



**Middle School
Handbook
2023-2024**

Parent Letter

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior!

Welcome to Middle School at Grace Christian School. Middle School is an exciting time, and we have worked very hard to create a very special experience for our students. We strive to provide academic excellence in an encouraging and supportive environment. Put simply, we care about students and want to help them succeed! This handbook is a guide for the many unique aspects of the Grace Middle School experience.

Middle School is a time of tremendous growth, and we will be celebrating with you the victories along the way. We are here to support you during these important years - we want to help! Please communicate any challenges you have with regard to middle school so that they can be addressed quickly.

We pray that your Grace Middle School experience will provide encouragement for your family to grow closer to God and that you experience His presence through the joys and challenges of parenting your emerging adult.

May God bless us all as we endeavor to raise our children to become responsible, caring, Christlike adults.

In Christ Jesus,

*Grace Christian School
Middle School Faculty*

Victoria Swanson--Language Arts, Bible Class, Athletics

Taylor Shellhammer--History, Science

Isaac Endermann--Middle School Lead, Mathematics

Jesse Mazariegos--Athletics

Aaron Smith--Senior Pastor, Bible Class

Michelle Quezada--Associate Principal

Ben Elliott--Superintendent

ACADEMICS

We expect our students to try their best to succeed in every class. Open communication with their teachers is necessary to reach this goal. We appreciate family support in encouraging students to reach out to teachers. If it is before or after school hours, students can always send a message to their teachers via email.

Students maintaining an average below 70% in any class will have their parents notified by email weekly. Parents and students are expected to sign in to GradeLink to review grades and assignments. If there is any confusion on how to improve, students and parents are expected to communicate with teachers to make sure they understand how to move forward.

To pass a subject, a student must have a passing average over the year. Any student that fails two or more core academic subjects will not be promoted and must repeat the grade. Any student failing 8th grade will not receive a Grace Christian School diploma and will not have the privilege of participating in 8th-grade graduation services and end of the year class activities.

In order to participate in school sports games, students are required to maintain a GPA of at least 2.0 and have no failing grades. A student with a failing grade will only be allowed to play if adequate progress under the supervision of the relevant teacher is being made toward improving the failing grade.

In each 8th grade graduating class, the valedictorian will be the student with the highest yearlong percent score average over all graded classes, and the salutatorian will be the student with the second highest average. Any score in an advanced math class will be counted as one full letter grade higher, which is 10% higher than shown on a report card.

HOMEWORK POLICY

It is important that students complete their assigned work on time. Late assignments may receive no credit or partial credit depending on the nature of the assignment. See teacher policies for class specific details.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

On all assignments, students should value and respect academic honesty.

Due to the varying nature of assignments and degrees of acts of academic dishonesty, disciplinary action may include the following:

- Receiving a score of zero for the entire assignment or for part of the assignment.
- Requirement to repeat the entire assignment or part of the assignment.
- The general behavior consequences outlined later in the document, including behavior conference, office referral, detention, and revoking of privileges.

Explanations of various topics relating to academic honesty can be found below. This is not an all encompassing list, but provides general insight into academic honesty.

1. Assessments

Students are expected to do their own work or to collaborate only as directed by their teachers. Any giving or receiving of external assistance relating to an examination, test, or quiz, without expressed direction or permission of the teacher is cheating. This includes giving or receiving previously administered tests.

2. Fabrication, Falsification, or Forgery

Students are expected to present information they believe to be true. Any falsification or invention of material, information, data, citation, or other authority in an academic exercise is cheating. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to generate school work that is not student original work is considered cheating. Additionally, forging another person's signature is an act of academic dishonesty.

3. Unauthorized Collaboration

Collaboration is often a helpful tool for learning, and as such is often permitted and encouraged by teachers.

However, unauthorized collaboration is an act of academic dishonesty. This includes copying another student's work, sharing answers or images of work to an individual or group, allowing work to be copied, completing assignments for others, giving or passing old tests to other students for the following year, or receiving old tests from other students.

Unless it is a group project, students should not work together on class assignments. Check with your teacher if you are ever unsure.

If students turn in identical answers, it will be considered a violation of the academic honesty policy for both students. Exceptions may apply based on the nature of the assignment, such as a math quiz.

4. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is taking credit for someone else's work. Plagiarism can have serious academic, professional, or legal consequences. Please note that plagiarism is not limited to copy and pasting from a website, but it is any time someone leads others to believe that someone else's work is their own. Students are expected to take credit only for their own work.

GUYS AND GIRLS OF GRACE

Guys and Girls of Grace (GGG) is a time for building camaraderie, focusing on spiritual growth and promoting the well-being of our middle school students.

