

Gulf Coast Christian Schools

Parent/Student Handbook For Elementary and Middle School Students 2011-12

6355 38TH AVENUE NORTH

ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA 33710

(727) 345-3448

OPERATING HOURS 7:00 am UNTIL 6:00 pm

OFFICE HOURS 8:00 am UNTIL 5:00 pm

SCHOOL COLORS: BLUE AND GOLD

“Making a World of Difference”

FULLY ACCREDITED BY THE NATIONAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
FULLY ACCREDITED BY AdvanceED, Effective January 2012

INDEX

MISSION STATEMENT	3
PHILOSOPHY	6
PURPOSE STATEMENTS.....	4
REGISTRATION AND TUITION FEES.....	7
SCHOOL POLICIES.....	8
Admission Criteria.....	10
Arrivals & Departures	8
Attendance Policy.....	8
Birthday/Parties	10
Books	10
Bullying.....	10
Cells Phone.....	10
Challenged Material.....	10
Change of Address.....	11
Chapel.....	11
Class Observations	11
Codes of Conduct	11
Conferences	12
Courtesy.....	12
Discipline.....	12
Dress Code.....	14
Extended Learning.....	16
Field Trips	16
Fire & Emergency Drills	16
Fund Raising.....	17
Grading Scale.....	17
Homework	17
Honor Roll	18
Illness.....	18
Insufficient Funds	18
Lunches.....	18
Medication.....	19

Naptime	19
Open House	19
Physical Education	19
Pre-Entry Screenings	20
Photograph/Video Release.....	25
PTFA	19
Registration Fees	20
Report Cards	20
School Closings.....	20
School Pictures	20
Sports Program	20
Summer Program	20
Technology.....	24
Telephones.....	20
Tobacco and Alcohol Use.....	21
Toys	21
Volunteers.....	21

MIDDLE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

Academic Probation.....	22
Disciplinary System.....	23
Make-up Work.....	22
School Rules.....	22

MISSION STATEMENT

GCCS is a community of Christians whose mission is to educate students using the best educational practices, including innovative and traditional methods, in order to guide students to grow and mature as Jesus did, “in wisdom and stature, in favor with God and men.” Luke 2:52 NIV

Gulf Coast Christian Schools is a non-profit organization and operates under a license from the Pinellas County License Board and is fully accredited by the National Christian School Association.

Gulf Coast Christian Schools offer quality educational resources. In addition to the normal academic program, your child will learn respect for authority, patriotism, moral values, and faith in God. Our goal is to promote the well being of your child in all phases of his or her development - physical, social, cognitive, emotional and spiritual growth.

Gulf Coast Christian Schools admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to students at the school. It does not

discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational and admission policies or other school-administered programs.

Special Note

Every effort is made at Gulf Coast Christian Schools to provide a wholesome environment, which is conducive to learning and spiritual growth. It may, however, be expedient during the school year to develop new policies and/or to adapt present policies and procedures.

PURPOSE STATEMENTS

SPIRITUAL

Gulf Coast Christian Schools seek to provide:

- A Christian learning environment
- The example of Christ and His principles as the ultimate source and authority in every involvement and activity
- The development of the desire for Christian leadership roles at school, at home, in the community, and in the church
- The development of an awareness of Biblical teachings and principles as they apply to our daily lives
- The acquisition of skills and understandings utilized in the development of Christian character and intelligent citizenship

ACADEMIC

Gulf Coast Christian Schools seek to provide:

- A quality scholastic program
- The stimulation of intellectual curiosity
- A preparatory situation for the development of leadership roles during and following the formal education years
- The opportunity for the development of clear, logical, and effective communication in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening
- The development of a respect for the culture, traditions, and ideals of our democratic society
- The opportunity to develop appropriate skills in mathematics, science, literature, language arts and social studies.

SOCIAL

Gulf Coast Christian Schools seek to provide:

- The development of socially responsible citizens
- Meaningful lines of communication among students, parents, faculty members, and the administration
- The development of a respect for positive guidance and authority
- The encouragement of courtesy and politeness on the part of all individuals

- The development of a respect for the property belonging to others and oneself.

EMOTIONAL

Gulf Coast Christian Schools seek to provide:

- The development of the understanding and appreciation of oneself
- The development of the ability to discern one's own faults and the decisiveness to make the appropriate changes when necessary
- The development of an appreciation for other individuals and their strengths and weaknesses

PHYSICAL

Gulf Coast Christian Schools seek to provide:

- The development of an interest in and a desire for a healthy and sound physical condition on the part of each individual
- The development of a desire for a wholesome appearance depicting neatness, cleanliness, and appropriateness of dress and mannerisms
- Developmentally appropriate physical activities

PHILOSOPHY

Gulf Coast Christian Schools exist in order to provide students with the opportunity to grow and mature, *“as Jesus did, in wisdom and in stature, in favor with God and man.”* Luke 2:52 NIV. This guiding principle is incorporated into a curriculum designed to guide students to develop spiritually, mentally, physically, and socially.

The foundation of Gulf Coast Christian Schools is the belief that God and His son Jesus are creators and sustainers of all, as the Godhead – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus, the Word, became flesh and was sent for the purpose of saving mankind. We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God given to us through the Holy Spirit guiding the writings of men. We believe the Bible is our guide for living and daily decision making.

Gulf Coast Christian Schools were founded on the belief that man has a divine origin that he was created in the image of God, and that man has moral freedom and responsibility. We believe that man is saved by God’s grace through belief in and obedience to God’s word.

We believe that Christ is our example for our relationship to the world. Our view is toward an eternal life with God.

