

Parent/Student Handbook



Teaching Truth

Cultivating Character

**“...that they might be called oaks of
righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, that he
may be glorified.”**

Isaiah 61:3

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School Board

Jill OsbornPresident & Board Chair

Amy Bogart.....At-Large Board Member

Roxie Cibuzar.....At-Large Board Member

Head of School

Dr. Jillieta NorwoodBoard Member

Brief History of Grove Christian Academy

The desire for a new school in the Brainerd Lakes Area was born in the heart of a mom who looked out over the landscape of our current culture and became concerned about how truly prepared her children were for life. She wondered about their resiliency, God-confidence, and their understanding of God’s unique giftings and calling for each of them.

The first seed in the planting began with a call to a respected friend. The request was simple - “Who do you know that might be interested in opening a new Christian school?” One year and many connections later, the Lord brought together a widely varied and skilled group of talented individuals. Each followed their own God-guided path to join a Steering Committee that eventually became the founding board tasked with building the initial foundations of the school. In April, 2022, the Founding Board hired the school’s first Head of School who worked tirelessly to hire teachers and prepare the rented classrooms of Heritage Church in Baxter, MN for the inaugural opening. The doors of Stâre Academy officially opened in September 2022 with 45 pre-K through 8th grade students.

Over the course of the next few years, the school has steadily grown to over 120 students and increased in influence throughout the community. In the fall of 2025, the name of the school was officially changed to Grove Christian Academy. Though the name changed, the mission, vision, and steadfast commitment to teach Truth and cultivate character have not changed. We have built our model on the belief that our students will flourish and transform when we raise the bar, not lower it. Therefore, our school is grounded in a vision of education that forms the whole person to become graduates who lead think critically and lead faithfully.

Statement of Beliefs

The Grove Christian School Board and Staff commit ourselves, without reservation, to the statement of Biblical beliefs that follow:

1. We believe in the Bible, comprised of 66 books is the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; I Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

2. We believe in the Triune God – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10, 11; Matthew 28:19).

3. We believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

- a. His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35)
- b. His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22)
- c. His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38)
- d. His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- e. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4)
- f. His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Heb. 1:3)
- g. His imminent, visible, and bodily Second Coming of Christ to the earth to establish His kingdom. (Romans 8:19-25; 1 Cor. 1:7; Philippians 4:5; Jude 21)

4. We believe that humanity was originally created in the image of God, male and female (Genesis 1:27; Genesis 5:1-2). We believe that the biological sex of an individual was chosen by God and assigned at conception (Psalm 139). Since both male and female were created in His image both are equally important and equally valuable to God.

5. We believe marriage is between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6).

6. We believe that humanity fell into sin through the first Adam, separating man from God and becoming eternally lost (Genesis 3:1-19).

7. We believe that salvation from the penalty of sin is only accomplished through a personal belief that Jesus bore our sins on Himself on the cross becoming the atoning sacrifice for our sin. (I John 2:2; Romans 3:23). **Through the confession of sin and the receiving of the free gift of salvation a person is saved from sin's penalty and receives eternal life.** (Romans 6:23; John 3:16; I John 1:9).

8. We believe the Holy Spirit indwells all who receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and accomplishes the work of sanctification in the believer. (I Corinthians 3:16; 2 Timothy 1:14; Romans 8:9-11; I Peter 1:2).

9. We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ which ensures the resurrection of all believers who have received God’s gift of salvation (I Corinthians 15:52). We also believe in a resurrection to a day of judgment for unbelievers (John 5:28-29; Acts 17:31).

10. We believe the church is the body of Christ made up of born-again believers who are called to: (1) Worship (Colossian 3:16; Ephesians 1:12), (2) Nurture other believers and build them up in the faith (Colossians 1:28; Ephesians 4:12-13) and (3) Fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

11. We believe that all believers are called to be in the world but separate from it, living a life that is counter cultural and brings glory to Christ alone. (John 17:14-15; Romans 12:2; Isaiah 43:7)

FINAL AUTHORITY FOR MATTERS OF BELIEF AND CONDUCT

The Statement of Beliefs does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For matters of faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline at Grove Christian Academy, our School Board is the final interpretive authority on the Bible’s meaning and application.

Our Mission

We will teach Truth and cultivate character through an engaging Christ-centered education.

Our Vision

To develop servant leaders equipped with the robust character, logic, and resilience needed to impact the world for Christ.

3 Foundational Components of Education

Character Formation – To cultivate “Oaks of righteousness” by acquainting students daily with their creator thereby helping them to discover who God created them to be (per Isaiah 61:3)

Exemplary Academics – To create an environment that fosters a love of learning with high academic standards

Grace to Grow – To allow safe places to share ideas, listen, discuss respectfully, make mistakes, and grow

Six Core Distinctives of Grove Christian Academy

1. **God Centered** – We understand our broken, sinful human condition and deeply believe that only God can change human hearts, forgive sin, make us new creations and give us purpose.
2. **Classical and Experiential** – We are data-informed and classically-designed, training children to think critically and apply what they learn to real life through experiential opportunities.
3. **World Engagement** – We will assist children in navigating the world, its opportunities, ideas, and struggles. We are committed to having kids engage in their neighborhoods, communities, and the world.
4. **High Accountability** – We believe radical accountability coupled with radical grace for teachers, parents, and students leads to a thriving environment that cultivates growth.

5. **Staff Stewardship** – We believe that staff will serve children best out of the overflow of God’s work in their own lives. Therefore, we will commit to pray for, listen to, mentor and grow our staff spiritually and vocationally.