For lunch on GGG days, we walk off campus to a local store or restaurant to purchase lunch, snacks, or dessert. Students enjoy a time of friendship, fresh air, and fun. We hope that all students are able to participate in the extended lunch. (This privilege can be revoked as a consequence of poor behavior.)

UNIFORM/DRESS CODE POLICY

This is a supplement to the all-school policy that can be found in the Family Handbook that provides extra clarification for relevant middle school topics.

Additional Middle School Guidelines:

- Students are expected to dress safely.
 - Students are allowed to wear modest jewelry, but jewelry that compromises safety will not be permitted. Examples of unsafe jewelry include but are not limited to chains, dangling jewelry, large earrings, or spikes.
 - Free dress clothing must not have any elements that compromise safety. Possible elements of safety concern may include straps, rips, holes, tears, or any dangling or excessively loose components.
- Students are expected to dress modestly, and therefore no garment should be excessively tight, form-fitting, or revealing.
 - All free dress and uniform skirts and dresses must be no shorter than two inches above the knee.
 - All shorts may be no shorter than mid thigh.
 - Uniform leggings may only be worn under skirts, skorts, and shorts. Leggings must be solid, non-patterned in black, gray, or uniform color (forest green, navy blue, light yellow, white).
 - Free dress leggings may be worn with an accompanying garment that covers from at least waist to mid-thigh.
 - For free dress clothing, no rips, holes, tears, slits, mesh, or other revealing elements may be present above mid-thigh.
 - The only make-up permitted is mascara (black or brown), concealer, and clear lip gloss or chapstick (no color or glitter). Makeup may not be applied during school hours.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

This policy is a supplement to the all school discipline policy that can be found in the Family Handbook. It provides clarification for relevant middle school topics.

The teachers and staff of Grace Christian Middle School care very much about your children and want them to have a safe, productive year. We believe it is in their best interest to set up and enforce guidelines for their conduct.

General Rules

The following rules will be in effect throughout the course of the day.

- Follow directions from teachers and staff.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Be seated at your assigned seat when the teacher is ready to begin.
- Be prepared for class with the required materials.
- Use polite and respectful speech and gestures.
- Respect the learning environment.

- Arrive to class promptly.
- Follow any classroom specific rules.
- Use Chromebooks and other digital devices only as directed by the teacher and only for the academic purposes of the current class, unless otherwise permitted by the teacher. Digital devices including cell phones and smart watches that are misused will be confiscated and can be picked up by a parent or guardian in the front office.

General Consequences

Below are the general consequences in order of escalation. More serious infractions will be met with more serious consequences.

- Verbal warning
- Take a moment outside to regain composure and reenter with improved behavior
- Behavior conference with a staff member
- Office referral
- Detention
- Revoking of privileges, such as any trips off campus

Non-Negotiable Behaviors

The following behaviors will result in referral to the administration for a behavior detention and/or other disciplinary action as necessary.

- Misuse, destruction, or theft of another's belongings or school property.
- Use of a Chromebook or other digital device to access content inappropriate for the learning environment. Examples include but are not limited to streaming videos for entertainment, sending private messages, or accessing explicit content.
- Disrespect for a teacher's decision.
- Bullying, threatening, or intimidating others.
- Other severe behavior issues, including but not limited to overt defiance, fighting, possession of a controlled substance, or possession of a weapon.

MIDDLE SCHOOL LOCKER AGREEMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

Carefully read the following guidelines as you accept a locker from Grace Christian School. Remember that having a locker is a privilege and not a right. Lockers are assigned only if the student and parent/guardian agree to these rules. Violation of these rules will result in loss of the privilege of having a locker.

Locks and lockers for middle school students are the property of Grace Christian School. Vandalism or destruction of the lock or locker will result in a repair or replacement fee. ONLY the school-issued combination locks will be permitted on the lockers.

1. The school assumes NO responsibility for loss or damage to personal or school items in an unlocked or locked locker.
2. Grace Christian School reserves the right to search lockers at any time.
3. Valuables, including Chromebooks and chargers, must NOT be kept in the lockers.
4. Students should keep only items necessary for school in the lockers (i.e. textbooks, school supplies, P.E. uniforms)
5. The storage of food and drink in the locker is prohibited.
6. Students are solely responsible for the contents of their lockers and should not share their lockers with other students. Students should not divulge locker combinations to other students.
7. Lockers must be in the same condition at the end of the school year as they were in the beginning of the school year. Students are not to write, place stickers on, or vandalize lockers in any manner. Students guilty of such infractions will be charged for cleaning and/or repair of the locker and lose locker privileges.
8. Students may not use lockers during class time without permission.
9. Locker use is not an excused reason for tardiness to class.
10. Students are to report any problems with lockers to their homeroom teacher immediately.

My signature on the School Handbook Signature Page indicates I have read, understand, and agree to comply with these policies. Lockers will not be assigned without a signed agreement.