  - tights or leggings
  - skirts or mini dresses
  - short shorts
  - bathing suits
  - tank tops or sleeveless shirts
  - shirts with open backs or low-cut backs
  - any shirts or bottoms that show undergarments
  - shirts that show midsections
  - any clothing that has vulgar, anti-Christian, or other unlawful material on it
  - any clothes with holes in them.
- If the Spirit Day calls for wearing a dress (girls), female students may do so with leggings underneath, if the skirt/dress does not reach the knees.
- If a student is out of dress code on a spirit day, he/she will be required to change into school-provided clothes.



# General Discipline

## Discipline Philosophy

Discipline is the training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental facilities or moral character of the individual. However, we commonly use the word “consequence” with our students. Discipline is established and maintained at Gilbert Christian Middle School with the intent to train each student in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6). We desire to be fair yet firm. The first goal of our discipline policies and procedures is to help students develop a biblical world and life view. Our desire is that each student learns to think and live biblically. The second is to create a climate that facilitates maximum learning for each student. The third is to help each student learn to move from external-control, to self-control, to ultimately, Spirit control.

As a Christian school, we must provide an environment conducive to the spiritual growth and development of our young people. We believe that Christian students should avoid practices which cause loss of sensitivity to the spiritual needs of the world and to the Christian’s spiritual, mental, and physical well-being (Romans 12:1-2).

It is expected that students will:

- Behave appropriately
- Respect the rights of the teacher to teach and fellow students to learn
- Respect each teacher and their peers as instructed by Christ
- Be obedient and respectful to all those in authority
- Respect the building and all school equipment and materials

## GCS 5 Steps of Loving Correction

1. **Remember** – verbal warning is given by the teacher to help the student change their behavior.
2. **Redirect** – student is sent to a designated area in the classroom. Heart talk.
3. **Regroup** – student given time to rethink behavior in another classroom or in the office. Knight’s Honor Points taken. Email sent home to parents.
4. **Restart** – student will be sent to the vice principal for additional heart help; phone call home.
5. **Rejoice** – teacher gives encouragement and celebrates when student adjusts behavior.



## Matthew 18 Principle

Matthew 18 provides a definite pattern to follow when resolving interpersonal problems. If a problem arises between a parent and teacher, parent and administrator, or parent and parent, it must be resolved quickly and prayerfully with love, patience, and forgiveness. Open communication and Christ-like relationships are two keys to developing a school environment that is positive, mature, and glorifying to God. This is the Matthew 18 principle.

*“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But, if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, take it to the church, and if he refuses to listen to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.” Matthew 18:15-17*

## Appeal Process

All questions, problems, or complaints should be brought first to the teacher, coach, or school employee with whom the conflict is concerned. This should be done before anyone else is involved. (A majority of problems are resolvable at this level.) Although it is easier to pick up the telephone and address this issue with the administration, this is not consistent with the Matthew 18 principle. If the issue is not resolved through direct contact with the person involved, then the problem should be addressed with a member of administration.

## Due Process and Grievance Procedures for Families

In the unfortunate event that a family should come into conflict with a staff member, the school expects the matter to be resolved applying the principle of Matthew 18, paying particular attention to 18:15-17. In other words, the family should first discuss the matter with the person in question. If a resolution cannot be reached, the matter should be discussed with the person’s direct supervisor. At no time should the matter be discussed with anyone who is not in a position to bring the matter to resolution or who is not in the direct line of supervisory hierarchy. If a resolution has not been found after exhausting this process, it is then a family’s right to submit a written statement to the Superintendent and/or the Board. The Superintendent and Board’s decision is the school’s final decision in the matter. It is our hope and expectation that families would approach conflict prayerfully and with humility.



## Employees and Volunteers

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of GCMS, and to provide a biblical role model to the students and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by GCS in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:2). Failure to do so may result in discipline of employees, up to and including termination of employment. In the case of volunteers, admonishment or removal as a volunteer and possible suspension or expulsion of the volunteer's children from GCMS.

## Classroom Discipline

At Gilbert Christian Middle School, the teacher is the principle authority in the classroom and assumes the major responsibility for the training and discipline of each student. The students are expected to follow the specific rules of the classroom and of the school. The expectations are respect and responsibility. Specific behaviors in the classroom for which students will receive consequences include, but are not limited to:

- Not being prepared for class
- Eating/drinking in the classroom (other than water)
- Tardiness
- Lying and cheating
- Disobedience, lack of respect
- Disrupting the teaching/learning process
- Swearing/inappropriate language
- Dress code violations
- Cell phone/electronic device use

## Public Displays of Affection

No public displays of affection (PDA) are allowed on campus or at school-related activities or events. Please see the Knight's Honor program for further information on student expectations and specific behavior rewards.