6. **Accessible for All** – Through donor events and partner sponsorship, we will finance our mission through benevolent giving and through fair share, income-based tuition.

Core Values for Grove Christian Academy

- S – Steadfast:** I Corinthians 15:58 – “be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord...”
- T – Trustworthy:** Luke 16:10 – “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much...”
- A – Accountable:** Romans 14:12 – “So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.”
- R – Resilient:** Micah 7:8 – “Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord, will be my light.”
- E – Exceptional:** I Peter 2:9 – “. . .that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

Grove Christian Academy Handbook Policy Statement

The following policies and procedures cover a broad range of topics and represent the most recent expression of Grove Christian Academy desire to provide equitable and consistent treatment of all enrolled students. To assure that Grove Christian Academy achieves and maintains the purpose of this handbook, and to assure the continued ability to meet our organizational needs and those of our constituents under changing conditions, Grove Christian Academy reserves the right to modify, augment, suspend or revoke any and all policies, procedures, practices and statements contained in this handbook at any time, without notice. Any changes made during the school year will be published in a note home and/or on the Grove Christian Academy website.

This handbook does not contractually bind Grove Christian Academy in any way.

Parents and students are expected to read this entire handbook in order to become completely familiar with the Grove Christian Academy environment. Parents, as stated in this handbook, may also represent legal guardians of Grove Christian Academy students.

Admissions Policies and Procedures

Grove Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities available at the Academy. We do not discriminate based on race, color, and national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational, admission, scholarship, athletic and/or other school administered programs.

FACTS Family Portal

Grove Christian Academy uses the FACTS Family Portal School Management Software system. This internet-based system embraces the various needs of administration, staff, teachers, students, and parents. Family Portal is a private and secure website that will allow the parents to see complete information specific to their students, while protecting the child's information from others. All that is needed is an internet capable device to view information such as: attendance, grades, progress reports, report cards, missing assignments, lunch orders, and email addresses of Grove Christian Academy employees.

Enrollment Process

Admission to Grove Christian Academy is determined by:

- Submission of application – either online via the website or at the school
- Completion of special needs evaluation or preschool screening - if required
- Signed Parent Covenant
- Completing Parent Orientation

The enrollment process consists of the following:

- Step 1: Complete the enrollment packet in the FACTS Family Portal
- Step 2: Apply for Financial Aid through the FACTS portal (if desired) and sign Tuition Agreement
- Step 3: Select tuition payment plan selection on the FACTS portal
- Step 4: All records from previous schools will be requested of those schools by our office prior to the start date of school. This may include, but is not limited to: Academic, discipline, attendance, and Special Education records
- Step 5: Attend a Parent Orientation

Grove Christian Academy will look at all factors during the enrollment process and reserves the right to deny enrollment if a student's needs may best be served in a different educational setting.

New Admissions

Families must agree to abide by school policies, to assist the school and support school leaders in the implementation of its policies.

Students of new families will be accepted in the order of receipt of application if they are determined to be best served by Grove Christian Academy.

Parents must state in writing that they have read and agree with the Grove Christian Academy Statement of Beliefs, Parent Covenant, and parents must agree to have their children educated in accordance with school policies and standards.

Parents must agree that:

- The school has full discretion in the discipline of their children according to the Grove Christian Academy Discipline Policy
- The school has final discretion for the admission and grade placement of the student
- They will meet all tuition and other financial obligations

All new students with questionable academic records will serve a nine-week probationary period unless it is determined that an eighteen-week probationary period is necessary to allow time for sufficient student evaluation. We will follow progress in every area of the student's development. Progress will be measured case-by-case and with input from the teacher(s), staff, administration, and the family.

We desire to educate as many young people as possible, however, class size may limit admission.

We do our best to teach students of all academic and social abilities. In the event we are unable to adequately meet a child's needs, we will work to advise parents to the best of our ability of the resources available to them within the community.

It is our aim that students of Grove Christian Academy will grow in the highest moral character and incorporate Biblical principles into daily living including, but not limited to, prohibitions against sexual activity, drug use, alcohol use, pornography, homosexuality, gossip, slander, bullying, disrespect toward teachers and leaders.

Acceptance or rejection of all new applicants will be by email notice. The enrollment fee will be refunded if the applicant is not accepted by the school.

Re-enrollment Process

Current families must re-enroll their students each year. Students will be accepted in the order of receipt of application. Students of current school families will not have priority over students of prospective/new school families after open enrollment has begun.

Re-enrollment for current families will begin in February or March of each school year.

Transfer Students

Students desiring to transfer to Grove Christian Academy at the beginning of a school year should follow the normal enrollment procedures discussed above. Transferring to Grove Christian Academy after the school year has begun will be considered on a case-by-case basis as space is available. A meeting with the school administration, prospective student, and parents will determine whether or not a transfer will be possible. Students wishing to transfer during the school year are subject to all enrollment processes in order to be considered for enrollment.

Withdrawal from School

Parents or guardians of students who withdraw from Grove Christian Academy for any reason must notify the office of their intent and reasons for withdrawal. Partial tuition refunds will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Immunizations

Minnesota State Law requires that each child's file contain proof that his immunizations are current or that a waiver is on file. Please check your child's medical records, complete the following shots, and report them to Grove Christian Academy BEFORE attending. Your child's previous school may have this record, and may be transferred to Grove Christian Academy via email or mail, as may your doctor's office.

The following vaccinations are recommended: DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, & pertussis), Polio, MMRs (measles, mumps, & rubella), and Hepatitis B.

