



Welcome!

This *Student Handbook* consists of policies or portions of policies taken from the larger *GPCS Family Handbook* that we think will be of interest to students. It is not exhaustive in any way but is designed to provide secondary students with some information they will need about our school. As with any such document, the school may, from time to time, make changes to this handbook without notice to the student, and the revised document will be applicable going forward. The provisions of this handbook shall not be considered a part of the contract between GPCS and the individual student. In this handbook “parent” is understood to include guardians; “school” refers to GPCS.

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# ABOUT THE SCHOOL

## Mission Statement

Greater Portland Christian School provides a distinctively Christian education which complements the home and church, brings a biblical perspective to every subject, and helps parents prepare their children for a God-glorifying life.

## Nondiscrimination Policy

Greater Portland Christian School is a distinctively Christian institution dedicated to biblical principles of fairness and equality (Proverbs 24:23; Acts 17:26; Galatians 3:28). Therefore, GPCS welcomes students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, providing them all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students in the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition assistance programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## Core Values

- Truth:** We will seek and value truth, because God is the ultimate source of all truth.  
“Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding”  
(Proverbs 23:23).
- Wisdom:** We will seek God’s wisdom in our decisions, choices, and actions.  
“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight” (Proverbs 9:10).
- Excellence:** We will seek the highest possible quality in everything we do.  
“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”  
(1 Corinthians 10:31).
- Stewardship:** We will wisely use and care for the resources entrusted to us.  
“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein” (Psalm 24:1).
- Servanthood:** We will follow the example set by Jesus Christ in how we serve others.  
“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

# ATTENDANCE

## Excessive Absences

Students in Kindergarten – grade 12 are expected to be in attendance at school at least 85% of the 175 instructional days in the school calendar in order to keep pace and achieve success in their educational development. Therefore, any student in grade K – grade 5 who accumulates more than 26 days excused and/or unexcused absence, will be considered for retention in that grade. Students in grades 6–12 who accumulate more than 26 excused and/or unexcused absences (or 13 days in a single semester; pro-rated for classes meeting fewer than five days a week) will be in jeopardy of forfeiting credit for their courses, with the final decision to be made by the administration. Parents will be notified of excessive absences in a timely manner and students may be placed on academic probation in an attempt to prevent this kind of serious consequence.

## **Tardiness**

Students who arrive after **8:10AM** (grades 6-12) or **8:20AM** (grades K-5) are marked tardy. Tardiness disrupts classroom routines and instruction, and chronic tardiness may develop a habit in a student which will be detrimental to success beyond school. Therefore, parents are expected to make every effort to ensure students are at school on time.

Secondary students (grades 6–12) with **five unexcused tardies** to a class in a quarter will receive an after-school detention. Continued tardiness will result in meeting with the administration to determine further disciplinary action if appropriate. Secondary students must attend school for at least **three hours of classes** in order to participate in any after-school activity.

## **Student Planned Absences**

Since a number of extended recesses are scheduled during the school year itself, parents are strongly encouraged not to schedule vacations during school weeks, if at all possible, due to the disruption it can cause in a student's academic progress as well as the extra work it creates for teachers. A planned absence may make the difference in a student passing a grade or specific course(s). If a planned absence must be scheduled, the parent should complete a *Student Planned Absence Notice* form and send it to the main office preferably four weeks prior to the absence.

In the event that students miss school due to a planned absence, the teacher will use his/her discretion regarding the issuing of homework prior to the trip. Any homework given prior to the vacation must be completed and turned in as specified by the teacher; otherwise, no credit will be given for the assigned work. Further, if the teacher decides that no homework will be given prior to the trip, then all work missed is to be completed within the same number of school days that the student missed. The student must recognize that he/she is responsible for any work missed while he/she is absent from school, and that teachers will not be asked to provide tutoring or additional help due to planned absence. If there are multiple tests or major quizzes or projects to be made up, then the teacher(s) involved will coordinate the makeup requirement for these kinds of major grades.

## **Make-up Work**

On the day secondary students (grades 6-12) return from an absence, they are responsible for checking with their teachers about missed work. Students with excused absences will be allowed to make up all work missed in a time period equal to the number of days the student was absent. As a general rule, if an assignment or project is given in advance and the student is absent from school for 1-2 days during the assignment period, the assignment will still be due or the test taken on the assigned date; this is at the teacher's discretion. Special consideration will be given to students with long-term illness or disability documented by a physician's note.

Quizzes, tests, and special projects that were announced prior to the student's absence are to be made up on the student's return to school unless otherwise arranged and approved by the teacher. Consideration will be given to students missing several consecutive days or who were too ill to prepare for school. Students are not permitted to miss regularly scheduled classes in order to make up work.

## **Freshman Christian Service Requirement**

One of our core values is *servanthood*: "We will follow the example set by Jesus Christ in how we serve others" because "...Even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). High school freshmen are required to serve nine hours each quarter beyond the typically assigned projects given at school. Each activity should in some way benefit the community, no compensation should be given to the student, and the activity should not be for a family member.

# ACADEMIC PROGRAM

## Grading System

Numerical Equivalent	Letter Grade	4-pt Scale Equivalent
92-100	A	4.00
90-91	A-	3.67
88-89	B+	3.33
82-87	B	3.00
80-81	B-	2.67
78-79	C+	2.33
72-77	C	2.00
70-71	C-	1.67
69	D+	1.33
66-68	D	1.00
65	D-	.67
64 & below	F	.00

## Course Failures

### Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Any student failing two or more core academic subjects (English, Math, History, and Science) will repeat that grade for the next school year.

### High School (Grades 9-12)

High school students who fail a required full-year course must make up that work in one of two ways as approved by the Academic Dean; the administration may limit the amount of credit earned through these alternative methods in order to protect the integrity of our diploma:

1. Pass a comparable course of an approved correspondence or online program;
2. Repeat the course in the upcoming school year, schedule permitting.

## Diploma/Credit Requirements\*

*\*Subject to change as necessary*

Subject Areas	Credits	
Bible	4 (1 credit for each year of GPCS enrollment)	*While in high school, all students taking a foreign language must take two years of a foreign language.  **Fine arts credit may be earned by taking an art class (in or outside of GPCS) and by participating in drama, yearbook, and/or chorus as available.
Math	4	
English	4	
Social Studies	4 (1 credit must be in U.S. History)	
Science	4	
Foreign Language*	2	
Physical Education	1	
Fine Arts**	1	
Computer Literacy	1	
Health	.5	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25.5</b>	

## **GPCS WRITING AND RESEARCH STANDARDS: GRADES 6–12**

The administration and secondary faculty have adopted the following basic standard for writing and research at the secondary level at Greater Portland Christian School, believing that holding students to a consistent, reasonable standard honors the Lord (Colossians 3:17, 23). All students will be expected to submit work that meets these minimal levels of expectations. Teachers may, at their own discretion, increase these standards for any of their assignments. Work not meeting these standards will not be accepted by the teacher and will be considered late until turned in with corrections.

### **Writing Standards**

1. SENTENCES
  - All sentences will start with a capital letter, be complete, and end with an appropriate end mark.
  - All answers will be written in complete sentences in every course as appropriate. “Short answers” will be the exception rather than the rule. Teachers may require parts of answers to be highlighted to save correction time.
2. ORGANIZATION
  - Students will use IBC (introduction-body-conclusion) format with good paragraphs.
3. MECHANICS
  - Students will italicize, underline, or use quotation marks for titles and demonstrate correct use of apostrophes, capitalization, and spelling.
4. APPEARANCE
  - Written work will be legible and not use all capital letters.
  - Written work will be neat with few corrections.
  - There will be no scribbling or doodling on written work.
  - All papers will use the correct GPCS heading:
    - Student name
    - Date
    - Course
    - Assignment

### **Research Standards**

1. All research papers and projects at GPCS must conform to MLA (Modern Language Association) format; all teachers will have a copy of MLA style requirements and refer to it. Basic citations state the author and page number inside parentheses: e.g., (Smith 103).
2. Any specific information not derived from common knowledge must be cited, whether it is quoted or paraphrased. Failure to properly attribute sources will be considered plagiarism and dealt with according to school policy.
3. Teachers may determine the quantity of Internet sources to be used for papers and projects as well as determine which Internet sources are acceptable for assignments.
4. All research work must include note cards, typed notes, or a handwritten rough draft at the discretion of the teacher.
5. Students may be required to have their papers typed.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## Philosophy

Greater Portland Christian School is a school family based on the teachings of Jesus Christ as taught in His Word, the Bible. In such a community, we all—students, parents, and staff—are expected to engage in ways that build each other up and honor God. There is no place for language, appearance, or behavior that would show anything other than respect for God, ourselves, and those around us, for our facilities, and for our learning environment (Romans 12:10,16; 13:8-10; 14:19). We feel strongly that no one at GPCS should ever experience rudeness, disrespect, sexual comments, theft, intimidation, harassment, fighting, or any other type of behavior that would make that person feel unsafe, unwelcome, or less than equal. We have, therefore, developed policies to help ensure that GPCS provides students the safe environment necessary for optimal learning and training. Attending GPCS is a privilege that is extended on the condition that students and parents accept and support our policies, including this *Code of Conduct*. The *Code of Conduct* expresses basic principles by which we expect students to live as long as they are enrolled at GPCS.