We believe that each student will be able to develop to his full potential and learn most efficiently when curricula and practices are developmentally appropriate and by consistently experiencing success in their efforts. We believe students learn Christian values by identifying with the Christian attitudes and conduct modeled by faculty and staff.

The role of the parents in the education of their children is critical to the success of the curricula of Gulf Coast Christian Schools. Parents are respected as primary teachers of their children and valued for their essential role in God’s plan for the family unit. The school utilizes many methods to maintain close communication between school and home. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in school life through participation in PTFA (Parent/Teacher/Friend/Association), classroom volunteer activities, and all school functions.

Gulf Coast Christian Schools have maintained a relationship with the church since its establishment. Faculty and staff are involved in a spiritual ministry as well as the educational process. The school seeks to be of service to the surrounding community and the area churches of Christ.

REGISTRATION AND TUITION FEES

A copy of the current registration/tuition schedule is available in the school office.

Extended learning is care provided before and after school, including intramurals, clubs, classes homework time, and free play.

- A **TUITION CONTRACT** will be signed by each parent/guardian.
- Tuition covers the regular school year (180 days). The Summer Camp for elementary and middle school students is priced separately and the schedule of fees for these will be available no later than April.

Tuition is payable monthly. Non-sufficient funds transactions are charged a fee of \$30.00. The student will not be allowed to attend if an account is more than **two months delinquent**. *The services of a collection agency may be used if the account is more than three months delinquent.*

Students will not be allowed to re-enroll for the next school year if there are any outstanding bills.

- **THE ANNUAL REGISTRATION FEE (which is non-refundable)** reserves the space in the classroom, includes the registration process and is due at the time of registration.
- **TUITION DISCOUNTS:** Additional students from same family - first student pays 100% of selected plan. The second student receives a \$300.00 annual discount and the third student and beyond receives a \$400.00 annual discount. Extended Learning charges are not discounted.

- **EXTENDED LEARNING SERVICES:**

\$3.75 an hour or any portion thereof from 3:00 – 6:00

\$25.00 for days when GCCS is closed for K-8 but open for care

Parents/guardian are responsible to pay \$5.00 per five minutes or any part thereof for any child who stays beyond 6:00 pm, to be paid before the child is accepted again into the Extended Learning program. Due to the variances in timepieces, the atomic clocks throughout the school will be used. You may wish to set your timepiece by them. If the parent has not contacted the school and clarified when the child will be picked up, after 7:00 pm, the child is considered to be abandoned. The local police department will be called should this occur. Parents who are late more than 30 minutes for five times will be asked to make other arrangements for child care during Extended Learning hours.

- **EARLY WITHDRAWAL FEE:** In the event of prolonged absence, withdrawal, and/or dismissal of the student after September 1, the parent or guardian will be responsible for all fees incurred through the day of withdrawal, plus an early withdrawal charge of \$300.00.
- **RE-ENROLLMENT:** In order for students to return to school the following year, all expenses from the previous year must be paid in full.
- **REPORT CARD RELEASE:** In the event of a student attending a new school, report cards will only be released when the balance is **paid in full**. The final report card will not be mailed until the annual tuition is **paid in full**.

SCHOOL POLICIES

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES: School begins at **8:20 am** daily.

- Students arriving at school between 8:00 and 8:20 will not be charged for Extended Learning. Students must report to Extended Learning; students should not wait outside classrooms without parents.
- Each elementary and middle school classroom at GCCS is equipped with an atomic clock that automatically sets itself correctly daily. These clocks will be used for all official school business including Extended Learning, opening and closing of school, etc.
- School begins at 8:20 am daily. Announcements will be at 8:25 am daily. Teachers will mark children tardy who arrive after 8:20.
- As your child arrives in the morning for Extended Learning, it is important that he/she be signed in on the time sheet. Sign-in sheets are located with the Extended Learning staff member on duty. Students arriving at class time are to go directly to their classrooms.

At the end of the day, children will be escorted to the Extended Learning Program or the parking lot area for pickup by the parent or person the parent has approved on the List of Authorized Persons. Children not picked up by 10 minutes following dismissal will be escorted to the Extended Learning Program.

As your child leaves from Extended Learning each afternoon, it is imperative that he/she be signed out on the time sheet. Failure to sign your child out may result in you being charged until 6:00 pm.

- If you must take a child out of class prior to the class dismissal, come to the office to sign the child out. The office will contact the teacher to send the child to the office to meet you.
- During the afternoon departure time (between 2:45 – 3:10 pm), if you are waiting for your child in the line of traffic and your child is not in the designated pick-up area, drive to the back of the line or park your car and wait.
- In order to keep children from crossing the line of traffic, maintain a single line. Do not block traffic preventing others from picking up their children.
- During inclement weather, children will be under the church overhang. Parents may circle through to pick up children. **No parking is allowed in this area.**
- The parking spaces next to the fellowship hall are for delivery trucks and church personnel. Do not park in this area.

ATTENDANCE POLICY School attendance is very crucial to your child's success in school. Special circumstances and illness do arise from time to time. The following policies will be enforced concerning absences. The only exception allowed will be for family emergencies.

- **ILLNESS** If your child is going to be absent due to illness, **call the school office** prior to the start of the school day. If your child is not to play outside upon his/her return from being ill, send a note to notify the teacher. Otherwise, he/she will be permitted to engage in outside activities.

- **MAKE UP WORK** It is your child’s responsibility to get the make-up work completed and turned in. Teachers determine the dates when make-up work is due. If the student is absent several days consecutively, all assignments will be due at a time designated by the teacher from the date he/she returns to school. Arrangements can be made for parents to pick up work in the school office if the office is contacted by 10:00 am. Work will be available for pick-up at 3:15 pm.