## Harassment, Bullying, and Cyberbullying

Our Christian walk should be demonstrated at all times. Students are expected to speak words of life and encouragement to their fellow students, teachers, and staff. As such, harassment and bullying of any kind will not be tolerated. Harassment and bullying includes, but is not limited to, focusing on a person's race and creed, handicap, faith, or national origin. Prohibited harassment/bullying actions include, but are not limited to, comments, slurs, jokes, innuendoes, cartoons, phone calls, text messaging, hazing, social media, pranks, and physical harassment. Teachers, students, and parents should feel free to contact Administration when they feel harassed or bullied at school and school activities.

## **Sexual Harassment and Misconduct**

GCS is committed to maintaining an academic environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect and which is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation and harassment, including sexual harassment. This school is prepared to address any situations related to sexual harassment and/or sexual misconduct. Anyone who violates this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion.

GCS prohibits harassment of, or discrimination against any member of the school community, including students, for sexually motivated reasons. Persons who engage in such conduct may be subject to disciplinary action, which may have legal consequences. Sexual harassment shall be defined as unwelcome sexual advancements, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's classroom evaluation;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting the status of the individual;
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's classroom performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment;
- submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through this school.

Gilbert Christian Schools requires the prompt reporting of such harassment or discrimination. Prompt resolution, through either informal or formal procedures, of any such reports may be accomplished.

## **Search and Seizure**

Illegal items such as drugs, drug paraphernalia, firearms, weapons, pornography, and other possessions reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of others will be temporarily or permanently removed from a student's possession. Appropriate law enforcement authorities may be contacted.

## **Alcoholic Beverages, Illegal Drugs, Controlled Substances, and Pornography**

Student use of alcohol or other illegal drugs is incompatible with the purposes and objectives of the school, and it is detrimental to the health and well-being of the individual. Substance abuse will result in lengthy suspension or expulsion. If the student is allowed to remain at GCMS, the school reserves the right to require both random drug testing and appropriate biblically based counseling by a professional affiliated with or recommended by the school. The school's discipline procedure may include legal action.



Voluntary disclosure of personal drug abuse will be taken into consideration in discipline; however, such disclosure does not guarantee mitigation of disciplinary procedures. (Voluntary disclosure does not mean coming forward after the administration, faculty, or student government has knowledge of an incident.)

The school reserves the right to question students about suspected drug/alcohol involvement. The administration retains the right to request a parent's or guardian's approval for an immediate urinalysis and/or breath test at the parent's or guardian's expense if a student is reasonably suspected of drug or alcohol abuse.

Students who possess and/or distribute and/or sell alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, controlled substances, pornography, or items that purport to be any of the foregoing to other students or persons during school time, on school premises, during school-sponsored activities, or any other time shall be subject to suspension and/or expulsion. This includes, but is not limited to, the video distribution of obscene or pornographic images through the use of a computer or cell phone from one student to another individual. The appropriate law enforcement agency will also be contacted.

School officials in charge will immediately remove anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs from contact with other students and also notify the parent or guardian. Circumstances may require the assistance of law enforcement agencies.

## **Smoking, Vaping, JUUL, and/or Tobacco**

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, distributing, or selling tobacco, tobacco substitutes, electronic cigarettes, chemical inhalation devices, JUUL, and/or vaping products while on school property, in adjacent parking lots, on the surrounding streets, on any school transportation, or when students are representing GCS in the public.

## **Possession of Weapons**

Gilbert Christian Middle School will not tolerate possession of any weapons, authentic or toy, by students on school property or at school-sponsored events. A student in possession of a weapon, authentic or toy, or who carries, exhibits, displays, or draws any weapon or any item apparently capable of producing bodily harm in a manner which under the circumstances manifests intent to intimidate another or warrants alarm for the safety of others, shall be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. In such cases, Arizona state law will be followed.

“Possession” includes, but is not limited to, having a weapon on school property or at a school-sponsored event located (1) in a space assigned to a student such as a locker or desk; (2) on the student's person or property such as in his or her clothing, purse, backpack, gym bag, or vehicle; or (3) under a student's control or accessible or available, such as hidden by the student.