## General Conduct Expectations for All Students

1. An attitude of respect for those in authority and a spirit of cooperation are to be maintained by all students. Insubordination, verbal abuse, persistent noncompliance, or open defiance of the authority of any administrator, teacher, or person assigned to supervise the student will not be tolerated. All GPCS employees have authority over all students, regardless of the employee's position. Students will at all times respect the authority of all teachers, school staff, and volunteers and address them respectfully, using the titles of Mrs., Mr., Ms., or Coach.
2. Students should understand that school rules are in effect at all school functions, whether on campus or not, and that teachers are authorized to establish reasonable classroom/course academic and behavioral expectations that comply with school policy.
3. Students will be considerate towards other students and adults, showing good manners at all times. They will not engage in conduct that will disrupt, disturb, or interrupt any school activity (e.g., talking without permission, rowdiness in hallways, coarse behavior, extreme clothing or grooming styles, etc.). Students will walk in the halls, use a reasonable tone of voice, and exhibit orderly behavior.
4. Students will arrive at school and classes on time, dressed appropriately, prepared to work and to complete assignments as instructed. They will not leave a designated location at school or at an off-campus school activity without permission from a school authority. If students have any problem that keeps them from class, they should speak to a teacher or the office immediately, or send word of emergency situations.
5. Students are encouraged to communicate and behave in Christ-honoring ways that build up and benefit. Examples of unacceptable conversation and behavior include inappropriate jokes, pranks, offensive symbols (e.g., gang symbols, racist symbols, suggestive sign language, etc.), pornography, gossip, derogatory remarks, degrading names and putting others down (e.g., "shut up"), misuse of God's name or spiritually meaningful terms, vulgar or coarse language, profanity, suggestive stories or drawings, horse play, hiding book bags, invading private property, stealing lunches or snacks, acts of intimidation, and invading private space. Students will not bully, threaten, taunt, or harass anyone, including students and employees.
6. Student postings on social media must be consistent with the school's Christian testimony. Students will not post derogatory, insulting, or threatening remarks about the school, its staff, or its students. They will not post or transmit coarse, offensive, or obscene language and/or inappropriate, embarrassing, or obscene pictures, graphics, or videos, whether using phones or Internet at home or school. While the administration does not scrutinize social media, when objectionable or questionable postings are brought to its attention, it will deal with any postings that are inconsistent with GPCS's testimony as a Christian school.

7. All students are expected to comply with the GPCS PEDs Policy (below) and our *Responsible Use Policy* (Appendix).
8. Students will live in harmony with the biblical view of sexuality and abstain from all immoral sexual activity including, but not limited to, sexual activity outside of marriage and possession, distribution, and/or use of pornography (Hebrews 13:4; Galatians 5:16-2; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Ephesians 5:3-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8). They will not promote or advocate for unbiblical views of sexuality. Inappropriate physical contact (e.g., hugging, kissing, and sitting in laps) is not acceptable.
9. Students will not advocate religious, ethical, or moral perspectives or values that, in the opinion of the administration, contradict the biblical perspectives and values of the school.
10. Students will respect all property belonging to the school, its employees, and other students and will not handle or remove another's personal belongings without permission, which will be dealt with by the school as theft.
11. Students are expected to avoid all forms of dishonesty including lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarizing, and forging.
12. No student is permitted to use or have in his/her possession while on school property or at any school function any object which is or can be used as a weapon or looks like a weapon, including firearms, knives, toy weapons, explosives, dangerous chemicals, or fireworks of any kind. Students will not behave in any way that can injure others such as horseplay and throwing objects.
13. Students will not obtain, use, or provide prohibited substances and devices including tobacco, e-cigarettes, vape pens, or any other electronic nicotine-delivery systems or any mind-altering substances such as drugs or alcohol, regardless of whether at a school function or elsewhere.

## **DRESS CODE**

### **Philosophy**

Our dress code is based on the principles of modesty, neatness, safety, and appropriateness. It has been designed to help ensure a school environment in which learning can take place safely and without distraction and to help prepare students to deal with workplace requirements. We give our students wide latitude in how they dress as long as they comply with the principles and guidelines below. Parents have the primary responsibility to make sure their children are dressed appropriately for school and conform to the dress code.

### **General**

1. Students are to dress modestly, neatly, safely, and appropriately for the Christian school setting.
2. All clothing must be neat, clean, in good repair (not ripped or torn), and sized appropriately: not oversized, sloppy, or tight-fitting. All clothing must be modest—not revealing or see-through. Students are expected to be clean and well-groomed and to practice good physical hygiene.
3. Dress and grooming must never contradict GPCS's biblical values. Logos, styles, etc., that violate biblical principles of wholesomeness and modesty are never appropriate at school functions of any kind.
4. Any clothing, jewelry, or grooming style that calls attention to itself and/or is disruptive in any way at school or school functions is unacceptable.
5. Students are to remain in appropriate dress code attire while on school grounds from the time they arrive until they depart, including athletic practices and events.
6. Dress code for special functions and occasions such as field trips, awards events, athletic team events, banquets, and graduation-related activities will be announced as necessary.

## Specific Guidelines

1. No underclothing or bare midribs should show at any time; pajamas and bedroom clothing are unacceptable.
2. Modest sleeveless tops are acceptable. Straps of tops should be no less than 2 inches wide. Tank tops, halter tops, crop tops, and anything that is excessively tight, short, or low-cut is unacceptable.
3. Shirts/tops must not expose skin beneath a line drawn across from armpit to armpit.
4. Skirts should be no shorter than one's finger tips when arms are fully extended to one's sides and should not "ride up" during the day.
5. Leggings/jeggings may only be worn with tops or skirts/dresses/shorts that are at least finger-tip length.
6. Boys' pants must be worn above the hips.
7. Modest shorts (no shorter than one's finger tips when arms are extended to one's sides) may be worn except December through February.
8. Hair should be clean and well-groomed; hair style, jewelry, and makeup should not be extreme and/or distracting. Excessive jewelry in size or quantity is not permitted for boys or girls.
9. Tattoos and body- or face-piercing jewelry (except girls' earrings) are not to be visible at school or any school functions including sports. No stretching or gauging of piercings is permitted. Boys are not to wear earrings at school or any school functions. Headgear (such as hats, hoods, bandanas, etc.) and sunglasses may not be worn inside the school building.
10. Shoes or sneakers must be worn at all times (for safety reasons, flip-flops are discouraged). Sneakers must be worn for PE and/or any activity on the gym floor.
11. Physical Education students are required to wear either shorts, athletic pants, or jeans (elem.), along with a T-shirt and sneakers.
12. Formal Dress attire is required at events such as awards ceremonies, banquets, and graduation. Formal dress for young men includes a dress shirt, tie, slacks (no jeans or shorts), shoes, and socks. For young women, formal dress includes either a dress or a skirt/dress pants and blouse, and dress shoes.

## Enforcement

1. The school administration and staff will seek to enforce the dress code with consistency, fairness, and respect, and with concern for not only an individual student but also for the larger school family. We do not want to foster negative attitudes unnecessarily, especially over these kinds of issues, but we do expect students and parents to cooperate when we bring something to their attention. **Parents are expected to support the school's position when questions arise.**
2. Students in violation of the dress code may be asked to remain at the main office until suitable clothing can be brought in and may be subject to disciplinary action (see Disciplinary Code), especially if a repeat offender. Students wearing acceptable clothing in an unacceptable manner may also be subject to disciplinary action (see Disciplinary Code).
3. The school reserves the right to evaluate and place restrictions as needed as new fashions and fads emerge. ***Final interpretation of the dress code rests solely with the administration.***

## PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (PEDS) POLICY

### Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs), Cell Phones, & Use of Technology

#### General

Personal electronic devices (PEDs) such as cell phones, smartphones, laptops, iPads, tablets, eReaders, iPods, and similar devices can enhance a student's school experience if used appropriately. However, unrestricted use of these devices can have detrimental effects for users and be disruptive to our program. Therefore, GPCS has established guidelines in order to maximize these devices' benefits and minimize misuse.



## **Guidelines applying to all students include:**

1. *PEDs and school technology resources may only be used with expressed, explicit faculty or administrative permission.* Restrictions on use may be made at the discretion of the administration, including type of access and location of use.
2. All use of PEDs and school technology resources must comply with this PEDs policy and with the GPCS Responsible Use Policy.
3. Parents understand that no technical support is provided for PEDs by the school, and that *all PEDs are brought to school at the user's own risk. Neither GPCS nor its staff are responsible for theft, loss, or damage to PEDs.*
4. Students may not use PEDs to make or receive phone calls during school hours (7:45AM–3:00PM) without specific permission. Parents are always welcome to call the Main Office to leave messages.
5. Use of PEDs is *strictly prohibited* in locker rooms, restrooms, or any other place where people have a reasonable expectation of privacy.