- **EXCUSED ABSENCES** Students with excused absences shall be given full make-up privileges. Students who wish to have their absences listed as “excused” must have a parent/ guardian call the office the morning of their absence or on the day of their return, or bring a **written statement** from a doctor, clinic, parent or guardian giving the reason for the absence. Parents may elect to write the absence excuse in the student’s planner. Students without such a note will be marked “unexcused.” Valid reasons for excused absences are:
 - Personal illness or illness in the family necessitating absence of the student
 - Death in the family or of intimate friend
 - Emergencies which arise, such as accidents
 - Educational travel, which has been prearranged and approved by parents, teachers, and school administration. Students will be responsible for all make-up work.
 - Pre-approved trips such as family vacations and church youth group activities

- **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES** Any absence for reasons other than those listed above will be “unexcused”. An unexcused absence is subject to the following:
 - Daily work: If an absence is unexcused, students will not receive credit for work scheduled for that school day. A zero will be recorded for each subject affected.
 - Tests: Tests cannot be made up.

- **FAMILY TRIPS** Taking your child out of school for vacations or church group activities can cause him/her to lose valuable time in the classroom and get behind on learning. If you choose to take a vacation during school time, you must arrange this with your child’s teacher at least one week prior to the missing of school. Your child will have one day per missed day to make up the work. All make-up work will be given to you no later than your child’s return to school. Tests will be made up at the teacher’s convenience. All work cannot be made up: discussions cannot be recreated, etc. Delay to make up the work beyond the date given by the teacher will result in a 0 on the work unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher.

- **UNREPORTED ABSENCE** Any unreported absence will be considered unexcused. All unexcused absences will result in zeros being given on all missed assignments. Work must be completed in order to assure that the student learns the material covered or the student may exempt the work by taking the test and making an A grade but the grade will not be counted.

TARDINESS Daily activities will begin at 8:20 a.m. Being on time is important. Any student arriving after 8:20 am will be marked tardy by the teacher. One tardy per year will be excused for car problems. If a child is tardy or late for ½ day, it will be recorded as an absence. Work for excused and unexcused tardiness must be made up, but credit will only be given for excused tardiness. Timeliness is very important for your child’s achievements, and we trust that you will work with us to ensure he or she gets the great education for which you are paying. An average of five minutes late per day results in your child missing over 6 hours of instruction per year. *After the 6th tardy for the*

school year, the teacher will request a parent conference. After the 9th tardy for the school year, a parent conference with the administrator will be required.

ADMISSION CRITERIA The following are required for admission to GCCS:

- Average stanine (Stanford Achievement Test prediction of the student's ability to succeed in academics) of 4 or higher
- Positive recommendation from previous school
- Commitment by child to do best at GCCS

Students enrolled at GCCS who have stanines that fall below an average of 3 will be referred to a program that can better meet their needs.

All new incoming students are on probation at GCCS for the first six weeks.

BIRTHDAYS/PARTIES Birthday celebrations at school are to be kept to a minimum. A small food special treat is usually acceptable, but is up to the discretion of the individual teacher. Invitations for parties at the child's home or off campus may be given to the classroom teacher for distribution only if every student in the class is to receive one. Otherwise, the parent must mail them directly.

BOOKS Library and textbooks that are lost, damaged, or destroyed by a student must be paid for by that student. If the book is lost, destroyed, or damaged so badly as to be unusable, the student will be responsible for the replacement cost of the book, including shipping and handling.

Parents and students are asked to work closely with the school in returning library materials at the appointed time.

BULLYING A student is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students. (D. Olweus)

Consequences of Bullying Behavior Proven allegations of bullying can result in:

- Verbal or written reprimand
- In-school or out-of-school suspension
- Dismissal
- Criminal prosecution

CELL PHONES are ONLY allowed on campus if a signed permit is on file in the school office. It must be turned into the teacher or adult in charge for the school day. If a child uses his/her cell phone on school campus it will be confiscated and turned into the adult in charge or the administrator. All phone calls made by students must be made using a school phone and with permission of the teacher.

Parents are to refrain from talking on cell phones when in the presence of students and teachers. When arriving on campus, phones should not be in use.

CHALLENGED MATERIALS Individuals with concerns about the content of books and/or resources are to address the concerns in writing to the principal. These concerns will be reviewed by both the principal and staff. The decision will be communicated to the individual with the concern. If the individual still challenges the position taken by the staff and principal, he/she may put the concern in writing to the board to be addressed. A letter will be written by the board and sent to the individual.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS If you change your address, phone number, or work location, notify the school. It is important that the information in your child's file be kept current. This is for the protection of your child and you.

CHAPEL The heart of the activities at Gulf Coast Christian Schools is the chapel service. It is here that the entire school gains personal strength and inspiration for the tasks of the day. Chapel is devoted first to Christian worship and then to a variety of other activities of interest and educational values that contribute to the total program of Christian education. Students are required to attend and are encouraged to participate in each chapel experience. During chapel and general assemblies, the student body is expected to be on its best behavior, showing respect and gratitude for visitors and presenters. Parents and friends are invited to attend chapel service at any time and are encouraged to participate in the worship along with the students.

CLASS OBSERVATIONS Class observations require an appointment made through the school office or with the teacher at least 24 hours in advance. Observations should be limited to 30 minutes.

CODES OF CONDUCT Institutions have standards and expectations. GCCS standards should be applied equally to school hours and non-school hours as long as the student is enrolled as a student of GCCS.