If you conscientiously object to your child being immunized or if a doctor certifies that it would be unhealthy for your child to be immunized, you may submit a notarized waiver indicating exemption.

Financial Policies

Financial responsibility is one of the key factors in maintaining a quality Christian school for your child. Your cooperation will enable Grove Christian Academy to maintain a positive Christian testimony by having funds necessary to meet our financial obligations in a timely manner. No students will be denied educational opportunities that require additional fees above normal tuition.

Tuition Payments

1. Annual and monthly payment amounts are stated at the beginning of each school year.
2. Tuition may be paid in full or divided into payments not to exceed 12 months. The first tuition payment is due in the month of August, and end no later than July 31. Payments will be invoiced through the FACTS system.
3. Payments received after the grace period will be assessed with a \$30 late fee.
4. No student may attend class the next school year if tuition has not been paid in full for the previous school year, unless a repayment plan has been approved by the Grove Christian Academy and/or School Board.
5. No report cards and/or student records (transcripts) will be released until all accounts are up to date.
7. Some families need scholarships more than others. If you would like to help us assist other families with partnership scholarships, please inform the Head of School or another staff member of your generosity to pass on the scholarship to another family.
8. Grove Christian Academy understands that financial hardships can happen. Please contact the Head of School if extenuating circumstances may arise.

Parent Volunteering

We love our parents and believe you are critical to our success! If you want to volunteer, please let us know! We do background checks on our regular volunteers, please stop by the office to pick up a background check application if you plan to work in the classrooms.

General Policies and Procedures

Meal Program

Grove Christian Academy understands that healthy meals help students learn at maximum potential. Parents can either send a cold lunch daily with their child or participate in the Grove Christian Academy meal program. To this end, breakfast and hot lunches are available to all students free of charge.

When sending snacks or lunch from home, we request that you please do not send soda or other caffeinated drinks – students will not be allowed to consume these beverages during school hours.

School Meals Policy

Policy (Purpose)

Grove Christian Academy participates in the Minnesota Free School Meals program as outlined in [Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 124D.111, subdivision 1](#). In addition, this policy is to ensure that school employees, families and students have an understanding of the expectations regarding unpaid meal charges.

Meal Service

Grove Christian Academy participates in the Minnesota Free School Meals Program, and therefore all enrolled students will be offered one breakfast and one lunch at no charge while at school regardless of an outstanding meal balance. Once a meal has been placed on a student's tray or served, it will not be taken away by the cashier or any school official, regardless of the student's meal account status. All reimbursable meals offered meet state and federal guidelines. We will not provide an alternate meal unless related to a dietary need.

Point of Service

For Grove Christian Academy to receive State and Federal reimbursement for meals served, each student must be identified at the point of service.

The Grove Christian Academy food service program is serve-only, therefore, to be counted as a reimbursable meal all five components of the meal must be on a student's tray. Each student who receives a complete meal will be documented at the end of the food line.

All students will be treated respectfully and in accordance with [Minnesota Statute 2024, section 124D.111, subdivision 5](#). **Payment for A La Carte and Extra Entrees will not be allowed at the Point of Service**

Nonprogram Food Sales

To meet the non-program food revenue requirement, the nutrition program must charge and accrue revenue for items outside of the reimbursable breakfast and lunch it chooses to sell.

Nonprogram Food Sales are any food or beverage sold outside of the reimbursable meal.

Grove Christian Academy does not allow students to purchase food, beverage or second meals in addition to the reimbursable meal(s) at the point of service. Any food or meal that is sold at the school will be offered independent of the School Nutrition Program and its funds.

Unpaid Meal Charges and Prior Year Unpaid Meal Charges

The Minnesota Free Meals Program does not address debt incurred before the program's implementation.

In the spirit of commitment demonstrated by the state of Minnesota to provide all students with a breakfast and lunch, Grove Christian Academy will cover any student cost incurred for a meal provided during the school that is not considered reimbursable. The funds to cover these meals will not be taken from School Nutrition Funds but rather will be charged to the general fund of the school. There will be no charge to students for breakfast or lunch regardless of free/reduced lunch status.

School Nutrition Funds cannot be used to repay previous years' debts per 2 CFR Part 200.426.

Current Year Unpaid Meal Charges

The Minnesota Free School Meals Program pertains only to reimbursable meals.
Unpaid meal charges will be covered by the school's general operating fund.

Communication Policy

This policy and any pertinent supporting information will be provided in writing (i.e., mail, email, back-to-school packet, student handbook, etc.) to:

- All households before the start of each school year;
- Students and families who transfer into the school district, at the time of enrollment
- All school district personnel who are responsible for enforcing this policy.

Grove Christian Academy will post this policy on the school district's website, in addition to providing the required written notification described above.

When contracting with a Food Service Management Company or Vended Meal Provider

Grove Christian Academy will ensure that any third-party provider with whom the school district enters into either an original or modified contract after July 1, 2021, adheres to the school district's school meals policy.

Health and Safety

Grove Christian Academy works diligently to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all students. Parent and student cooperation with school health and safety policies is necessary in order to avoid accidents and to properly care for students. Grove Christian Academy will be diligent in their efforts to always provide a safe and healthy learning environment. We ask that parents maintain an open line of communication with school leaders to ensure the health and safety of all our students are considered.

Visitors

All visitors are required to check-in at the Main Office entrance of the building (Door D). All exterior doors will be locked during normal school hours.

Parents are welcome to visit the school but must come to the office first to receive a visitor pass. Parents who come to pick up their child are not to go directly to the classrooms, please come to the office to sign out their child or bring child belongings.