## **Elementary (Grades K–5)**

1. We strongly encourage parents to *not* send PEDs to school with elementary students as these easily provide a major distraction in class and are prone to being lost or taken without permission. In addition, devices with Internet-connectivity pose major safety risks for children and potentially even their classmates as elementary students generally do not possess the maturity or skills to use the Internet safely unsupervised.
2. However, an elementary student may bring a PED to school provided the parent provides a signed “PED Consent Form.” Upon student arrival, PEDs must be silenced and kept in the student’s backpack during the school day (backpacks for some classes hang outside the classroom). PEDs must not be seen, heard, or used during the school day (including recesses).
3. Students may use PEDs in AfterCare *only* if the device cannot connect to the Internet (no cell phones for this reason).
4. Elementary students shall not capture, publish, broadcast, or otherwise electronically transmit photos, video, or audio of students or staff at school or at school-sponsored activities *without the explicit parental permission* of those photographed, recorded, or videotaped, except for activities considered to be in the public arena such as sporting events or public performances.
5. Elementary Violations: If PEDs are brought to school without permission or used without permission, they may be confiscated and the parent be required to retrieve them. Any further misuse or unauthorized use of a PED may result in the loss of the privilege to bring a PED to school. If an elementary student uses a PED to photograph, record, and/or video while on campus without permission, the device will be confiscated by the teacher and must be retrieved by a parent. In such cases, disciplinary action will be taken with the student.

## **Secondary (Grades 6–12)**

1. PEDs must be silenced and put away out of sight (locker, pocket, book bag, etc.) during school hours (8:05 AM–2:30 PM, *including study halls and period changes*) except during lunch. Students are allowed to use PEDs during classes for academic or instructional purposes only when explicitly permitted by their teacher. In study halls, laptops may be used with explicit teacher permission to complete assignments but the use of any other PEDs is not permitted. All use of PEDs on campus must comply with the school’s Responsible Use Policy.
2. Students must leave PEDs on the teacher’s desk if leaving a room during class; they may pick up the PED from the teacher’s desk when returning to class. Earbuds and headphones are not permitted during the school day (including study halls and lunch) and may only be used in the classroom with explicit teacher permission when there is an academic necessity.
3. Students shall not capture, publish, broadcast, or otherwise electronically transmit photos, video, or audio of students or staff at school or at school-sponsored activities *without the*

*explicit permission* of those photographed, recorded, or videotaped, except for activities considered to be in the public arena such as sporting events or public performances.

4. Secondary Violations:

- a. First violation: unauthorized use of a PED or disruption of a class or other activity by a PED will result in the device being confiscated and held in the Main Office until retrieved by a parent (the teacher will notify the parent).
- b. Second violation: same discipline as the first violation, and the student will receive an after-school detention.
- c. Third violation: results in a one-day suspension and the loss of the privilege to bring a PED to school the remainder of the school year.
- d. PEDs seen, heard, or used during assessments (such as tests and quizzes) will be confiscated, and the student will receive a zero on any test or assessment in progress. Further disciplinary action may result as well, including suspension.
- e. Use of camera/video devices or those functions on PEDs in violation of this policy may result in further disciplinary measures as listed in the GPCS Disciplinary Code, up to and including expulsion at the discretion of the administration depending on the severity of the violation. If a student uses a PED to photograph, record, and/or video while on campus, the Head of School has the right to view and/or confiscate the content; the device may be returned at the end of the school day or held for further review. In such cases, disciplinary action will be taken with the student.
- f. Any violations of federal, state, or local statutes will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

## **APPROPRIATE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN STAFF AND STUDENTS**

Greater Portland Christian School expects all its staff (including volunteers), as Christian role models, to maintain the highest professional, moral and ethical standards in their conduct with students at all times, whether on or off school property, both during and outside of school hours.

These boundaries shall be maintained regardless of the student's age, the perceived consensual nature of the relationship or activity, the location of the activity, and whether the staff member directly supervises the student. Personal contact between students and staff members must always be professional, non-sexual, appropriate to the circumstances, and unambiguous in meaning. The full guidelines are posted in our *Family Handbook*.

### **Unacceptable Conduct**

Examples of unacceptable conduct by staff members that are *expressly prohibited* include but are not limited to the following:

1. Any type of inappropriate physical contact with a student or any other conduct that might be considered harassment under the GPCS Bullying and Anti-harassment Policy;
2. Overfamiliarity: disclosing inappropriate personal, sexual, confidential, family, employment concerns, or other inappropriate private matters to students; permitting students to address staff member by first name, nickname, or a pet name;
3. Maintaining personal contact with a student outside of school by notes, phone, text, email, social networking, etc. without the prior express permission of the student's parent/guardian;
4. Singling out a particular student for personal attention and friendship beyond the professional staff/student relationship;
5. Sexual banter, allusions, jokes, or innuendos; flirting; comments with sexual overtones or that are personal or physical in nature ("you have great legs," "you should wear that sweater more often," "you're really jacked");
6. Encouraging students to confide their personal or family problems, secrets, and/or relationships;

7. Giving, requesting, and/or accepting shoulder massages, lingering touches, squeezes, hugs, or kisses;
8. Giving or receiving gifts that are personal or extravagant in nature (beyond customary student-teacher gifts).

### **Appearances of Impropriety**

The following activities can create an actual impropriety or the appearance of impropriety. Whenever possible, staff members should avoid these situations. *If unavoidable, these activities must be pre-approved by a lead teacher or the head of school.*

1. Being alone with an individual student out of the view of others or in an inaccessible location, except for in the context of teachers working with students in an afterschool setting or during testing;
2. Socializing or spending time with students outside of school-related or school-sponsored curricular or extracurricular activities or organized community activities (including but not limited to activities such as going out for beverages, meals, or movies, shopping, traveling, and recreational activities);
3. Driving students home or to other locations;
4. Inviting or allowing students to visit the staff member's home;
5. Visiting a student at home or in another location unless on official school business known to the parent;
6. Hiring a student to perform any work for the staff member, whether at the staff member's home or at a business related to the staff member without the prior knowledge and express permission of the parent/guardian.

### **Electronic Communication**

Digital technology and social networking provide multiple means for staff members to communicate appropriately with students and personalize learning. *Electronic and online communications between staff members and students must be transparent, contemporaneously accessible to supervisors and parents/guardians, and professional in content and tone.* Such communication must be professional, nonsexual, appropriate to the circumstances, and unambiguous in meaning. Staff members must restrict one-on-one electronic communications with individual students to accounts, systems, and platforms that are provided by and accessible to the administration or with the prior express permission of the head of school and the parent/guardian.

### **Reporting Violations**

Students, parents/guardians and staff are strongly encouraged to notify the head of school if they believe a staff member may be engaging in conduct that violates this policy.

Staff members are required to immediately notify the head of school if they become aware of a situation that may constitute a violation of this policy. This obligation is in addition to the statutory responsibility to report suspected abuse and neglect. Violations involving sexual or other abuse will also result in referral to the Department of Health and Human Services, the District Attorney and/or law enforcement.

## **DISCIPLINARY CODE**

### **Guiding Principles**

This Disciplinary Code outlines how we respond when the Code of Conduct has been violated. Certain principles guide the administration of discipline here, including the following:

1. We understand from the Scriptures that no one "keeps the law" perfectly (Romans 3:9-10, 23; Psalm 14:3). If a student does violate a school rule, it is expected that he/she will recognize and