Problems arising from disregard for school, for others, or for school property will be dealt with by the Administration through counseling, discipline and parental contact. Excessive problems in attitude and/or conduct result in more severe penalties. Attendance at GCCS is a privilege. Student's whose attitude and conduct, both in and out of school, are deemed undesirable and in opposition to the basic principles and purpose of this school will not be allowed to continue.

The following offenses may lead to the suspension or dismissal of a student. It is the reserved right of the Administration to determine judgment. Violators may be subject to immediate suspension.

- Alcoholic beverages (use or possession)
- Bullying (any behavior that is unwelcome, unwanted, or uninvited by the recipient)
- Cheating
- Continual non-support of school standards
- Cyber bullying
- Defacing school property
- Disrespect or insolence
- Drug use or possession
- Fighting
- Gambling
- Immoral conduct
- Insubordination
- Lying
- Name calling

- Negative attitude
- Pornographic material (possession or distribution)
- Possession or use of a deadly weapon
- Profanity
- Theft
- Tobacco (use or possession)
- Truancy
- Vandalism
- Vulgarity
- Weapons
- Use of school computers for one or more of the above

CONFERENCES Are an important aspect of Parent/Teacher communications. All Parent/Teacher conferences should be requested directly with the teacher. An effort should be made to give the teacher a 24-hour notice before a conference is scheduled.

During the first and second semesters of the school year, teachers and students will conference with parents regarding the student's accomplishments.

COURTESY Is the rule in all relationships. Paul says that "Love...does not behave itself unseemly," that is, it is mannerly. Parents, students, staff, and guests of GCCS are asked to make this true in the halls, classrooms, athletic field, etc. of GCCS and any off campus activities.

DISCIPLINE Gulf Coast Christian Schools are governed by Christian principles with the spiritual, mental and physical well being of each child. All children attending Gulf Coast Christian Schools are under the control and supervision of ALL faculty and staff members. This policy applies to all regular school hours, Extended Learning hours and all school activities. Gulf Coast Christian Schools strives to maintain disciplinary practices, which teach children to socialize with individuals and groups and yet maintain self-control. Rules are kept simple and easy to understand. Corporal punishment is not used. Minor problems will be handled within the classroom. The administration will intervene only as necessary. Good communication and support between the home and school can help to alleviate many behavior problems.

Six learning steps in discipline will be used:

- 1) Warn the child and redirect his/her activities.
- 2) Removal from activity if behavior persists.
- 3) The child's feelings will be acknowledged; rules and their importance will be firmly restated.
- 4) Time will be allowed for the child to regain self-control before resuming activities.
- 5) The child will be encouraged to return to the group or class activities substituting an acceptable behavior.
- 6) Privileges will be lost if undesirable behavior continues.

If a particular behavior persists, a parent/teacher/administrator conference may be deemed necessary. Disciplinary action will be decided during the conference to eliminate the unacceptable behavior. Suspensions count as an unexcused absence. The student will be dismissed after being involved in three altercations and may be dismissed after four referrals to the office for the same offense, such as bullying, cheating, or vulgarity/profanity.

Gulf Coast Christian Schools seek to provide quality education in a Christian environment and encourages each child to develop to his/her full potential. Students are expected to refrain from indecent language and disorderly conduct and to maintain Christian standards in courtesy, kindness and morality.

GCCS DRESS CODE

All students (K through 8th grade) are to wear their Gulf Coast Christian Schools' uniform.

- The uniform consists of a GCCS monogrammed shirt in red, navy, or royal blue and khaki or navy blue pants, shorts, skorts (girls), or capris (girls). A burgundy monogrammed shirt is required and is to be used only for field trips and special activities.
- For field trips and special occasions, students are required to wear Uniform brand khaki pants, skorts, capris, or shorts with their burgundy GCCS shirt. This shirt should not be worn for other occasions unless specified by a teacher.
- The Uniform brand pants, skorts, capris, skirts and shorts are available at French Toast (www.frenchtoast.com, Source Code QS44D3G), and major department stores. Pants must be worn at the waist or upper hip and must not reveal underclothing.
- Shirts may be purchased at www.frenchtoast.com (Source Code QS44D3G), as well as department stores. See website for info on embroidery.
- Mid length skirts and jumpers are also acceptable for girls, if khaki or navy shorts (no short shorts) are worn underneath.
- Shorts, skirts, skorts and jumpers should be fingertip length or longer. No short shorts are allowed.
- Students are to keep shirts tucked in neatly, especially on field trip days and when in leadership roles. They may be pulled out for PE, recess, and Extended Learning activities.
- Official uniform cardigan sweaters and jackets may be purchased at Allen's Sports.
- For the child's safety, flip-flops, boots, "jellies", crocs, plastic, wheeled or platform style shoes may not be worn at school. Children are required to wear neutral color (white, navy, tan, black, or brown with no graphics or sparkles or lights) tennis shoes or sneaker type shoes. Shoes must have closed toes and closed heels.
- Socks are to be solid white, black, navy or khaki. Leggings or tights are to be navy blue.
- For Middle School girls who have outgrown "girls" sizes, French Toast has junior and women's sizes available.
- All clothing should have the child's name on the tag.
- Students in grades 4-8 are to change into PE uniforms for PE: navy or royal blue athletic shorts (fingertip length) with a gray, red or blue solid color tee shirt.
- Long sleeve navy or white shirts or turtlenecks may be worn under uniform shirts on cold days.
- Boy's pants and the girl's outfits must be Uniform brand or equal in appearance. No dress pants or jeans will be allowed.
- Winter attire sweatshirts must be a solid color (preferably navy) and fit properly. Hoods are not allowed in class.