## Off-Campus Misconduct

The Student Disciplinary Code and all GCMS penalties may apply to conduct off school grounds, particularly those that may endanger the health or safety of GCMS students within the school setting or substantially interfere with the educational process.

Examples of off-campus misconduct that may be subject to GCMS discipline include, but are not limited to, illegal activity, threats of violence, alcohol possession/use, fighting, hazing, drug possession/use or sales, firearm possession, violent offenses, robbery, burglary, arson, and sexual assaults.

GCMS considers a student an official member of the student body from their first day of acceptance at GCMS until withdrawn, removed, or graduated. There is a “24-7-365” aspect to the GCMS Code of Conduct. GCMS reserves the right to discipline for both on-campus and off-campus misbehavior during the student’s tenure at GCMS.

When deemed necessary and/or required by law, certain acts of student misbehavior, whether on-campus or off-campus, may be reported to appropriate authorities.

GCS parents or guardians shall not knowingly facilitate or allow the violation of rules of GCS or the law; such as the failure of parents to adequately safeguard any alcohol or drugs they possess, or to provide reasonable supervision standards in order to significantly minimize the possibility of alcohol or drugs being brought into the home, another location of social gathering, or to school functions or property. When parents or guardians knowingly facilitate or allow the violation of rules of GCS or the law, the result may include the immediate termination of the relationship between the family and GCS.

It is not the responsibility of the school, nor does it have the resources or ability to police a student’s behavior off campus during non-school hours or days. Members of the GCS family who become aware of violations of school policies that occur beyond school property, school activities, or school hours should first consider speaking directly to the other families involved, as GCS often is not in the best position to do anything about the concern under such circumstances.

## Student Responsibilities When Wrongdoing Occurs

Occasionally, a GCS student may find himself/herself in a situation when clear violations of this Code of Conduct (e.g., consuming alcohol, taking drugs, immoral behavior, etc.) are occurring. It is the responsibility of that student to take immediate and reasonable steps to remove himself/herself from the location of the wrongdoing. If such steps are not taken, the student may be subject to disciplinary action.

When GCS employees request truthful answers from a student regarding allegations about his/her own actions or the actions of others, it is done with a presumption of full disclosure.

## Social Media

Widespread use of social media has become a regular part of people's lives. While GCS has no control over the use of social media off campus, members of the GCS community should use great discretion when using social media. Students represent GCS on and off campus, and violations of school expectations off campus and during non-school hours can lead to disciplinary consequences.

Students who use social media must understand that comments they make on social media can cause disruption to the educational environment. Any comment they make or like that causes a substantial disruption to the school environment can result in school consequences. Here are some guidelines that everyone should keep in mind when using social media:

- Avoid harassment/threats of violence. Any comment or picture that is meant to demean or intimidate a student is considered harassment. Liking a comment or page is giving approval and only serves to encourage the harassment.
- Be aware that privacy settings are not foolproof. Assume that anything you post can be seen by anyone for an indefinite period of time, including future employers.
- Don't post anything confidential, including date of birth, address, phone number, social security number, etc.
- Parents, create a social media account and follow your child. That way you can ensure that your child is using social media responsibly.
- Make certain that your posts do not conflict, or lead to the perception of a conflict, with the positions of GCS. Do not tag other people in social media posts that they may find offensive. Do not do anything on social media that could put you or the school in a compromising position.
- Creating Instagram pages with any part of the GCS name or acronym is prohibited.
- Illegal activities or inappropriate materials using social media or on electronic devices may be reported to law enforcement.



# Cheating

All work (in-class assignments, homework, projects, etc.) is considered to be an individual grade and must represent the student’s own independent effort unless specific permission has been given by the teacher for students to work together on a particular assignment. Therefore, copying answers from anyone or plagiarizing will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined as the failure to identify any part of an assignment that uses words or material of other people without giving credit to the proper source. Copying another’s work, plagiarism, or any other type of academic misconduct that enables a student to receive a grade or score that was not or would not have been earned legitimately will receive consequences.

First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense	Repeated
Parent contact and a zero on the assignment.	Two-day suspension and a zero on the assignment.	Four-day suspension and a zero on the assignment.	Possible expulsion.