Prospective school-age students may attend if invited by a Grove Christian Academy student and pre-approved by the Head of School at least 24 hours before the visit. Visitors must sign in and out at the school office, even if they are visiting only for lunch. All visitors must abide by school dress code and behavior policies while on campus.

Emergency Drills

Fire, tornado, and lock down emergency drills will be conducted throughout the school year in accordance with regulations. Evacuation maps are in each classroom.

Head Lice Policy

If lice or nits are found on a student, they will be removed from class, and the parents will be notified to pick up their child as soon as possible. Students need to be treated with medication and be nit free before they are allowed to return to the classroom. Parents are encouraged to give notice to the school in the event that they find head lice or nits on their child at home. This will help prevent the spread of head lice at school.

Sickness

In the best interest of every child's well-being, parents are requested to keep their child home when they are sick. If a child has symptoms such as elevated temperature (100.5 or higher), rash,

vomiting, excessive nasal discharge, diarrhea, or pink eye, please keep your child home. If your child develops symptoms at school, they will be sent to the office, and you will be notified to pick up your child as soon as possible. Your child is to be kept at home until they are symptom free for 24 hours unless other instructions from your doctor apply.

Medication

Students are not permitted to carry medication (either over the counter or prescription) on their person or store them in their desks, lockers, or backpacks. All medication must be stored in the school office in a clearly marked Ziploc bag with the child's name, date, dose, number of doses, and the time to be taken. Designated school staff will administer all medications in the school office. Non-prescription pain relievers (such as Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen) may be given in the office with parent permission.

Outside Play and Severe Weather

Outside play is encouraged at Grove Christian Academy and outside recess will be a part of the school day as weather permits. Grove Christian Academy will consult the latest Childcare Weather Watch guide to determine whether students will be able to engage in outside play each day or not. Students will go outside unless the temperature or windchill is more than 0 degrees Fahrenheit. Please send your child appropriate clothing to accommodate the ever-changing Minnesota weather. Outerwear sufficient for going outside will not be provided in the office due to lack of storage space. Students who do not have appropriate winter gear will remain indoors during recess.

Attendance Policies

One of the keys to successful academic achievement is regular attendance at school. School attendance is not only required by state law, but it also becomes a permanent part of the student's record. Grove Christian Academy encourages students to be in attendance when school is in session, however, we understand there are times when your student may need to be absent for reasons other than illness. Please make yourself knowledgeable of the school calendar for scheduled days off. The school calendar is available on the school website – grovechristianmn.org

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. each day. Students who arrive after 10:00 a.m. or leave before 12:00 p.m. will be counted absent for half a day. All absences will be recorded even if a note is brought to school. Medical or dental appointments during the school day will count toward the student's number of excused absences. Any school-sponsored activity will not result in absences for the participant. (i.e., leaving early for athletic functions).

Drop Off and Pick Up

Students may arrive in their classrooms at 7:50 each morning. Students arriving before this time should report to the cafeteria area if eating breakfast or the gym if not eating breakfast. Students are required to leave the school building and the school grounds immediately after the 3:00 p.m. dismissal unless enrolled in the After Care program. Students involved in school-sponsored activities must report to the teacher or coach responsible for the activity immediately after school. Any student not picked up by 3:15pm will be added to After Care for that day and will be charged \$10 per student.

Before and After Care

Before Care may hours begin at 7:30 a.m. and will meet in the cafeteria area where they will be supervised until 7:50 a.m. At this time they will be released to go to their respective classrooms.

After Care hours run from 3:00 p.m. until 5:15 p.m. The daily cost for this program is \$10/day per student.

Late Fee and Late Pick-Up:

- Aftercare ends at 5:15 pm. A \$10.00 minimum late fee is charged for the first ten minutes with \$1.00 per minute fee incurred thereafter.
- Aftercare service will no longer be available if you are late three (3) times in picking up your child.

Absences

Please notify the school office by 7:30 a.m. if your child is going to be absent (please leave a message if there is no answer). If we do not receive notification that your child is going to be absent, we will contact you to ensure that your student is ok.

A student should not accumulate more than six (6) unexcused absences per semester in order to be successful academically. Exceptions will be considered for extended illness which will require a doctor's excuse or prearranged family trips. A letter will be sent home if students exceed this amount, and parents will be asked to meet with school administration to work on solutions to this issue. Should it become necessary, excessive absences will be reported to Crow Wing County Child Protective Services as school personnel are mandated reporters and required by law to report truancy issues.

Tardiness

Punctuality is a matter of primary importance in the education process. Students who are tardy may disrupt the educational process and jeopardize their own academic achievement. All Grove Christian Academy students need to be in the classroom and seated by 8:00 a.m. If students are tardy for any reason, they must check in with the office and present a signed and dated note from their parents stating the details of the tardiness (unless the office has been notified by phone or email). The student will sign in and be permitted to class with a pass from the office. **Three tardies will be considered as one absence.** If tardiness numbers accrue more than 2 absences in a quarter, the principal may call for a meeting with the parents and students to address the situation and seek a solution.

Signing Students Out of School

Grove Christian Academy is a closed campus, and no student is to leave at any time without previous parental written permission. A student will be considered truant, and a parent will be contacted if they leave without permission.

If the student needs to leave school early, parents must inform the school office or send their student with a signed note from their parents or guardian with the date, time, and reason that they need to leave. All students are currently too young to drive and will not be released to anyone other than the student's parents, or the designated people that the parent has authorized.