DRESS CODE GENERAL STANDARDS:

- The appropriate GCCS monogram will be put on all shirts. Monograms are \$3.00 per shirt at Paradise Embroidery located at: 10525 Park Blvd, Suite 102, Seminole, FL (inside of Extreme Signage)

- It is expected that uniforms will be of appropriate size and neatly fitted. There will be a uniform exchange at the back to school picnic.
- No shirts shall be worn on top of GCCS shirts. Shirts worn under GCCS shirts should be in a school uniform color.
- Underclothing is not to be visible.
- Bare feet, sandals, flip-flops, boots or shoes with metal cleats are not permitted.
- Jewelry, accessories, and shoes should complement and not distract from the uniform.
- Boys are not permitted to wear jewelry in ears.
- Girls are allowed to wear up to a maximum of two earrings per ear. Earrings should be no longer than one inch.
- Other than girls' ears, no body piercing is acceptable.
- Tattoos (permanent or temporary) are not to be visible.
- Hats are not to be worn inside any building.
- Students on campus after school are required to abide by the dress code or change into their PE uniform.

Occasionally, special dress days will be announced.

Cold Weather Attire In order to maintain a uniform standard during cold weather, plan to purchase sweatshirts and cardigan sweaters at the uniform supply store.

Hair Styles Hair should not have unnatural colored styles. Lines, letters, numbers, or designs including Mohawks are not to be cut into the hair. No extreme shaved sides or top that are in sharp contrast to the rest of the hair are allowed. Boys' hair is to be out of their eyes and should not cover the collar or ear.

The Administration is the final judge on appropriate haircuts. If in doubt, ask first!

Dress code violation penalties are as follows:

- First Offense: The teacher speaks to the student and sends a correspondence via RenWeb home to the parents.
- Second Offense: The student will be sent to the office and parents will be required to bring a change of clothes. If the parent cannot be reached, the school will provide a shirt and the parent will be charged the cost of the shirt if it is not washed and returned within three days.
- Third Offense: The student will be sent home and the parent is required to attend a conference with the principal and sign a letter of understanding regarding the violation.
- Future Offenses: Suspension and possible dismissal.

DRESS CODE FOR PARENTS Dress modestly and appropriately when coming to the school or attending school functions. Guests at all school functions are to be dressed appropriately. Slogans on clothing should reflect values of a Christian school.

EXTENDED LEARNING

- **KINDERGARTEN THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE** - Tuition covers the hours from 8:20 am to 3:00 pm. Extended Care is available from 7:00 to 8:20 am and from 3:00 to 6:00 pm. Extended hours are billed separately. Tuition only covers the time (180 days) school is in session. Holidays and vacations are charged extra at extended learning rates and must be pre-arranged and prepaid. No credit will be given if a child is absent.
- **LATE FEES -GCCS closes at 6:00 pm daily.** If you cannot make arrangements with family or friends to pick-up children on time, you will be charged a cumulative late fee according to the following chart:

AFTER 6:00 P.M. FEES

From	6:00 to 6:05	\$ 5.00
From	6:05 to 6:10	\$ 10.00
From	6:10 to 6:15	\$ 15.00
From	6:15 to 6:20	\$ 20.00
From	6:20 to 6:25	\$ 25.00

It must be paid before your child can enter the Extended Learning Program again or arrangements must be made with the office staff for payment.

FIELD TRIPS Students participating in school field trips must have **Field Trip Permission Form** on file with the classroom teacher. The Principal has the authority to withhold field trip privileges due to unsatisfactory conduct. Students are expected to observe the following regulations:

- Remain quiet and orderly in route to and from designated activity
- Remain seated and wear seat belts while the vehicle is in motion
- Maintain Christian standards.

Parents who participate in field trips are responsible for assisting with chaperoning activities.

- Siblings cannot participate, for safety and insurance reasons
- On the day of field trips, there must be one adult for every ten children
- An Attestation of Good Moral Character must be on file in the school office for each participant
- Anyone who is to be left alone with children must be fingerprinted
- Parents should look professional and set good examples for all students
- No smoking, alcohol consumption or drug use is allowed when with children

FIRE AND EMERGENCY DRILLS In order to prepare the students for emergency situations, there will be fire and tornado drills at least once a month. These may occur during the morning or afternoon and will either be announced or unannounced in order to prepare the children to react during any emergency.

FUND RAISING GCCS, the Parent Teacher & Friends Association (PTFA), and classes coordinate fund-raising events during the year to purchase new equipment and supplies for classrooms and playground. Parents are expected to participate in fund-raisers. Children are never to go door to door to sell items. GCCS tuition does not cover the cost of educating students. Therefore, fundraising is essential.

GRADING SCALE A = 90 – 100 B = 80 - 89 C = 70 - 79
 D = 60 - 69 F = 0 - 59

HOMEWORK Homework is to be assigned regularly. Reinforcement exercises in math and reading are necessary. Homework may be assigned as needed on Wednesday and weekends, but the quantity will be limited so that worship and family time can be encouraged. Short weeks may require additional homework on Wednesday. In general, teachers assign approximately 10 minutes of homework per grade level, plus 5 minutes of reading per grade level. (Example: 2nd grade would get 20 minutes of homework and ten minutes of reading.)

Things to be done at school in preparation for homework:

- The student is responsible for writing all assignments in a school planner that is used for homework assignments.
- The student should ask questions to understand the assignments. Teachers may be asked questions before leaving school concerning assignments that are not clear.
- The student is responsible for taking home the books and materials needed to complete the homework assignments.