- acknowledge the misconduct, respond with honest regret and desire to change in the future, and then graciously accept the consequences. It is our desire to help students grow in self-discipline.
2. When our guidelines are violated we will seek to be as fair, redemptive, and instructive as possible, respecting the image of God in each student.
  3. If, however, a continued pattern of misbehavior develops, and a student fails to respond with sincere repentance and self-control, and the student indicates that he/she either does not desire our help or is incapable of living within such a self-disciplined community, then we reluctantly will be forced to ask that student to continue his/her education elsewhere.
  4. The degree of discipline seeks to reflect the frequency and seriousness of the offense. The attitude, repentant spirit, and cooperation of the student and/or parents involved may be considered in the administering of consequences.
  5. Voluntary disclosure of serious misbehavior will be taken into consideration in discipline. However, it does not guarantee that disciplinary procedures will be mediated. Voluntary disclosure does not mean coming forward after the administration, faculty, or student council has knowledge of the incident.
  6. When misconduct occurs that may also be a violation of law, the school will notify the appropriate law enforcement authorities when, at the sole discretion of the administration, it is determined to be required by law or otherwise deemed appropriate. When these authorities are involved, the school is not obligated to wait on or concur with the findings of those authorities in determining the appropriate action under GPCS's policies.
  7. The school reserves the right to consider any attempt to commit a violation of the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Code as a completed violation. Accomplices may be considered as violators and face similar consequences. *We strongly recommend that students avoid situations where others are violating the school's conduct policies.* When students find themselves in such situations, they should remove themselves immediately to avoid being implicated (2 Timothy 2:22).
  8. This Disciplinary Code is not intended to be an exhaustive list of misconduct that will subject students to discipline. Therefore, the school reserves the right to discipline a student for any conduct the school, in its sole discretion, considers worthy of discipline, even though the specific conduct is not mentioned in this code. The faculty and administration use policy, practice, professional knowledge, experience, and discretion when making disciplinary decisions. It is the right of the administration to determine the degree of consequence within the school policy in each case.
  9. GPCS reserves the right to discipline students for off-campus conduct that has an adverse effect on the GPCS community and/or its reputation, or in the event that a student is charged with or convicted of a crime. Under those circumstances, the head of school may suspend the student immediately. Reinstatement shall be at the sole discretion of the Head of School.
  10. We understand the school's authority to be an extension and delegation of the parents' authority while children are under our care, and we will deal with children on this basis. At the same time, attending GPCS is a privilege that is extended on the condition that students and parents accept and support our policies, including those in the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Code. Persistent failure to adhere to the standards of the school will result in separation from the school. *If a parent/guardian believes that it is no longer possible to work together with the school in a spirit of unity or is unable to support the decisions of the administration, and all reasonable avenues of communication are exhausted, he/she will be expected to withdraw their child(ren) from the school.*

## Secondary Discipline (Grades 6–12)

The Board of Directors has given authority for all behavioral/disciplinary matters to the Head of School. The Head, in turn, has delegated authority to teachers to administer routine discipline on a daily basis. The Head makes the final decision if there is an appeal of a teacher or staff member's disciplinary decision. More serious and/or chronic misbehavior is handled directly by the Head of School. The use of corporal punishment is prohibited as a disciplinary measure. GPCS does reserve the right to use reasonable physical contact and/or restraint in situations where the student's behavior poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others.

## SECONDARY MISCONDUCT POLICIES (GRADES 6–12)

The following policies and procedures are intended to provide a general sense of how misbehavior is normally handled, since it is impossible to list every possible infraction and situation that can arise or to outline every possible disciplinary response. The use of corporal punishment is prohibited as a disciplinary measure. GPCS does reserve the right to use reasonable physical contact and/or restraint in situations where the student's behavior poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others.

**While GPCS has no direct control over and accepts no responsibility for the behavioral choices GPCS students make when off-campus, we reserve the right to discipline a student for off-campus conduct (as described below) which negatively impacts the school's Christian testimony. Students do not cease to represent GPCS when they are not at school.**

### Bullying and Anti-harassment Policy

#### General Policy

The policy of Greater Portland Christian School is to provide an academic environment that is free from all forms of harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying, and intimidation, and where all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect. We believe all types of bullying and harassment to be major violations of Christian teachings and principles such as humanity's creation in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27) and the requirement to love one's neighbor (Matthew 22:36-40). This policy applies to the actions of employees, parents, volunteers, and students. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination or expulsion.

1. **Definition of Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation.** "Harassment, Bullying, or intimidation" means any written, oral, or physical act or gesture that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of harming a student or damaging his or her property or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or that has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student. Harassment, bullying, or intimidation includes a gesture or an act, whether written, oral, or physical, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by a characteristic such as sex (gender), race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability. This policy applies to all harassment, including any that occurs by or through any type of electronic communication.
2. **Examples of Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation.** Unwelcome conduct of this type can include a wide range of verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual or other nature. Among the types of conduct that would violate this policy are the following:
  - a. Unwanted sexual advances or propositions.
  - b. Offering academic benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
  - c. Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
  - d. Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters.
  - e. Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, and jokes about a student's race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability.
  - f. Verbal abuse of a sexual or other nature; graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; suggestive, obscene, or offensive letters, notes, or invitations.
  - g. Physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, impeding, or blocking movements, e.g., blocking stairwells or doorways.

- h. Any conduct that has the effect of insulting or demeaning a student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school’s educational mission or that is severe, persistent, or pervasive so that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

### **Scope of Bullying and Anti-harassment Policy**

Conduct violating the GPCS’s biblical standards—whether occurring at school or during school-sponsored events, activities, or functions or not, or on campus or not—is subject to appropriate action by the school.

### **What to Do If You Experience or Observe Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation**

Students who feel that they have been subjected to conduct of a harassing, bullying, or intimidating nature are encouraged to promptly report the matter to a teacher or the Head of School. Students who observe conduct of a harassing, bullying, or intimidating nature are also encouraged to report the matter promptly to a teacher or the Head of School. All complaints will be promptly investigated.

### **Confidentiality**

Every reasonable effort will be made to protect the privacy of the parties involved in any complaint. However, the school reserves the right to investigate fully every complaint and to notify a student’s parent/guardian and appropriate government officials as the circumstances warrant.

### **Protection Against Retaliation**

It is against the school’s policy to discriminate or retaliate against any person, including any student, who has filed a complaint involving harassment, bullying, or intimidation or who has testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in any investigation, formal proceeding, or hearing concerning harassment, bullying, or intimidation. However, if in the course of an investigation or subsequently the school learns that a student or others have made a complaint that was not in good faith or that was known to be false at the time of the complaint, the school reserves the right to take appropriate action. Making false complaints or complaints not made in good faith can jeopardize someone’s reputation, which is a violation of biblical principles (Psalm 15:1-3).

### **Procedure for Investigation of a Complaint and Taking Corrective Action**

When a school employee receives a complaint, he or she shall immediately inform the Head of School. The Head of School will direct an investigation. If the investigation confirms the allegations, prompt corrective actions shall be taken. The individual who suffered the harassing, bullying, or intimidating conduct shall be informed of the corrective action taken. In addition, any employee, volunteer, or student found to be responsible for harassment, bullying, or intimidation in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion. The severity of the disciplinary action will be based on the circumstances of the infraction.

## **ADDITIONAL SECONDARY DISCIPLINARY POLICIES (GRADES 6–12)**

### **Hazing**

Hazing refers to any activity expected of someone joining a group that humiliates, degrades, or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate. These activities may include, but are not limited to, the following: use of alcohol; paddling; creation of excessive fatigue; physical and psychological shocks; quests; wearing of public apparel which is conspicuous and not normally in good taste; engaging in public stunts and buffoonery; morally degrading or humiliating games and activities, etc. Any student involved in hazing will be subject to any measures in our Disciplinary Code and potentially may be reported to law enforcement officials.

## **Criminal Behavior**

Criminal behavior on or off campus, whether at a school function or not, will result in immediate suspension and an expulsion review. Any student who engages in any illegal activity is subject to immediate suspension from school, probable expulsion, and possible arrest by the civil authorities.

## **Threats of Violence**

Any threat of violence, whether on or off campus, in jest or otherwise, will be taken seriously. Such threats may result in immediate termination, at the discretion of the Administration. A student may be turned over to law enforcement officials.

## **Fighting and/or Assault**

Fighting or the use of physical force against another person that is not reasonably necessary for self-defense is prohibited and may result in a suspension. All parties involved in fights are subject to suspension. Subsequent offenses may result in an expulsion review. In addition to the school consequences, alleged criminal infractions may be reported to law enforcement.

## **Academic Integrity**

A student's academic work is his or her bond of trust with his or her teacher. Whether writing an essay, solving a math problem, or taking a reading quiz, the work a student represents as her/his own accomplishment must be offered to his or her teacher with complete personal integrity and honor. Incidents of plagiarism and cheating are serious violations of the GPCS Code of Conduct.

**Cheating:** GPCS operates on an honor system in which honesty and integrity are at the core. Cheating is a major violation of the Code of Conduct and is disciplined accordingly. The following examples are considered as cheating:

1. Giving or receiving unauthorized help on tests (including the use of smartphones, electronic devices, or any unauthorized help), copying homework, allowing someone else to copy one's own work;
2. Using study aids not permitted by the teacher, including old tests, exams, quizzes, projects, or answer keys;
3. Using prepared materials during a test or quiz, e.g., notes, formula lists, notes written on skin or clothing, etc.;
4. Sharing information from tests or quizzes with others;
5. Fabricating or inventing information or data, e.g., citing sources not actually used or inventing sources that do not exist, inventing data for a lab experiment, etc.;
6. Forging notes or parent's signatures

Any student violating this policy will receive a zero on the assignment and may face additional disciplinary action depending on the seriousness of the offense. Repeat offenses will result in further disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Please note that both the person sharing and the person receiving the material in question will face consequences.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarizing is copying work and claiming it as the student's own original work. It is the usage of someone else's thoughts or ideas without giving them credit for their work. This includes copying and pasting work from the Internet or another document. It also includes taking statements from other works and modifying them only slightly. When other works are necessary for conveying an idea, proper citation is taught and required.