Healthcare Appointments

Whenever possible, all medical and dental appointments should be made outside of regular school hours. Academic excellence is best achieved when students maintain consistent schedules with their classes. All appointments that result in a student missing school, should be communicated at least a day in advance whenever possible. This allows teachers to prepare the students for what they may miss ahead of time, where applicable.

School Closings

Family contact information is placed within our automated messaging system. This system is used to contact families for emergencies, cancellations, updates, etc. You will receive a text and/or email notifying you concerning any weather-related closings. If school closes early due to bad weather, students should be picked up as soon as possible. We usually follow the lead of other area schools. Please do not assume anything and make sure you are in the know of any closings, late starts, or early outs. As always, communication is the key in all instances.

Technology Usage

General Purpose:

- Student access to Grove Christian Academy's internet connection is intended for educational purposes only.
- Grove Christian Academy's computers will be used to conduct school-related research and/or produce school-related documents or projects.
- School computers will only be used under the supervision of school personnel.

Expectations and Responsibilities:

- Students are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards when using school computers, specifically avoiding plagiarism, copyright violations, cheating, and offensive or inappropriate content.
- Students should not attempt to circumvent the web filters that are in place and are required to immediately report any failure of the web filter system.
- The student is responsible for any damage – physical or electronic – to school-owned hardware, software, or data which occurs because of abuse or negligence.
- Equipment should only be disconnected or moved by IT support staff.
- Students will be assigned a computer; however, it remains the property of the school. They will only be allowed to go home with the permission of a staff member. Computers need to be placed back in the charging device at the end of the day.

Information Privacy and Storage:

- All data created, sent, received, or stored on Grove Christian Academy's computers, server, or network are the property of Grove Christian Academy and may be reviewed by the IT manager or other school personnel at any time if a concern exists.
- Students should only save information on their assigned network user directory or a personal flash drive. School computers may be erased occasionally without notice for maintenance or repair.

Restrictions:

- No software – including plug-ins – will be downloaded and/or installed by a student unless the student is given specific instructions from a teacher to do so.
- No electronic mail or other communication software (IM, etc.) will be used by the student at any time unless the student is given specific instructions from a teacher to do so.

- The student will not attach any hardware to a computer (zip drives, external CD drives, digital cameras, etc.) unless the student is given specific instructions from a teacher to do so.

Cell Phone Policy

Students may not have cell phones and/or other electronic devices such as earbuds, smartwatches, iPad, games, etc. outside of their backpacks during the school day. This includes before and after school programs and school field trips, unless with the permission of Grove Christian Academy's staff.

If brought to school, these devices must be left in the students' lockers or backpacks. They must not be visible and remain turned off. Please note that placing a cell phone into silent/vibrate or text messaging modes is not considered "turned off" and is prohibited.

Video recording or taking pictures is not permitted without the consent of the subject being recorded.

Consequences:

If a student chooses to disobey these guidelines, the student's access to the Grove Christian Academy's network and Grove Christian Academy's computers may be suspended for a period of time to be determined. Repeated violations will be handled by the Head of School or designated Grove Christian Academy's administration who will make the final determination concerning the consequences.

If a student is found to be in possession of a cell phone or other personal electronic device outside of permitted times, the cell phone will be taken to the office and will be returned to a parent or guardian at the end of the school day. In the event of repeated occurrences, further disciplinary actions may be taken.

Grove Christian Academy is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage of any cell phone or personal electronic devices.

Lost and Found

The "Lost and Found" area is located in the main office. All students who have lost articles should check periodically for those articles. Any article not claimed by the end of a current academic quarter may be donated or discarded. To reduce the accumulation of "Lost and Found" articles, we ask that every student have his or her name on all articles of clothing or other belongings. School-owned textbooks and small jewelry items will also be placed in the school office.

Unclaimed “Lost and Found” articles will be donated to a local charity.

Academics

Academic excellence is a high priority at all times and to this end the school is staffed by qualified, professional teachers.

Curriculum

Grove Christian Academy meets all standards prescribed by the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning and offers those subjects commonly taught at the kindergarten, elementary, and middle school levels. Grove Christian Academy uses a combination of curriculum published by Abeka, Jr. Great Books, BJU Press, Notgrass, Sadlier-Oxford, Novarre, and other publishing companies. Every subjected area is guided by a selected and established curriculum.

Curriculum selections are continually evaluated for their academic strength and effectiveness within our school environment.

Academic Detention

- A. Lunch/Recess or after school detention are consequences used by Grove Christian Academy to encourage a change in behavior or allow a student designated time to complete late work. Teachers may use academic detention whenever there are assignments that have not been completed, when either the student was present at school or the student’s makeup work was not completed within the two (2) day time limit for each absent day. Academic detentions are not punishment. Rather, they are used as a tool to encourage responsibility on the student’s part and prevent a student from academic decline. Late or missing work may impact a student’s ability to participate in fieldtrips or special school or classroom activities. **Assignments are not optional. They must be completed whether on time or late.**
- B. A one-day notice will be given to parents regarding detention. Scheduled times for detention are 3:00 – 3:30, however, the hours may be adjusted as appropriate.

Academic Dishonesty

Students are expected to conduct themselves honestly and with integrity in producing their own work. All forms of cheating, borrowing and plagiarism are prohibited and will result in disciplinary actions. Behavior that is unacceptable includes, but is not limited to:

1. Using a cell phone, or other electronic device, in any way during a test
2. Looking at or copying another student's homework, test, or quiz
3. Allowing another student to look at or copy answers from your test or quiz
4. Using any other method to get/give test or quiz answers
5. Taking a test or quiz in part or in whole to use or to give to others,
6. Working with others on projects that are meant to be done individually
7. Copying information from a source without proper attribution
8. Taking papers from other students, publications, or from the internet and
9. Logging into another student's online account and viewing/completing work for that student.
10. Use of Artificial Intelligence to write or create any work that is expected to be completed by the student

Violators of this policy will be disciplined on a case-by-case basis depending on the seriousness of the violation, prior violations, and other factors.