Expectations of Parents for Homework

- Parents may check the GCCS website to compare what student has written to what the teacher has posted as the homework.
- Avoid enabling children to get by without being responsible. Do not rush to the store or school to get things they forgot. Statements such as “Your failure to follow through on your responsibility does not create a crisis for me” help the children to develop good habits.
- Provide a set time and place for study.
- Guide student to organize a study place and create a time management plan. Parents help set the stage, but place the responsibility on the student.
- Provide encouragement and motivation.
- Encourage students to compete against their own best time in completing homework. Keep a chart of how long it takes to complete with excellence, then encourage child to beat his/her own best time.
- Pray for your child’s success, and that he/she will do the work with excellence, yet not perfection, and pray that she/he will learn from mistakes and learn to accept feedback in a constructive way. Pray for good time management and good organizational skills.

HONOR ROLL Third through Eighth grade Honor Roll Ribbons for the current period will be included in each report card.

- To receive the “**Principal’s List**” ribbon; the student must receive “A’s” in every academic area and satisfactory marks in conduct.
- To receive the “**A-B**” **Honor Roll** the student must receive all “A’s” and/or “B’s” and satisfactory marks in conduct.
- For students who do not earn the honor roll ribbon for a given grading period, a “**Superstar**” ribbon may be included highlighting a positive attribute or characteristic demonstrated by that student.
- Principal’s List and Honor Roll Students will be recognized at the next chapel and all Principal’s List students will attend a Bowling Party with the Principal, offered two times per school year.

ILLNESS A student should be kept home for 24 hours after experiencing a fever (101 degrees or higher), diarrhea (uncontrollable stool), or throwing up.

Guidelines for re-admittance to the school for the following communicable diseases are:

- Chicken pox..... all lesions are dry and crusted.
- Impetigoat least 24 hours after the start of medication and when all blisters are covered with honey-colored crusts
- Conjunctivitis.....at least 24 hours after the start of medication and drainage is no longer present.
- Lice and Scabiesfollowing medical treatment and when no nits are evident.
- Pin wormsno restrictions following the start of treatment
- Hepatitis.....physician’s statement required for re-admittance.
- Strep throat.....at least 48 hours after the start of oral medication or 24 hours after an injection.

INSUFFICIENT FUNDS If a check is returned for NSF there is a charge of \$30.00. After two NSF checks, payment is required by cash or Money Order.

LUNCHES Your child’s name should be on his/her lunch box and thermos. Ice packs are recommended to keep perishable foods fresher. Milk is available and is ordered on the lunch menu form each week. **No caffeine drink, soda, gum or candy is to be sent to school.** A nutritious lunch is composed of one or more of the foods from each of the following food groups:

- * Protein - meat, cheese, eggs, chicken, peanut butter
- * Breads/Cereals - bread, crackers, dry cereal
- * Vegetables/Fruits - fresh, raw, cooked, canned, dried or juices
- * Dairy Products - milk, cheese, etc.

LUNCH PROGRAM If your child would like to participate in the Hot Lunch Program, input your monthly order on RenWeb by the due date and submit to the office with your payment. (Checks should be made payable to Gulf Coast Christian Schools). Milk and water are also available. Credits

can't be issued for absences. If lunch payments are not received by the due date, remaining ordered lunches will be cancelled.

Lunches should not be shared between children, due to allergies, sanitation, preferences, etc.

MEDICATION Prescription drugs are to be deposited in the office in their original container and are to be used according to the prescription with the knowledge of the office. A current Medication Form completely filled out with the parent signature must be on file in the office. Cough drops and over the counter medications must also be registered and maintained in the office.

NAPTIME Children in Kindergarten classes rest or nap each day for twenty minutes. All items such as blanket or cuddly should be labeled with the child's name.

OPEN HOUSE September 1st has been designated as Parent Open House night. Please **do not bring children to classes this evening**, as we will be discussing information specific to parents.

PARENTS, TEACHERS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION The PTFA serves as a support organization for Gulf Coast Christian Schools. The purpose and objectives are to create an open line of communication between parents and staff.

GOALS include:

- To sponsor programs and activities that assists the quality of education
- To provide service where needed
- To raise funds for projects and equipment for the school.

Membership is open to all parents and friends of Gulf Coast Christian Schools. There is a \$5.00 annual membership fee per family. Communication will be via newsletters, telephone trees, and electronic communications.

PHOTOGRAPH/VIDEO RELEASE PERMISSION FORM (PAGE 25)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION The physical education teacher will instruct each Kindergarten through Eighth Grade class the skills to encourage large motor development, knowledge of games and sports, and good sportsmanship. Children receive a PE Grade on their report cards. Children must have tennis/sports style shoes to participate in physical education. Fourth through eighth grade students will dress for PE; see dress code for uniform information.

A written statement from a doctor or parent is required for a student to be excused from P.E. participation. Students who ask to be excused frequently or because of a chronic condition must have a doctor's statement on file. Alternative assignments may be made. Written notice from a doctor is also needed indicating when a child can return to active participation in physical education.

PRE-ENTRY SCREENINGS

- **KINDERGARTEN** Children entering our Kindergarten program will be screened using the Scholastic Inventory. Developmental screenings will begin as registrations are received in the office. Gulf Coast Christian Schools use this as an indicator to ensure a successful experience in Kindergarten. A \$35.00 screening fee is part of the fees.
- **NEW ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS** Students entering GCCS for the first time (or re-entering after attending another school) will be required to provide academic records (including achievement tests and scores, report cards, etc.) from their previous schools. Stanford Achievement Test results or an equivalency are required for each new student. In some circumstances, we may ask to test a child to be sure they meet the GCCS requirements.