# Major Conduct Violations

### Key

EXP = Expulsion

ISS = In-School Suspension

OSS = Out-of-School Suspension

\*Violates federal, state, and/or city laws. Authorities may be notified.

## Level One

Violation	1st Offense	2nd Offense
Verbal Abuse or Profanity	ISS/OSS	OSS/EXP
Offensive Racial/Religious Remarks	ISS/OSS	OSS/EXP
Possession of Obscene Material of Any Kind (Includes transmitted via internet or cell phone)*	ISS/OSS	OSS/EXP
Physically Initiating a Fight and Physical Altercation	ISS/OSS/EXP	OSS/EXP
Internet and/or Technology Infraction	ISS/OSS/EXP	EXP
Vandalism/Destruction of Property*	OSS/EXP	EXP
Harassment, Bullying, and/or Cyberbullying*	ISS/OSS/EXP	EXP
Verbally Initiating a Fight	ISS/OSS	OSS/EXP
Threats	ISS/OSS/EXP	OSS/EXP
Pictures or Videos in Restroom or Locker Room	ISS/OSS	OSS/EXP

<b>Violation</b>	<b>1st Offense</b>	<b>2nd Offense</b>
Audio Recordings, Pictures, or Videos in Classroom (without teacher permission)	ISS/OSS	OSS/EXP
Any repeated disruptive and disrespectful behaviors	ISS/OSS	OSS/EXP

## Level Two

Resulting in Automatic Suspension or Expulsion.

<b>Violation</b>	<b>1st Offense</b>	<b>2nd Offense</b>
Theft*	OSS/EXP	EXP
Smoking/Vaping/Tobacco*	OSS/EXP	EXP
Alcohol/Drugs*	OSS/EXP	EXP
Physical Assault*	OSS/EXP	EXP
Initiating a False Alarm*	OSS/EXP	EXP
Sexual Harassment*	OSS/EXP	EXP
Possession of Weapons or Explosives*	EXP	EXP

# Safety and Security

## Emergency Procedures and Drills

### Fire

- The school is required to hold regular fire drills.
- At the onset of a fire alarm, students must walk quickly, with their teacher, to their designated meeting area. Attendance will be taken, and all students must remain together as a class until the “all clear” signal is given to return to the classroom.

### Lock Down

- At the onset of an announcement signaling a lock down, students must follow directions of teachers and staff.
- Teachers will lock all classroom doors. Staff/administration will lock the office.
- Everyone must move away from windows and doors. Shades must be closed and lights turned off.
- Do not open any door or window until the all clear signal is given by Administration.
- The school is required to hold lock down drills.

### Power Failure

- In the event of a power failure during the school day, students are to remain in the classroom or lunch room until further instructions are given by the administration.
- If a power failure occurs during a passing period, students should proceed directly to their next class and remain there for further instructions.

## Reporting Child Abuse

Protecting the health and welfare of GCS students is fundamental to the mission of GCS. In accord with A.R.S. 13-3620, school personnel are required to report to a peace officer or to child protective services any reasonable grounds to believe a child is the victim of neglect, physical or sexual abuse. The school will not contact parents before making a report to authorities. The law is clear on the duty of school personnel to report, and there is no legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation.

# Student Records

Student records are maintained for the benefit of the student and are used for instruction, career development, guidance, and educational placement. Student records will include:

- All academic records including transcripts, records of attendance, progress reports, achievement test records, and records of health as required by Arizona state law.
- All behavioral records, including psychological testing, personality evaluation, letters to parents, records of conversations, transcripts of incidents, and formal administrative actions taken relative to student behavior.
- International students' records will include copies of the I-20, passport, and supporting documents as required by immigration law.
- All student records maintained by the school shall be made available for inspection by the student, parent, or guardian. These records will be made available only in the presence of a school official.
- The administration may withhold report cards, diplomas, or other records if the student owes a fee or has lost or willfully damaged or injured school property until the amount owed is paid in full.
- The school may not withhold academic records when such records are requested by another district for placement of the student.