Academic Probation

All Grove Christian Academy students are expected to maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA). If a student falls below this standard, a parent meeting will take place to identify areas of needed academic improvement. The possibility of evaluating study skills, increasing student effort, testing through area professionals, and the public school system and/or being placed on academic probation may be discussed.

Tuition will continue to be paid during the probation time.

Grading Reports

Academic evaluation for Kindergarten and music use the following code:

- 4 – Exceeds Standards
- 3 – Achieves Standards
- 2 – Approaching Standards
- 1 – Needs Support

Grading for grades 1-8 is reported either by percentages as follows or by the evaluation scaled noted above. The following percentage scale is used:

A+ =99-100	A=98-94	A- =93-90
B+=89-87	B=86-84	B- =83-80
C+=79-77	C=76-74	C- =73-70
D+=69-67	D=66-64	D- =63-60
F=0-59		

An “E” for Excellent, “S” for satisfactory, a “N” for needs improvement, and a “U” for unsatisfactory may be used for non-academic classes. The inclusion of an “I” on the grading report represents incomplete work.

Report Cards

Since Grove Christian Academy has four grading periods, report cards will be issued at the end of each of the grading periods. Report cards are sent home with the student for the parent to review. The last report card of the year will be sent home on the last day of school. If a student is absent on the last day the report card may be picked up at the office or will be emailed to parents. Grove Christian Academy will be diligent in performing many “progress checks” throughout the year as we understand the importance of consistent feedback and support. We want to ensure we catch any student who may begin to fall behind their normal pace of learning. We have a growth mindset at all grade levels and believe ALL students can grow academically throughout the entire school year.

Parent-Teacher Communication

We desire to keep parents continually informed about their child and school events, and we highly encourage parents take the time to meet and get to know the teacher(s) that their student spends so much time with each day. Notes from the office, contacts by the students’ teachers via telephone or e-mail, Class Dojo and the Grove Christian Academy website are some of the ways that we achieve this. Please ask your children for any communications from their teachers or the school office.

If you need to speak with a teacher, please do not interrupt teaching time to discuss private matters in front of other students. Please schedule an appointment with the teacher or staff member with whom you need to speak.

Formal Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled for grades K – 8th following the first and third quarters. Parents are encouraged to come to the conferences and visit their child’s teachers.

There may be times when your child may have some disagreement with or opposition to our Grove Christian Academy standards as we seek to guide them toward Christian maturity and the achievement of academic excellence. Such times may cause misunderstandings between the home and the school. We value open communication between the parties involved as we attempt to resolve misunderstandings. Grove Christian Academy personnel look upon these moments of difficulty as opportunities to work more closely with your family. Our heart is always to work with parents to draw out and cultivate your child's God-given strengths while working through their struggles. The desired outcome for all communication is reconciliation and what is best for the student in finding and fulfilling God's purpose for their life. We also believe it is important for adults to model for students what healthy disagreement and conflict look like. To this end, the following are steps for resolving a misunderstanding or dispute that we adhere to at Grove Christian Academy:

1. Speak directly with the teacher or staff member involved with your concern
2. Request a meeting with the Head of School if the matter goes unresolved
3. Request a meeting with the Head of School and GCA School Board if the matter is still unresolved

Social media is not a place to air grievances as it puts all students, staff, and parents at risk. Please be aware that bypassing the above steps and preemptively posting comments about the school, staff or other stakeholders of the school may result in the immediate removal of your student from the school and a forfeiture of any tuition refund.

Homework

Grove Christian Academy strives to keep homework to a minimum. However, homework may be given for several reasons. Grove Christian Academy believes students learn in a variety of settings and will always do our best to facilitate as many options as possible. Listed below are a few reasons why we may assign homework throughout the school year.

1. **Reinforcement:** We believe that most students require practice and drills to master material essential to their education process.
2. **Practice:** Following classroom explanation, illustration, and drill on new work, homework is given so that the material will be mastered.
3. **Remedial Activity:** As the instruction progresses, various weak points in a student's understanding of a subject may become evident. Homework, following instruction, is given to overcome such difficulties.
4. **Special Projects:** Book reports, compositions, special research assignments and projects are some of the activities that are frequently the subject of homework attention. We do request parent's full cooperation in seeing that the assignments are completed.

5. **Late Work:** Class work not completed because the student chose not to use time wisely in class becomes homework.

Make Up Work

Assigned Work for Absences in Elementary and Middle School

In some subjects it is very difficult for teachers to know what material will be covered during a student's upcoming absence. It is up to the teacher's discretion to determine if and what assignments will be assigned before or during an extended absence. If a student does not get an assignment before they leave on an extended absence, parents or students need to contact the teacher upon return and work out a reasonable schedule for work to be completed in a timely fashion.

Elementary Students

If a student is ill and wants to work on make-up assignments before returning to school, please allow the classroom teacher to gather the assignments and books at least one full day before needed.

Middle School Students

Students who are absent and want their textbooks and assignments prior to returning to school must make arrangements with the office to get the needed items. Please allow the classroom teacher at least one full day to gather assignments and books. Make up assignments can be completed after the student returns to school. In most situations, students are given 2 days to complete work for each day they were absent due to illness.