The first offense of plagiarism will earn a zero on that assignment and a notification to the home by the overseeing teacher indicating the problem. A second offense will earn a zero and suspension at the discretion of the administration. A second offense will preclude a high school student from or remove a high school student from membership in the National Honor Society. A third offense will result in further disciplinary action including losing credit for the class, suspension and/or expulsion at the sole discretion of the administration.

While not necessarily subject to the same penalties, gaining academic advantage by staying home to get more time to study or to complete a project, misleading or lying to the teacher regarding academic work, and other such behaviors are violations of academic integrity.

## **Break-In or Vandalism**

It is the responsibility of each student to respect and care for the building and equipment the Lord has provided for us at GPCS. Vandalism to school property will not be tolerated. This includes littering, writing on desks, defacing the school building, damaging school equipment, and abusing textbooks or library books. Students vandalizing school property or involved in a break-in will be required to make restitution for any damaged items, are subject to any measures in our Disciplinary Code, and may be reported to law enforcement officials.

## **Theft**

Taking another person's property without permission, whether belonging to a student or school employee, is prohibited. This includes removing someone's property as a prank and/or stealing lunches and snacks from lockers or desks. Damaged or destroyed property belonging to others is to be replaced by the student responsible. Violation of this policy may result in immediate suspension and an expulsion review and may be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

## **Weapons and Incendiary Devices or Substances**

Students are prohibited from the possession of weapons anytime on campus and at any school-related functions off campus. Weapons include but are not limited to guns, knives (this includes pocket knives, switchblades, etc.), box cutters, and bombs or explosive materials. Possession or use of any incendiary or explosive devices (including lighters, matches, fire crackers, etc.) at school or school functions is strictly prohibited. Weapon facsimiles, such as BB guns, Airsoft™ guns, or paintball guns, also are prohibited. Any item brought into the school or used by a student that is perceived by faculty or staff to be dangerous is subject to confiscation whether or not it is a weapon. If a weapon is needed as a prop for a school performance or as part of a school project, the teacher supervising the activity will assume responsibility for the use and storage of the item. Violation of this policy may result in immediate suspension and an expulsion review.

## **Sexual Purity, Pregnancy, Abortion**

This policy applies equally to male and female students.

### **1. Sexual Purity**

The Scriptures reveal that sexuality is a gift from God to be enjoyed within the context of marriage between a man and a woman (Genesis 2:22-25), and when this gift is abused and God's standards ignored, the Bible calls this "sexual immorality" (1 Corinthians 6:18-20; Ephesians 5:1-3). As a distinctively Christian ministry, GPCS requires its employees and students to adhere to these traditional biblical principles of morality including abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage (1 Cor. 6:9-20; Eph. 5:3-5; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; 1 Tim. 4:12; II Tim. 2:19-22, etc.). Even if parents do not share these biblical values, GPCS students shall not engage in, advocate, or promote sexually immoral behavior (for example, premarital sexual relations, homosexuality, bisexuality, use/distribution of pornography, etc.) whether on or off campus and/or using technology such as personal electronic devices.

If a student engages in, advocates, or promotes sexual immorality, we will partner with parents to address this in a way that best serves the family and honors God. We believe that God is honored when relationships are reconciled—relationships with Him, with fellow students and family members (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). Ultimately, the school reserves the right to respond to inappropriate student sexual conduct with any combination of discipline (as described in our Disciplinary Code) and accountability that leads toward reconciliation of these relationships (Hebrews 12:7-11). However, in some cases sexual immorality and/or advocacy for it regardless of the location or medium of the activity may result in a student's dismissal from Greater Portland Christian School depending upon the seriousness of the offense, the repentance or lack of repentance of the student, and/or the response of the parents.



## 2. Students Who Become Parents

Premarital sexual activity (“sexual immorality”) is a violation of the biblical requirement to live chaste lives (I Corinthians 6:9-20; Ephesians 5:3-5; I Thessalonians 4:3-8; I Timothy 4:12; II Timothy 2:19-22, etc.) and sadly results in numerous negative consequences even when followed by sincere repentance. Consistent with our commitment to traditional biblical morality but also with the need to nurture a reverence and gratitude for God’s gracious gift of human life, we will respond as graciously as possible to those students who are facing parenthood at such a young age but who give evidence of genuine repentance. At the same time, we understand that students who become parents have entered into a complex, deeper stage of life with much greater needs and responsibilities which our program (created for children and adolescents) is not designed.

a. Because the situation may be disruptive to the educational process not only for the immediate student(s) involved but also the entire school community including younger children, the continued enrollment of the student parent(s) for the current school year shall be reviewed on an individual basis by the administration in consultation with the student’s parents. If a student’s response appears to be one of genuine repentance and acknowledgement of wrongdoing, and if the student’s parents are cooperative, then our anticipation would be that the student would be provided the opportunity to continue course work from home with limited GPCS teacher supervision until at least the end of the semester in which the child is born and/or to the end of the school year at the discretion of the administration. The student parent(s) may then petition the administration for re-enrollment in regular classes for the beginning of the next full semester after the birth of the child.

During the time of homebound education, the student:

1. does not come to the campus without administrative permission;
2. forfeits any student leadership positions and is ineligible to participate in any student activities;
3. participates in graduation (if a senior) and receives all appropriate academic honors provided that all graduation requirements have been met;
4. does not bring children to the campus during the regular school day;
5. The student’s family will continue to pay tuition and may be subject to additional fees that will be assessed to compensate for the additional time and resources that may be needed to provide and monitor meaningful homebound coursework.
6. meets on a regular basis with a pastor and/or Christian professional counselor at least through the pregnancy.

b. Failure to follow these requirements and/or the decisions of the administration may jeopardize continued enrollment at GPCS.

c. If a student does not indicate genuine repentance and acknowledgement of wrongdoing and/or parents are uncooperative, then the administration may request the withdrawal of the student or petition the board for expulsion.

## 3. Abortion

GPCS holds firmly to the biblical teaching that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image; human life is, therefore, of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 9:3-6; Job 31:15; Psalm 139:13-16). We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. For a student to in any way encourage or facilitate another person having an abortion is considered a major violation of our biblical values and is subject to requested withdrawal or expulsion at the discretion of the administration. A student who has an abortion as a student at GPCS is viewed as a student parent and will be subject to requested withdrawal or expulsion at the discretion of the administration.

# PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES: ALCOHOL, DRUGS, TOBACCO

## General

A student's procurement, use, sale, or provision of illegal and/or controlled substances such as drugs, marijuana, alcohol, tobacco, and mind-altering substances and related paraphernalia violates biblical principles (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Romans 13:1-5), seriously jeopardizes the health and safety of students and others, is a violation of Maine law, and negatively affects the reputation of GPCS.

Therefore, the use, procurement, or provision by GPCS students of any of the prohibited substances listed below is strictly forbidden regardless of whether or not at school or a school function. The only exceptions to this policy are for the use of prescribed medications which are being taken in accordance with that prescription, for parent-approved substance use in the home, and for the use of wine for sacramental purposes.

## Prohibited Substances

Prohibited substances include all of those which are defined in 17-A M.R.S.A. §1101 and 1102 and those specifically listed below:

7. Narcotic Drugs (as defined in 17-A M.R.S.A. s1101, paragraph 6)
8. Alcohol
9. Marijuana (as defined in 17-A M.R.S.A. s1101, paragraph 1)
10. Potent medicinal substances (as defined in 22 M.R.S.A. s1102)
11. Hallucinogenic drugs (as defined in 17-A M.R.S.A. s1102)
12. Volatile materials such as glue, paints and aerosols when possessed for the purpose of inhalation
13. Steroids and look-alike drugs
14. Tobacco Products
15. E-cigarettes
16. Over-the-counter stimulants, depressants or other mood altering substance such as No Doze, diet pills, etc.
17. Paraphernalia and substance residue.

## Disciplinary Consequences

1. Alcohol and Drugs Use: Any student violating these regulations and using, in possession of, or under the influence of alcohol or other controlled drugs or mind-altering substances will receive immediate suspension and an expulsion review.
2. Alcohol and Drugs Sale or Provision: Any student selling or distributing alcohol or other controlled drugs or mind-altering substances on- or off-campus will receive an immediate suspension, be recommended for expulsion, and may be turned over to appropriate law enforcement personnel.
3. Tobacco Use: Any student using or in possession of any tobacco products and/or e-cigarettes will be suspended. A second offense will result in a recommendation for expulsion by the administration.
4. GPCS also enforces an "in the presence" policy: if a student shows up at a location at which alcohol or other controlled drugs or mind-altering substances are being used by minors, he/she must leave immediately. Failure to do so will subject the student to disciplinary action, including suspension.
5. The school will report to law enforcement authorities any adults (including parents or other family members) who violate state law by providing or knowingly facilitating student access to alcoholic beverages or other prohibited substances as listed above. Violation of this policy may result in the termination of the relationship between that family and the school in order to protect other students.