REGISTRATION FEES Registration for the next school year begins in February. Students who are presently enrolled will have first opportunity to register before the openings are filled with new students. These **non-refundable** registration fees are to be paid at the time of registration to reserve a space. As we plan for the next school year, it is important to know how many children will be returning so that books and supplies may be ordered.

REPORT CARDS Report cards will be sent home at the end of each grading period. The report card should be signed and returned to the school within five days after it is received. **In order for your child's report card to be released to you or to another school, your account must be paid in full. The final report will not be mailed until the full year's tuition and any extended learning is paid in full.**

SCHOOL CLOSINGS GCCS will usually follow the lead of Pinellas County Schools for closings due to bad weather or other circumstances. The website, phone tree, and a recording on the school phone will be used to notify parents. Channel Nine will be notified so that it can be listed on their website. If Pinellas County Schools are closed and GCCS is open, parents will be notified by phone.

SCHOOL PICTURES Individual and group school pictures will be taken during the school year. Information will be sent home with the students.

SPORTS PROGRAM The sports program offers each Middle School and Fifth Grade student the opportunity to participate in a sport of his/her choice. GCCS is a member of the Pinellas Association of Christian Schools, which allows the school to compete with schools of similar size. All students must maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA in order to participate in sports. GPA's are calculated weekly throughout every sports program. The grade of "F" is not allowed for any athlete. Following the codes of conduct must be a priority for the athletes at GCCS.

SUMMER PROGRAM The Summer Camp begins the first full week after the last day of school and is open to all students (and their siblings). Students from other schools may attend also.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY (SEE PAGE 24)

TELEPHONES Call if you are going to be late picking up your child. It is important that your home, work, and cell phone numbers are current on our records. If you are unable to reach the school in an emergency, call the Northwest Church of Christ office at 345-2836. The Personal Secretary

Service (answering machine) at GCCS is available at all times if the phone is busy or the staff is unable to answer the phone. Please leave your name, phone number and a brief message and we will return your call if you request. Otherwise, we will take your message to the appropriate party.

TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL USE The use of tobacco is not allowed on campus. Tobacco products should not be in view of students at any time. **No smoking or drinking alcohol beverages during any function or event at GCCS or where GCCS is being promoted to the public.**

TOYS Any special personal items should be left at home unless they are brought for “Show and Tell”. Your child’s teacher will let you know when a “Show and Tell” is scheduled. Money should be brought to school only as designated by the teacher for special events. GCCS is not responsible for lost or broken toys, money or other personal items.

VOLUNTEERS The GCCS contract requires that families give 12 hours per year in volunteer time or pay \$140.00 to the school. Parents will receive a list of opportunities at JumpStart Day and at Open House. Various methods are available for this, such as:

- driving for field trips (Class C or D license with passenger endorsement required for bus)
- serving as room mothers to help with activities
- assisting in the school-age Extended Learning program
- donations of age and stage appropriate books, records, food for meetings and workshops, etc.
- volunteering for PTFA sponsored events
- coordinating fundraisers
- assisting with facility needs
- assisting with fundraisers
- all volunteer work should be approved by a teacher or administrator
- assisting with "going green" efforts

After the work is completed, hours must be entered into the service hours section of RenWeb. Cooperation between parents and teachers is an important way to provide your child with the best working and learning environment.

The Volunteer Coordinator will work with all families to ensure that credit is given. Bills for the \$140 or any portion thereof will be sent to families who do not commit to their time during October. The fees and hours are pro rated based on the student’s start date.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

ACADEMIC PROBATION: Since academic excellence is something we strive for at GCCS, it is necessary to set academic standards. Each quarter we expect every student to strive for a grade of “C” or better in all subject matter. If any quarterly grade falls below a “C”, the student will be placed on academic probation. In order to be removed from academic probation, the student will have the following quarter to bring the grade up to a “C” or better. If the student fails to bring the grade up or is placed on academic probation for another subject, measures will be taken to help the child have a more successful experience elsewhere.

MAKE UP WORK: Assignments for classes missed because of an excused absence are due no later than two days after the student returns to school. If the student is absent several days consecutively, all assignments will be due at a time designated by the teacher from the date he/she returns to school. The secretary can arrange for all assignments to be obtained through the office if given 24 hours notice. Realize, all work cannot be made up. Class activities are an important part of the learning process and cannot be replicated at home. When your child is absent, he/she misses part of the learning process. The student is ultimately responsible for the completion of all assignments when he/she is absent.

SCHOOL RULES:

- Students must always be respectful of others’ rights and property and the authority of all adults and student leaders.
- Students who find it necessary to remain after school must be under teacher supervision either in an activity, extended learning or in a class.
- Talking is to be done in a conversational tone. Students are not to whistle, yell, and/or be rowdy in any buildings or on the walkways outside.
- Students are expected to enter the classroom quietly, sharpen their pencils, and take their seats before the class starts.
- Listen when others are speaking. Raise your hand to get permission to speak. When talking is permitted, the class must not become loud and boisterous.
- Writing and passing notes, tossing objects, playing with irrelevant objects, and other such disruptive acts are not allowed in class.
- Class assignments are to be turned in promptly the period that they are due. Students may not work on an assignment while attending another class unless they have permission from the teacher.
- Toys and comic books are not allowed in school and will be confiscated. They will not be returned.
- Students should not have chewing gum on school property.
- No radios, cell phones, pagers, tape recorders, or other electronic devices are allowed at school without office approval. (See page 10)

- Weapons such as knives, guns, dangerous chemicals (such as mace), explosive (including fireworks) and firearms are not permitted at any school activity for any reason.
- Students are to help keep GCCS clean by placing trash in the containers and picking up trash, even if he/she did not throw it down. Students are not to leave trash in desks and are to keep lockers neat and free from the accumulation of old papers, bags, etc.
- Use of tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs, either at school or outside is not permitted by any students enrolled at GCCS.
- Boys and girls are to refrain from touching each other in any sexually affectionate manner, and are not to hold hands or kiss at school or school functions.
- Set a good example for younger students.