Chapel (The Grove)

At the very heart of Christian education is the aim to invest in the spiritual growth and vitality of the student body. As part of this investment, chapel services will be planned to spiritually challenge and grow the students. Grove Christian Academy will provide speakers from our staff, churches and our community. All students are expected to participate in the chapel services.

Standardized Testing

Standardized testing is required by the State of Minnesota Department of Education and will be administered to students in grades K-8 each spring. The results of these tests are given to parents and placed in the student's permanent cumulative folder in the school office.

Field Trips

A well-rounded educational experience is best achieved by leaving the classroom and going on a field trip. Students are to understand that this is a privilege and with it comes the responsibility of representing our school in a positive manner. The same policies that apply to school and classroom behavior also apply to students when on a field trip. The staff in charge of the field trip will provide a permission form giving information concerning the event and cost and will have a place for the parent/guardian to sign and date. This permission form must be returned, signed, and dated before your child may attend the field trip. Generally, school vehicles will be used to transport students on all field trips. Parents will be notified if other vehicles/drivers are used for the field trip.

Dress Code

Our dress code has been established for two reasons – first, to reflect our personal Christian testimony as Christians, we always want to have a proper testimony for Christ in every aspect of our lives, this includes what we wear. There are four principles that serve as basic fundamentals of our Christian testimony and will be regularly taught and applied at Grove Christian Academy:

- **Modesty:** Does this call undue or inappropriate attention to my body?
- **Distinction between the sexes:** Does this distinguish me as the boy or girl God made me to be?
- **Distinction from the world:** Does this help me identify with Christ and not the world?
- **Appropriateness:** Is this proper for the activity at hand?

Second, the dress code is designed to help create an environment conducive to learning. A classroom filled with well-groomed, neatly clothed students creates a better learning environment and lends a note of seriousness to the task at hand.

To this end, the dress code at Grove Christian Academy will follow what is known as “business casual.”

General Principles:

- Students must be in compliance with the standard of dress prior to entering the school and continue until the end of the school day.

- Clothes should be clean, in good repair, gender appropriate, suitable for the weather and modest.
- All clothing must be properly sized, modest and unrevealing in cut, fit, and texture.
- Modesty is expected at all times at any school event or function: including any extracurricular activities. Anything that is wrinkled, poorly fitting, or too revealing should be avoided.
- The standard of dress is for all school days unless special dress is approved by the administration.
- **When in doubt, do not wear it.** It is always better to err on the side of looking professional!

Pants: Khakis and neutral colored dress pants such as black, navy blue, and gray are staples to a business casual wardrobe. In addition, jeans of any color that are in good condition may be worn. **Leggings, yoga pants, excessively tight pants, and pants with holes are not to be worn.**

Leggings may be worn under skirts or dresses that are at least one inch longer than the wearer's finger tips.

Shirts: Shirts are not required to be collared, however, button down shirts, polos or non-button-down blouses are ideal. Sleeveless tops need to be paired with a sweater. Plunging necklines, spaghetti straps, tank tops, or midriff shirts are not part of a business casual wardrobe and, therefore, not part of the school dress code. T-shirts may be worn under sweaters, pullovers, and cardigans. **Shirts or sweatshirts must be free of cartoon characters, movie or music groups or political messaging.**

Sweaters, pullovers, and cardigans: These are great options for layering during long Minnesota winters. Sweatshirts may be worn as long as they do not include offensive language, cartoon characters or other advertising inappropriate for the school setting.

Dresses and skirts: Girls may wear dresses and skirts as long as they are respectable and modest in length. Dresses and skirts must be longer than mid-thigh and must extend at least one inch past fingertips. Additionally, it is always a good idea to test out sitting in them when trying them on. Furthermore, as recess and outdoor activities (weather permitting) will always be a part of the school day it is advisable for shorts or leggings to be worn under dresses and skirts.

Shorts: Shorts may be worn during warmer weather, however, they must be no short than mid-thigh length (reaching at least 2 inches past fingertips).

Shoes: Dress shoes, tennis shoes, and sandals are all appropriate for the classroom. No flip flops! Please have your student avoid wearing boots or crocs on PE days or send an extra pair of gym shoes with your student.

Hair: Hair is to be clean and well-groomed. **Hair that is streaked with colors outside the spectrum of normal hair coloring is not allowed.**

Tattoos and Piercings: Tattoos are not to be visible and are to be covered. Girls may wear earrings in their ears, but all other jewelry associated with a piercing is to be removed. Guys are to remove all jewelry associated with a piercing.

At Grove Christian Academy, it is our goal to develop in students the habit of “putting your best foot forward.” A wardrobe does not have to be expansive to make a good first impression. The Grove Christian Academy school board, faculty, and staff along with parental input, have established the dress code guidelines. It is primarily the responsibility of parents to make sure their child is dressed and groomed properly for school. Any student wearing an article of clothing deemed inappropriate by a teacher or the administrator will be asked if they have any other clothing available at school. If not, the student will be given something else to wear. Should the problem continue, parents will be contacted.

Preschool students are not subject to the dress code.

Friday’s are Grove Christian Academy Spirit Day. School t-shirts or sweatshirts are encouraged!