## Custodial Parent Agreements/Access

GCS will administer student access and student supervision in alignment with the most current custodial agreement that has been provided to our school registrar's office. That information will remain in the student file for reference. In conjunction with the terms of the agreement, our school will work within established guidelines. The guidelines are:

- Each parent may produce a list of names as emergency contacts.
- Each parent may produce a list of those names (suggested list be two names) who can pick up children during or after school on the day that parent has custody of the student.
- No parent may remove nor alter any of the names submitted by the other parent.
- It is not up to the school to determine which days the children are to go to which parent.
- We have no responsibility to provide financial records to the non-fiduciary parent.
- All parents have equal access to the student files related to registration, health records, and achievement information.
- A parent may volunteer for a field trip unless there is a restraining order against the parent by the opposing parent of the child.
- If in doubt as to who the person is that says they are authorized to pick up a child, proof of identification is required.



## Confidentiality Statement

There may be a need for a student to receive counseling for academic, behavioral, and/or personal reasons. To further this ministry, parents and students need to understand the following information on both ethical and legal grounds.

Conversations in counseling sessions are considered confidential. However, the following are events that may necessitate a report to the Arizona Department of Health Services:

### Legal

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Serious evidence of suicidal tendencies
- Serious evidence of the possibility of harm to others
- Instances of pregnancy. Parents of students who are under the age of 16 must be notified.

### School Policy

- Any school rule and state or federal laws which have been broken may be reported to the administration, parents, and/or the police department.

## Custodial/Non-Custodial Parent Access to Records

GCS presumes that the person who enrolls a student in school is the student's custodial parent. Unless the court specifies otherwise, the custodial parent "may determine the child's upbringing, including his education". Parents or guardians have the two-fold right to receive information contained in the school records concerning their minor child and to forbid or permit the disclosure of such information to others unless authorized by the custodial parent.

GCS, unless informed otherwise, assumes there are no restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent's right to be kept informed of the student's school progress and activities. If restrictions are made relative to the above rights, the custodial parent will be requested to submit a certified copy of the court order, which curtails these specific rights.



Unless there are specific court-imposed restrictions, the non-custodial parent, upon request, will be given access to all of the student's educational records, including, but not limited to, the student's cumulative file (when applicable), and upon written request, an opportunity to conference with the student's teacher.

Students are not permitted to visit with or be released to anyone, including the non-custodial parent, without the approval of the custodial parent.

## Health Services

All office staff are required to maintain valid CPR certification and the middle school has a health aide trained in first aid. A student who is injured or who feels ill during the course of the day may request permission from his or her teacher to see the health aide.

The health aide will attend to the student's concerns and advise the student about continued class and athletic attendance for the day. The health aide will notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) if the student must be sent home because of illness. The health aide must authorize all departures from school due to injury or illness.

## Communicable Disease Guidelines

If a student has nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or an elevated temperature (100° F or more by thermometer), the child should be symptom-free for 24 hours without medication and without an elevated temperature for 24 hours before returning to school. In order to maintain a healthy environment, the school asks that families observe the following guidelines:

- If a student has strep throat, he/she should stay home at least 24 hours after the first dose of antibiotics has been administered.
- If a student has conjunctivitis (pink eye), he/she should stay home for 24 hours after the first dose of medicine has been administered. The student's eyes should be free of drainage before returning to school.
- If a student has head lice, he/she must be treated and be louse- and nit-free before returning to school. If the lice are discovered during the school day, the school will call the parent or guardian to pick his/her child up at school. The Health Aide will need to check the child before he/she returns to the classroom.
- If a student contracts measles, meningococcal meningitis, mumps, pertussis (whooping cough), rubella (German Measles), tuberculosis, chickenpox, Lyme disease, hepatitis A, or other communicable diseases or food-borne illnesses, please notify the health aide.



## **Immunizations**

All students must be in compliance with current immunization guidelines. Parents should review their child's immunization record with their child's physician. Students who are not current with their immunizations must either become current or file an exemption form for compliance.

## **Medication**

Medications taken during the school hours must be administered by the health aide or additional office staff trained to administer medications. The exceptions are asthma inhalers, which may be carried by students if a permission slip is signed by parents. Medication must be in the original container with the pharmacy label, student's name, prescribing physician's name, medication name, dosage, and the time and route of administration.

## **Backup Medication**

Backup medication(s) for a student's health condition may be kept in the school's Health Aide office. Parents who provide the school with backup medication(s) should note the medication expiration date and provide current medication when necessary. If a student requires daily medication that is not taken at school, parents should consider consulting with the Health Aide about storing a three-day supply of the medication at the school in case of a lock-down.

## **EpiPen**

If a student's allergies require the use of an EpiPen, please provide his or her prescribed EpiPen along with a signed EpiPen Care Plan form to the health aide.