# **DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS & CONSEQUENCES**

In addition to the options listed below, sanctions may include counseling, community and/or school service, and restitution, solely at the discretion of the administration.

## **Verbal Warning/Reprimand**

A verbal warning may be given the first time for minor offenses such as talking without permission, inattention, etc.

## **Lunch Detention**

A lunch detention may be given by a teacher for minor infractions or to complete a homework assignment.

## **After-School Detention**

1. Detention is usually held after school from 2:35-3:20 p.m. on Thursdays. Students report to the classroom of the duty teacher. Students reporting late to detention will receive additional detention time.
2. Parents are notified in writing (Misconduct Notice) at least one day prior to the day to be served so that transportation arrangements may be made if necessary. Detention will not be postponed due to extracurricular activities, practices, games, inconvenience, etc., but may be postponed for emergencies, genuine hardship, or medical appointments at the discretion of the issuing teacher.
3. Failure to return the signed Misconduct Notice or to serve the assigned time will result in additional detention.
4. Students may be given copying assignments or work detail at the duty teacher's discretion during the time of the detention and will be unable to do homework, read books, or use electronic devices.
5. The third detention received within any three week period will automatically result in an in-house suspension. It is important to note here that the student is no longer being suspended for the original offences but for contempt and/or lack of respect for our school community's effort to maintain a healthy educational environment.

Examples of violations that may result in after-school detention include, but are not limited to:

1. Chronic tardiness to class
2. Frequent refusal to come prepared for class (no books, paper, pen, etc.)
3. Disruptive and/or inappropriate behavior in the classroom, chapel, hallway, field trips, etc.
4. Dress code violation
5. Horseplay resulting in damaged school, staff, or student furniture or property
6. Unkind and hurtful verbal treatment of other students
7. Disrespect to teachers; arguing or bickering with an adult in authority at school or a school activity
8. Public display of affection on campus or at school events
9. Malicious throwing of objects
10. Any unauthorized use of cellphone during school
11. Using coarse or inappropriate language

## **Community Service**

Community service may be assigned to be performed on campus, either after school, or on a Saturday, or at a community service project approved by the administration.

## **Suspension from Extracurricular Membership/Activities**

Participation in any extracurricular activity is a privilege that can be suspended or revoked by the administration at its sole discretion at any time as part of a disciplinary action. Students should

understand that any misbehavior, whether related to an extracurricular function or not, may affect their extracurricular involvement. A student serving suspension will not be allowed to attend or participate in activities, practices or games on the day(s) of the suspension. Coaches/advisors have the right to curtail or suspend playing/participation time in response to student attitude and/or behavior. Continued attitude and/or behavior problems may lead to permanent removal from the team or organization by the coach/advisor or by the administration at their sole discretion.

## **Suspension**

Suspension is the removal of a student from the classroom and all school activities for a specific amount of time at the discretion of the head of school depending upon the nature and/or frequency of the offence as well as the student's prior behavioral record. This step is taken when there is a serious violation or repeated violations of the Code of Conduct that jeopardizes the student's continued enrollment at GPCS. It is intended to signal clearly that unless change takes place, the student will be separated permanently from the student body. It may be served at home or at school at the discretion of the administration. As with any disciplinary measure, suspension may be accompanied by other measures including required counseling, community service, loss of membership and/or participation in extracurricular activities such as Student Council, National Honor Society, class trips, missions trips, and interscholastic sports. In the most serious situations, suspension may be followed by requested withdrawal or expulsion. A parent/administrator conference is required before the student can be reinstated at school after an at-home suspension due to the seriousness of the discipline.

Teachers will provide work to be accomplished during the suspension. Suspended students are expected to turn in completed assignments (for credit) and take missed tests and quizzes immediately upon their return to school. A suspended student may not appear at *any* school-sponsored activity at or away from campus (including games and practices) while suspended until the day after the suspension is served. A record of a student's suspension will be placed in the cumulative educational record. This notice will be removed from the permanent educational record when the student graduates from GPCS or is promoted from grade 8 to grade 9.

Examples of violations that may result in suspension include, but are not limited to:

1. Criminal activity: violations of municipal, state, and/or federal law
2. Serious offenses such as, but not limited to, those listed in our Disciplinary Code policies, regardless of whether occurring at school or school functions or not: bullying, harassment, threats of violence, hazing, break-ins, vandalism, possession of weapons and/or incendiary devices and substances, sexual immorality, production of and/or distribution of pornography (including "sexting" and social media), prohibited substances (alcohol, drugs, tobacco)
3. Theft, destruction, vandalism, or abuse of any property, on campus or off campus
4. Critical or derogatory remarks, disrespect, insolence, disobedience shown toward those in authority
5. Violations of the "Terms of Use" for the computer or science labs
6. Falsely ringing a fire alarm
7. Deceiving by means of plagiarism, cheating, lying, forging signatures
8. Repeated or chronic violations of "lesser" misconduct such as those listed under "After-School Detention"
9. Cutting class or leaving campus without permission
10. Swearing, using obscenities
11. Inappropriate or dangerous use of vehicle on school property or when entering or leaving school property
12. Any serious breach of conduct inside or outside of school which adversely affects the testimony of Christ and/or the reputation of the school

## **Disciplinary Probation**

A student may be placed on disciplinary probation by the administration for a specified period. Probation gives a student an opportunity to correct unacceptable behavior. This will normally follow other disciplinary action outlined in the Disciplinary Code but may be established for a new student as a result of questionable references or disciplinary issues at a previous school. Parents/guardians and student will be asked to sign a contract; failure to meet contract conditions may result in requested withdrawal or expulsion.

Reasons for being placed on disciplinary probation include, but are not limited to:

1. Continued deliberate disobedience;
2. Unchanged rebellious spirit;
3. Continued negative attitude;
4. Negative influence on other students;
5. Advocacy of religious, ethical, or moral perspectives or values that, in the opinion of the administration, contradict the biblical perspectives and values of the school;
6. Serious breach of conduct inside or outside of the school which has an adverse effect on the reputation, atmosphere, and standards of the school;
7. Failure of the parents/guardians to comply with the disciplinary procedures of the school.

A student may be denied admission for the following year when in the opinion of the administration the parents do not fully support the ideals, goals, and discipline of the school and/or the student demonstrates an uncooperative or negative attitude toward the school.

## **Withdrawal**

Because we believe the home and school must be in harmony in matters of discipline and standards, parents will be asked to withdraw their child if in the opinion of the administration the parents or student do not fully support the ideals, goals, and discipline of the school or the student demonstrates an uncooperative or negative attitude toward the school and its policies. In such cases the permanent record will record only the date of withdrawal and will not indicate the reason, unless the parent places a statement in the record. Withdrawal should not be confused with expulsion. If a parent refuses to withdraw a student at the head of school's request, however, the head of school will petition the board of directors for the expulsion of the student. In the case of expulsion the permanent record will state the reason(s).

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion is reserved for the most serious violations of school policies and/or repeated offenses which lesser disciplinary measures have not succeeded in preventing. In such cases the student will be suspended at home until the board of directors can hear the head of school's recommendation of expulsion and make a decision. Parents will be notified of the board's decision. Any student convicted of a criminal offense may be expelled from Greater Portland Christian School.

Violations that may result in expulsion include, but are not limited to:

1. Any of the violations listed as examples under "Suspension" and/or "Disciplinary Probation;"
2. Endangering the welfare of another by fighting or by threatening another with physical harm;
3. Acting in a dangerous manner on or about the school premises or at a school sponsored event, athletic or other;
4. Serious breach of conduct inside or outside of the school which has an adverse effect on the reputation, atmosphere, and standards of the school.

A student can be expelled only by the executive committee of the school board, upon recommendation by the head of school. When the head of school recommends that expulsion is warranted, he/she shall suspend the student immediately from the school until such time as the

recommendation to expel can be heard by the executive committee. The student and her/his parents or guardian shall be notified immediately and will be given a hearing with the executive committee of the board prior to their taking action, if requested.

If the head of school believes that a student's presence poses a significant threat to his or her physical or emotional safety or well-being, or may disrupt the safety or well-being of another student, faculty, staff, guest, or other GPCS community member, the head may take any action that he or she believes to be appropriate and reasonable under the circumstances without respect to the Disciplinary Procedures. In addition, GPCS reserves the right to take unilateral action against students for off-campus conduct that has an adverse effect on the school community, or in the event that a student is charged with or convicted of a crime. Under those circumstances, the school may suspend the student immediately. Reinstatement shall be at the sole discretion of the head of school.

### **Expulsion Appeal Process**

The student and his parents or guardian may ask to appeal the expulsion to the entire school board if they believe the decision was unfair. The request for appeal shall be in writing and shall be presented to the head of school within five days of expulsion. Either the parents or guardian may represent the appeal to the board. The decision of the school board will be considered final.