Discipline Policy

Our desire is to develop the habit of living with lasting convictions rather than just temporary compliance to a certain set of rules. With this in mind, we do not *punish* students we seek to *discipline* students to bring about growth which leads to self-control and long-term positive behavior. Positive reinforcement is a necessary part of a child’s learning. Because of this, individual teachers use a variety of methods of encouragement and reinforcement in the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to manage their own classrooms and parents will be informed at the beginning of the school year of your student’s classroom management plan. In serious disciplinary matters, the teacher will involve the administration and, when needed, the parents. Continued misbehavior could result in suspension or dismissal.

The following guiding principles form the expectations of student behavior:

1. As it applies to the classroom, the general premise is that no student has the right to interfere with the teaching and learning taking place.
2. To change unwanted behavior, teachers begin with the lowest level of intervention and increase interventions as necessary to protect the learning environment.
3. At Grove Christian Academy, we value the parents’ insight, experience and wisdom regarding their children. We expect parents to participate in the child’s discipline plan when appropriate.
4. These are the behavior expectations at Grove Christian Academy. These expectations extend beyond the school building and are expected in the community as well as online.
 - a. Show a reverence for God, the Bible and Christianity.

- b. Demonstrate a Christ-like example by showing a positive attitude and positive behavior, including words and actions.
- c. Comply with all rules established by the classroom teacher.
- d. Obey and show respect to all teachers and staff, in class, at lunchtime and during after-school activities.
- e. Respect one another. Deal with each other in kindness and love.
- f. Leave no one out.
- g. Work together to solve problems when conflict arises, taking responsibility for behavior.
- h. Respect one another's property, taking or borrowing such property only with permission.
- i. Walk in the building at all times.
- j. Remain quiet when in the hallways while classes are in session.
- k. Keep all work areas clean.
- l. Complete assigned classwork on time and according to instructions given by the teacher.
- m. Participate in class discussion.
- n. Care for textbooks.
- o. Use student planners if provided.
- p. Have dress, groom, and conduct that does not distract from the academic process.
- q. Use playground equipment and activity in a safe and proper manner.
- r. Treat others as you want to be treated (Matthew 7:12)

Interventions

After seeking a change in undesirable behavior with interventions in the classroom, lunchroom, gym, or playground (wherever the difficulty is taking place) the following disciplinary actions may be taken, with a desire to have consequences that fit the offense:

1. **Behavior Report.** For students in K-8, should unwanted behavior occur, the staff will use a "behavior report" to communicate an incident with parents, the classroom teacher and the office. Parents will be asked to sign and return the report given to their student.
2. **Loss of Recess.** There may be instances when a student forfeits their ability to participate in recess. All students are fully informed of expectations and consequences and therefore any loss of recess is a fully informed choice that a student has made.
3. **After School Detention.** If your student is required to stay after school for detention as a behavioral consequence, during that time preventative measures are used to help the child learn from the experience. The student will help decide goals to make better choices with preventative intervention or consequence. Spiritual applications are used for healing and restoration.
4. **Suspension.** There are two kinds of suspension, in-school and out-of-school. For both kinds of suspension, a phone conference with parents would be held to discuss the situation, desired results and the amount of removal time.

- a. **In school suspension** is for cases of continued misbehavior, unimproved after the consequence of detention. This may also be used for other situations that are severe causing the safety of other students or staff to be in question. The student would not be involved in school activities but would be kept in a supervised area and given assigned class work. Only partial credit is given for assignments completed during in-school suspension.
 - b. **Out of school suspension** may be used after detention, in-school suspension, or when there is concern for the safety of students or staff. Out-of-school suspension would mean that the student would be under the care of the parents and not be allowed on campus. The student is expected to complete all missed work and only partial credit is given.
5. **Expulsion.** When a student's behavior is not in accord with school policies or principles, and school personnel are not able to help him/her correct the situation, the parents will be called for a conference. If, after such a conference, and a reasonable period of time for readjustment, the administration and teacher(s) feel the student's presence is detrimental to the school and/or student body, the parents may be asked to remove the student from enrollment. The constant infraction and lack of regard concerning the conduct items listed in this Student Handbook may result in the necessity of expulsion.

Grove Christian Academy reserves the right to act in the best interest of the student/staff body and not use the above steps should the infraction of the student justify such, at the discretion of the administrator.

A redemptive approach may be considered for a student and their family who exhibit a repentant and humble heart and if it's administratively determined that continued enrollment is in the best interest of the student and Grove Christian Academy student body.

Searches

It is our intention that Grove Christian Academy be a safe place for students to learn. Therefore, the Grove Christian Academy administration reserves the right to inspect lockers, book bags, clothing and vehicles driven on school property, at any time. Enrollment at Grove Christian Academy constitutes consent by all parents or guardians and the student for such inspection. To maintain order and discipline in the school and to protect the safety and welfare of students and personnel, only school administration may search a student, locker, bag, or vehicle. Under circumstances outlined below, they may seize illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search. A student's failure to permit searches and seizures, as provided in this policy, will be considered grounds for disciplinary action. Individuals and their effects are subject to being searched by administration if a school official has reasonable cause to believe that the person is in possession of illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials.

If the attitude and spirit of a child is deemed contrary to the functioning of a Christian atmosphere at Grove Christian Academy, the behavior will be immediately addressed with the Head of School and the parents/guardians.

We pray daily your student will grow internally as the Holy Spirit transforms them to become the young man and young woman of God they are intended to become. We pray this growth develops into leadership that enables them to lead by example and demonstrate true Godly character.

Conclusion

We look forward to partnering with you in the raising of your precious child. We take this responsibility very seriously as we are guided by God’s Word to make an investment into the next generation to cultivate men and women who are “oaks of righteousness,” able to stand firm in who God created them to be and use their gifts to change lives and bring glory to God.