DISCIPLINARY SYSTEM

1. Behavior which evidences disobedience of school rules, disrespect, lack of courtesy, general disturbance, abuse of permission, incomplete homework, and other such actions will be handled by the teacher.
2. Behaviors, which the teacher deems to be chronic, flagrant, or otherwise worthy of special handling, will be referred to the administration. These behaviors will result in disciplinary actions.
3. Students who maliciously destroy school property are subject to suspension or dismissal from school.
4. Unexcused tardiness to school or class, and other minor infractions, will be recorded in the office. Repeat occurrences causing extra work for others will be dealt with appropriately.
5. Suspensions carry an unexcused absence for each subject per day.

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY POLICY

PURPOSE

Computing technology and the capability for electronic communication provide extensive opportunities to further the educational goals and objectives of Gulf Coast Christian Schools. Informed use of technology will enrich their learning experiences now and prepare for their lifelong pursuits of knowledge. The Christian values forming the basic philosophy of Gulf Coast Christian Schools will be used to assure appropriate extensive electronic resources are available to achieve these scholarly goals. This Acceptable Use Policy clarifies that responsible and ethical use of these learning tools is expected from all students and staff.

LIABILITY

Students will be held responsible for their inappropriate use of the school's technological resources. This policy and all instructional programs will emphasize appropriate use of the electronic technology.

GCCS will not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable due to technical or other difficulties.

The accuracy and quality of information obtained through network connections cannot be guaranteed.

GCCS is not responsible for any user violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence or costs that might be incurred by users.

GCCS provides a safe Internet learning environment via Trinity Data Filtering System. Students cannot circumvent the filtering as blocking occurs on the server.

GCCS takes every precaution to protect their students from any adverse exposure on the Internet. Parents should be aware, however, that some inadvertent exposure may be possible. While it is impossible to guarantee 100% protection on the internet, GCCS uses the best in modern technology to filter your child's internet access. If parents are uncomfortable with this exposure, they should discuss the schools protection scheme with the staff. If still uncomfortable, they should NOT authorize their child for internet use.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Students will use electronic technology in an ethical, responsible, and legal manner for school related tasks only. Access to the Internet will be done only with software owned by the Gulf Coast Christian Schools and **only while under the supervision of their teacher.**

Use of appropriate language and other rules of conduct expected of GCCS students are applicable to electronic computing and Internet use.

Students will access only those resource topics to which a teacher or staff member has guided them.

Students with personal online accounts may not install or access home accounts using school equipment. **No software may be copied to the school computer or network.**

Students will respect the privacy of others during electronic activities and with stored data.

Students will use the electronic networks for legal activities only. Examples of illegal activities are knowingly spreading viruses; violating copyright laws and plagiarizing, using unauthorized software; using other person's password; unauthorized entry; and destruction of computer systems or files.

Students shall not use the network to make personal purchases, or to access personal sites, such as blogs, forums, Myspace, or Facebook. . Access to sharing sites such as Google video, Youtube, or Yahoo video is prohibited without direct teacher supervision.

Students and their parents(s) or guardian(s) must sign the User Agreement Form signifying compliance with the terms of the policy.

CONSEQUENCES TO UNACCEPTABLE STUDENT USE

The use of electronic technology is a privilege, not a right. Violation of this policy will result in the user's privilege being denied, revoked, or suspended. Misuse of equipment and the system will be subject to disciplinary action at the appropriate level. Students and their parents or guardians will be responsible for costs resulting from the replacement or repair of internally misused equipment. If applicable, involvement of law enforcement agencies may result in criminal action under appropriate state and federal laws. Parents or guardians will be notified when violations of this policy occur.

Gulf Coast Christian Schools

Parent/Student Acknowledgements 2010-11

HANDBOOK

I, _____ (students in grades K through 8), have read (or had read to me) this handbook, and agree to cooperate with the policies stated in the Parent/Student Handbook including the Discipline Policy.

I, _____ (parent of students in grades K through 8), have read this handbook, and agree that my child(ren) and I will follow these rules.

PHOTO PERMISSION

I, _____ (parent of students in grades K through 8), have given permission to use photographs and/or video of my child _____ in publications, video presentations, yearbooks and bulletin board displays.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

I, _____ (students in grades 4th-8th), agree to comply with Gulf Coast Christian Schools ACCEPTABLE STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY POLICY while computing and using the communicating network. I have reviewed this statement with my parent(s) and I understand my responsibilities. I also understand my responsibility for any violations of this policy.

I, _____ (parent of students in grades K through 8), have read (or had read to me) the ACCEPTABLE STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY POLICY of Gulf Coast Christian Schools and would like my child (name) _____ to participate in computing and electronic communication activities under compliance with this policy. I have discussed these guidelines with my child and s/he understands that use of the internet should only take place under a teacher's supervision and direction. I also understand that I will be held responsible for any violations my child may incur. I support the high standards of conduct and use required in technological learning activities of Gulf Coast Christian Schools.

Parent Signature: _____ Date _____

Student Signature : _____ Date _____

Return this form to your child's teacher by September 15th.