### **End-of-Year Disciplinary Review**

At the end of each school year, the administration reviews the disciplinary record of all students. The administration may, at its sole discretion, place students with unacceptable disciplinary or academic records on academic or behavioral probation or deny them the option to re-enroll.

### **Restoration and Reinstatement**

When a student is withdrawn or expelled, there is the possibility of restoration and reinstatement in the future if, at the sole discretion of the administration, 1) the student has demonstrated sincere repentance, 2) there is sufficient reason to believe the student will remain in full compliance with the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Code, and 3) the return of the former student will not be disruptive to the school community or cause anxiety for other students. The exception to this possibility of restoration and reinstatement is if the situation prompting the withdrawal or expulsion involved criminal activity or threats against others.

### **Disciplinary Code Scope**

The Disciplinary Code applies to students while they are on campus or at a school-related function or activity. While student behavior outside of school falls under parental responsibility, behavior that impairs the testimony of the school cannot be ignored. GPCS students are expected to avoid illegal and/or immoral activity at all times. *Any serious breach of conduct inside or outside of school which adversely affects the testimony of Christ and the school may result in disciplinary action by the administration. While GPCS has no direct control over and accepts no responsibility for the behavioral choices GPCS students make when off-campus, we reserve the right to discipline a student for off-campus conduct which negatively impacts the school's Christian testimony.*

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY POLICY**

#### **General Policy**

Our eligibility policy has been developed to help ensure that academic achievement does not suffer as a result of involvement in extracurricular activities and to comply with the Maine Principals' Association's (MPA) requirement. Eligibility for all extracurricular activities will be guided by certain criteria pertaining to academic achievement, class conduct, and effort/attitude.

#### **Extracurricular Probation**

The grades of secondary students are checked at the end of the fifth and ninth weeks of each quarter. Students are placed on extracurricular probation if they have one or more grades below a 65 at those checkpoints. Students placed on probation are required to work out a plan with their teacher(s) to get their grades to 65 or higher. Students on extracurricular probation must still continue their commitment to extracurricular activities including athletic teams.

Grades for all students on extracurricular probation are rechecked every two weeks. If students have brought all their grades up to at least a 65, they will be taken off probation. If their grades fall below 65, they will be placed on the ineligibility list for the next two weeks.

### **Ineligibility List**

Students who are placed on the ineligibility list may not participate in any extracurricular activities including team practices and competitions. In order to regain eligibility, they must raise their grade to 65 or higher by the two-week recheck day. If any grade is below a 65 at this point, the students remain ineligible for two more weeks. Students who are ineligible at the second week of the quarter are not rechecked until the fifth week. Adjustments are made to this sequence to accommodate the Christmas recess.

### **Summary of Checkpoints**

Weeks 5 and 9 of the current quarter: all students checked

Weeks 7 (of the current quarter) and 2 (of the next quarter): grades of probation or ineligible students rechecked

### **Extracurricular Activity and Discipline**

Participation in any extracurricular activity is a privilege that can be suspended or revoked by the administration at its sole discretion at any time as part of a disciplinary action. Students should understand that any misbehavior, whether related to an extracurricular function or not, may affect their extracurricular involvement. A student serving suspension will not be allowed to attend or participate in activities, practices or games on the day(s) of the suspension. Coaches/advisors have the right to curtail or suspend playing/participation time in response to student attitude and/or behavior. Continued attitude and/or behavior problems may lead to permanent removal from the team or organization by the coach/advisor or by the administration at their sole discretion.

### **National Honor Society**

GPCS sponsors a chapter of the National Honor Society, which is duly chartered and affiliated with the national organization. It is open to any student in grades 11-12 who meets the eligibility requirements in four areas of evaluation: scholarship (must have a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or higher), leadership, service, and character. Standards for selection are established by the national office of NHS and have been revised to meet our local chapter needs. Students are selected for membership by the Faculty Council, which bestows this honor each spring upon qualified students on behalf of our school faculty. *Consideration for membership in the NHS is a privilege, not a right; merely achieving the minimum GPA does not automatically result in an invitation to be a member.*

Students who meet eligibility criteria as listed in the chapter bylaws (available from the main office and the GPCS website) are invited to complete the Student Activity Information Form that provides the Faculty Council with information regarding the candidate's leadership and service. A history of leadership experiences and participation in school or community service is also required.

To evaluate a candidate's character, the student's school disciplinary records are reviewed, and faculty are solicited for input regarding their professional reflections on a candidate's service activities, character, and leadership. This information is reviewed by the Faculty Council along with the Student Activity Information Form to determine membership. A majority vote of the Council is necessary for selection. Candidates are notified regarding selection or non-selection according to a predetermined schedule.

Following notification, a formal induction ceremony is held to recognize all the newly selected members. Once inducted, new members are required to maintain the same level of performance (or better) in all four criteria that led to their selection. This obligation includes regular attendance at chapter meetings held during the school year, and participation in the chapter service projects conducted each year. Students or parents who have questions regarding the selection process or membership obligations can contact the chapter advisor through the main office.

## **SPORTS PROGRAM**

### **Middle School Program**

We currently have a middle school soccer team (coed, open to students in grades 4 – 8) that plays in the Maine Christian School Sports League. We also have middle school basketball teams that play in local leagues. Our middle school track team competes in Western Maine Conference regular season meets. Sports at the middle school level are foundational and emphasize basic rules and skills, sportsmanship, and teamwork. Every player will play approximately 50% of each game depending on number of players on team, attendance at practices, and behavior.

### **Varsity Program**

GPCS currently fields five teams in three varsity sports. Our baseball team, boys' and girls' basketball teams, and boys' and girls' soccer teams all compete in the Maine Principals' Association's (MPA) Southern Maine Region. All GPCS interscholastic athletic activities are governed by the rules and regulations established by the MPA. At the varsity level, teams strive to be as competitive as possible within our philosophy. Coach expectations are higher at this level. There is a greater time commitment (daily) and the possibility of an extended season due to play-offs and tournaments. Playing time will vary depending entirely on skill, attitude, and work ethic.

### **Attendance Requirement**

Attendance is mandatory at all practices and games. Exceptions may be granted for excused absences at the Athletic Director's discretion. Missing a practice for any reason other than illness may result in the student-athlete not starting the next game. Missing a game for any reason other than illness may result in a suspension from the next game. The student-athlete will serve the suspension in uniform on the bench. The athlete should notify the coach ahead of time when possible. Secondary students (grades 6-12) must attend school for at least three hours of classes in order to participate in any after-school activity. It is each student's responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher for any work missed due to early departures.

### **Physicals**

A current physical examination is required by Maine state law before students can participate in interscholastic sports. A physical within the last two years is required to participate in sports.

### **Concussions**

Any student-athlete experiencing any symptoms of a concussion must report it to a coach immediately. Anytime there is any type of contact or collision involving a student athlete's head the coach needs to do immediate assessment. If there are any signs or symptoms of a concussion the student athlete must be removed from all physical activity immediately. The coach needs to contact the Athletic Director immediately and fill out an incident report with the athletic director immediately. The student-athlete must go to a doctor for evaluation and possible treatment. The student-athlete will not be allowed to return to any activity; games or practices, until they provide the Athletic Director with a signed return to action plan from their doctor. The athletic director will provide a copy of the return to action plan to the coach.

### **Christian Testimony**

An athlete's actions are a reflection of the standards and values of GPCS. Therefore, all athletes are expected to exhibit Christ-honoring behavior and attitudes both on and off the field/court, at school and away from school. This includes being respectful and obedient and demonstrating good sportsmanship.



## **Uniforms & Game Day Attire**

Athletes are responsible to treat their uniforms with care and to keep them clean. Uniforms may be worn only for games and athletic functions as required by the coach or athletic director. Students are expected to return uniforms when requested and are responsible for the cost of lost or damaged uniforms. Failure to return or pay for uniforms may result in ineligibility to play on other teams. Game day attire is set by the Athletic Director.

## **Pick-Up of Students**

Students are expected to arrive at an athletic event or practice at the time determined by the coach/athletic director and should not be dropped off earlier. Students are expected to be picked up promptly after all practices and athletic events. Exceptions to this policy may be made on a case by case basis by the coach or athletic director. Students arriving while another practice is occurring must respect the rules of a closed practice and will not enter or interfere with the other practice.

## **Sportsmanship**

All our school family—parents, staff, and students—are strongly encouraged to come and cheer for our teams in competition. Spectators are asked to remember, however, that good sportsmanship on the part of fans enhances our testimony as a Christian school, while poor sportsmanship sets a negative example for our children and harms our witness to the community. School personnel will respond to fans who fail to conduct themselves in a Christ-honoring way at athletic events involving our students.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

### **Medications at School**

No student will receive any medication, prescription or over-the-counter, without written consent of the parent or guardian. Only a school nurse or trained unlicensed personnel can administer medications that are prescription or over-the-counter; GPCS office personnel receive training from a nurse and so may administer medications.

Students in grades 6-12 may receive Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Advil) provided their parent has submitted an “Authorization to Administer Acetaminophen & Ibuprofen” permission form. We do not administer any medication, prescription or over-the-counter, to elementary students (Preschool – gr. 5) without a doctor’s written permission.

The personnel administering a medication records the date, time of dispensing medication, and dosage and sends the parent/guardian an email notification. No other over-the-counter medication will be given without written consent of the parent or guardian.

Students who regularly receive prescription medication must have an “Authorization to Administer Medication During School Hours” form completed and on file.

### **Allergies and Asthma**

A student may self-medicate with an inhaler or EpiPen if GPCS has an “Allergy/Anaphylaxis Action Plan” and/or “Asthma Action Plan” for the student signed by their healthcare provider. A record of medication needs to be completed every time an inhaler or EpiPen is used. If the student has permission to self-medicate, the student completes the record. If the school’s authorized personnel medicates, they complete the record. A back up inhaler and/or EpiPen need to be provided to the school to have on hand in case of emergency. The inhaler or EpiPen should be labeled appropriately as with all prescription medication.

### **Fire Drills**

GPCS is required to hold two fire drills during the first two weeks of school and to hold an additional eight fire drills during the year. Instructions for leaving the school are posted in each room. When students hear the fire alarm, they are to move quickly and quietly in single file out the designated exit. They assemble in a designated area outside away from the building until instructed to return. *Absolute silence is to be observed and will be insisted upon.* Students are then to proceed directly to the room which they left.

## Lockdown Procedure

Our lockdown procedure, developed in consultation with safety authorities, would be used if a serious threat to student and staff safety existed. During a lockdown, students and adults are cleared immediately by staff from the halls and restrooms and locked in the nearest available room. All doors are locked, door windows are covered, and all students and adults remain quiet in their classrooms and offices. No one is permitted to leave, and no one, including parents, is allowed on campus during lockdown. The use of cell phones is not permitted during lockdown due to the need for total silence.

## Lockout Procedure

The lockout procedure is most commonly used when heightened vigilance is required due to an incident occurring outside the school building, on or off school property. During a lockout, the school continues with the normal school day, but cancels any outside activities and allows no unauthorized people in the building. Parents are able to pick up their children during a lockout.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Arrival

7:45 a.m.	Students begin arriving and wait inside; <b>do not arrive prior to 7:45 a.m.</b>
8:05	Secondary students go to homerooms
8:10	Attendance taken in gr. 6-12; marked tardy after this time

### Dismissal

2:30 p.m.	Dismissal: grades K-12
3:00	All students must be picked up except AfterCare students AfterCare begins for any remaining students gr. K-8

## Sign-In / Sign-Out

Secondary students who arrive in school after 8:10 a.m. must sign in at the main office or be signed in by a parent. Students leaving before 2:30 p.m. must sign out at the main office or be signed out by a parent.

## Student Drivers

High school drivers need administrator authorization to drive to school and must park only in the areas specified by administrators. A registration form should be obtained from and filed with the main office. Students are not permitted to use their vehicles at any time during the school day without permission; this rule applies particularly to lunch time. No other students are to have access to student vehicles during the school day. Student drivers are expected to arrive at school on time and to park along the perimeter nearest the fencing on the east/left side of the lot (the gym foyer side). Students are not to “hotrod” (spin tires or endanger) on campus or on the main streets around the school at any time. Failure to abide by these guidelines and responsibilities may result in loss of driving privilege for a period of time. *Student drivers must not be tardy to school.*

## Senior Privileges

Seniors are allowed certain privileges commensurate with their higher level of maturity and self-discipline as young adults. Our goal is to reward those whose behavior and academic progress are a positive example for underclassmen. This also provides time for seniors who have other responsibilities such as Christian service opportunities or part-time jobs.

### Guidelines for Senior Privileges:

1. Seniors should remember that these are *privileges*, not *rights*, which may be forfeited any time at the discretion of the administration if, in its opinion, a student shows a lack of maturity or self-control and/or violates these guidelines. Loss of senior privileges may accompany other disciplinary actions. These privileges are subject to the requirements of the *Extracurricular Eligibility Policy*, and seniors need to keep this in mind when making commitments to employers. Parents/guardians must sign their consent for their senior to receive these privileges.

2. With specific parental permission, seniors with privileges may:
  - a. Leave campus for lunch (but not during any free periods);
  - b. Arrive later at school if they do not have a first period class;
  - c. Leave school at the end of their last scheduled class;
  - d. Transport other seniors (no underclassmen) in his/her vehicle at lunch and/or ride in vehicles operated by other seniors during lunch

## **Closed Campus Policy**

In the interest of student safety, GPCS is a closed campus, which means that once a student reports to the school grounds, he/she may not leave until dismissal without written parental permission, and that school-age visitors are not permitted during school hours except with permission from the administration. Students are not allowed to leave the school once they have arrived, even if prior to the start of the school day (e.g., to go to buy coffee, etc.). The exceptions are for students with senior privileges and juniors who have been approved to leave early for work reasons only.

## **Visitors**

All visitors, including parents, must sign in at the main office; no one may enter a classroom without first signing in at the office. This is because we are responsible to know who is in our building at any time for safety reasons such as fire drills, emergency drills, etc.

*We generally do not permit school-age visitors (except prospective students by appointment) due to potential issues with supervising students unfamiliar with our policies and guidelines, due to our unfamiliarity with their health issues, due to liability issues, and due to the extra work required for teachers. We ask that students not invite friends or relatives to school because they are out of school elsewhere or visiting from a distance.*

## **Fundraising and Solicitation**

Students and parents who wish to solicit funds for private purposes, or advertise for-profit or charitable services or functions, must have permission from the head of school. The *GPCS School Directory* may not be used for solicitations or personal mailings (other than for parties and similar social activities) and should not be given to or shared with any organizations or businesses, or persons outside the immediate GPCS family community. Students and parents are strictly prohibited from selling items on school property without the expressed written permission of the head of school. They are also prohibited from putting fundraising materials in faculty and staff mailboxes or asking members of the GPCS faculty and staff to distribute materials on their behalf via email or other means.

## **Lockers**

Middle school and high school students are assigned lockers at the beginning of school each year. ***Lockers are the property of Greater Portland Christian School and may be searched by an administrator at any time at the administrator's discretion.*** Students are responsible for keeping the lockers clean and using them according to the following guidelines:

1. Students are not to swap lockers with anyone else without the approval of the student's homeroom/classroom teacher.
2. Only poster putty or magnets are to be used to put up pictures inside lockers. Stickers that do not peel off are not allowed. *Nothing is allowed on the outside of the locker.*
3. Discretion is expected in regard to material displayed in lockers. Items must be compatible with our Christian school philosophy and mission. Items considered inappropriate by a faculty member or administrator must be removed by the student upon request.
4. Lockers are to be kept clean and neat at all times. Periodic locker checks and cleanouts may be held during the school year.

5. Chronic failure to maintain a neat and clean locker or failure to maintain the locker by these guidelines may result in a detention and/or losing the privilege of using a locker for a period of time.

## **Restroom Use by Students**

**Secondary students** (grades 6-12) are to use only the restrooms in the high school wing near the gym changing rooms. They are not to use the staff restrooms.

## **Lunch**

Students bring their own lunches to be eaten in their homerooms. The travel club (EF) usually sells pizza on Tuesdays, and sometimes other lunch options are offered as fundraisers. Secondary students may purchase snacks and drinks from the school store.

## **School Store**

The Senior Class runs the school store, which sells snacks and other food items. Proceeds are used toward graduation expenses.

## **Copier Use**

Students must have explicit authorization to use the copier in the Teachers' Work Room. Students are asked to be good stewards of our resources by only printing only what is truly necessary and avoiding printing of graphics and photos.

## **Office Phone Use**

Students may not use the phones in the school offices unless authorized by the office staff for genuine emergencies or unexpected schedule changes. Students may not use cell phones during the school day without explicit staff permission. We are happy to forward messages to students from parents for transportation changes that have to be made occasionally, but please avoid calling after 2:00 p.m. if possible as the office staff and teachers have numerous end-of-day responsibilities. Written messages may be left for staff; neither students nor staff will be called out of class except for genuine emergencies.

## **Textbooks**

Texts and workbooks are supplied to students. Prorated replacement charges for lost or damaged texts or property may be billed to parents at the administration's discretion.

## **Library**

With limited space available, GPCS has a small library, and students are encouraged to make use of their own local public libraries as well as Internet resources. Regardless of a student's town of residence, GPCS students may get a card at the South Portland Public Library, which is helpful for research purposes.

## **Lost & Found**

Unclaimed articles will be placed in the hallway of room 207, in the high school wing, and are removed and discarded on the last Wednesday of every month.