



STUDENT HANDBOOK

Rev. September 2021

Matthew 4:19-20

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." At once they left their nets and followed him.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCHOOL FOUNDATIONS	4
VISION STATEMENT	4
MISSION STATEMENT	4
PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION.....	4
EXPECTED STUDENT OUTCOMES.....	4
WORLDVIEW STATEMENT	4
STATEMENT OF FAITH.....	5
POSITION AND BIBLICAL MORALITY STATEMENTS	6
GOVERNANCE.....	8
ACCREDITATION	9
POLICY OVERVIEW	9
NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY.....	9
PRIORITY ENROLLMENT	9
ADMISSION STANDARDS	10
WAITING POOL.....	10
PROBATIONARY STATUS.....	11
BIRTH AND HEALTH RECORDS	11
STUDENT WITHDRAWAL.....	11
<u>FINANCIAL POLICIES.....</u>	11
FEES	11
PAYMENT POLICY.....	11
DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS	12
STUDENT WITHDRAWAL.....	12
AFTERSCHOOL CARE FEES.....	12
ANNUAL FUND	12
<u>ATTENDANCE, ARRIVAL, AND DEPARTURE.....</u>	13
ATTENDANCE INTRODUCTION.....	13
ABSENCE.....	13
SIGNING STUDENTS OUT EARLY	15
TARDINESS	15
SCHOOL ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL SCHEDULES	15
SCHOOL CANCELLATION	16
TRAFFIC PATTERNS.....	16
ARRIVAL PROCEDURES	16
DISMISSAL PROCEDURES	17
<u>ACADEMICS.....</u>	18
CURRICULUM	18
GRADING SCALE	18
HOMEWORK.....	18
REPORT CARDS	19
LATE AND MISSING ASSIGNMENTS	19
PROMOTION GUIDELINES	19
HONOR ROLL.....	20
JUNIOR BETA CLUB.....	20
STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM.....	21

ENRICHMENT CLASSES.....	21
LIBRARY	21
<u>DRESS CODE</u>	<u>22</u>
RATIONALE	22
GIRL'S DRESS CODE	22
BOY'S DRESS CODE.....	23
CASUAL DRESS POLICY.....	24
EXCEPTIONS	25
DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS	25
<u>STUDENT CONDUCT</u>	<u>25</u>
DISCIPLINARY PHILOSOPHY	25
DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS	25
DISMISSAL	26
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT	26
OFFENSES AND CONSEQUENCES	26
GENERAL EXPECTATIONS	28
STUDENT HARASSMENT POLICY.....	28
DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
CYBERBULLYING	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
THREATS	29
CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES	29
CARE OF FACILITIES.....	30
LUNCH GUIDELINES.....	30
PLAYGROUND GUIDELINES	30
ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR COMPUTERS	30
<u>HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY.....</u>	<u>31</u>
ILLNESSES.....	31
MEDICINE.....	32
COUGH DROPS	32
INHALERS	32
FOOD ALLERGIES.....	32
SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY	33
VISITORS	33
SECURITY CAMERAS	33
<u>PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS</u>	<u>33</u>
FAMILY INVOLVEMENT	33
PRAYING FOR THE SCHOOL.....	34
PARENT TEACHER FELLOWSHIP (PTF).....	34
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	34
PARENT DRESS STANDARDS	35
PARENT/TEACHER RELATIONS.....	36
CONFLICT RESOLUTION	36
<u>MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES</u>	<u>37</u>

OFFICE HOURS	37
CHANGE OF ADDRESS	37
CHANGE IN ROUTINE	37
DELIVERIES.....	37
TELEPHONE USAGE.....	37
LOST AND FOUND.....	37
INSURANCE	37
SNACK.....	37
LUNCH.....	38
BOOKS	38
FIELD TRIPS.....	38
OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS	39
PARTIES	40
<u>STUDENT COVENANT AGREEMENT</u>	<u>43</u>
<u>COVENANT AGREEMENT</u>	<u>44</u>

SCHOOL FOUNDATIONS

Vision Statement

Myrtle Grove Christian School's vision is that all students exemplify biblical principles, godly character, and academic skills to be life-long learners and productive citizens as they serve Christ.

Mission Statement

Myrtle Grove Christian School's mission is to educate students by exposing them to biblical principles as a framework for all that is taught. The goal for all students is that they be strengthened spiritually, morally, academically, emotionally, and physically to meet the challenges of higher education and their call to serve Christ in the world.

Philosophy of Education

Myrtle Grove Christian School believes that God has lovingly called each of us as His children to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. He has called us to help our students grow in wisdom and understanding in this relationship in every area of their lives. Each child is a special gift of God, with unique mental, physical and spiritual abilities. These characteristics need to be acknowledged in the classroom. Every student should be challenged to use his/her gifts of intellect to the maximum degree according to age level and ability. (Ephesians 4:11 & 12)

Only as the home, the church and the school come under the authority of God will children develop their potential to the greatest degree. Myrtle Grove Christian School is to be a partner with families. We will endeavor to assist students in guiding their development both academically and spiritually. By assisting the home, we are following God's commandment to ". . . bring them (children) up in the training and instruction of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4)

As Christian educators, we are called to model Christ before our students. "A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher." (Luke 6:40) The hope of our world resides in the lordship of Jesus Christ. Myrtle Grove Christian School is called to assist our children in taking that hope to the unsaved world. "We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, the wonders He has done...so the next generation would know them. Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget His deeds but would keep His commands." (Psalms 78:4, 6a, 7)

Expected Student Outcomes

Eighth grade graduates are maturing followers of Jesus Christ equipped and inspired to impact the world for the glory of God.

- Graduates are well rooted in faith and learning.
- Graduates nourish the world through effective stewardship and service.
- Graduates are critical thinkers who discern truth and evaluate ideas from a biblical perspective.
- Graduates enjoy and demonstrate their identity in Christ.
- Graduates broadly reflect the excellence of God's design in their work and relationships.

Worldview Statement

One of our chief aims at Myrtle Grove Christian School is to instill in students a Biblical worldview that is based wholly upon God's Word, the Bible. By worldview, we mean a person's mental framework for understanding the "big picture" of reality, based upon conscious and unconscious assumptions about God, creation, humanity, morality, and purpose.

We believe that the Bible describes the world as it really is. In other words, the Bible answers not only man's religious questions but also the major philosophical questions for which man has always sought answers. The student with a Biblical worldview has a system of thought that is unified, logically consistent, and relevant to every area of life. The propositions below provide a brief description of a Biblical worldview.

GOD

There is one triune God who is eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is infinite, personal, sovereign, all powerful, all knowing, and perfect in love, justice and mercy. God is not silent but has revealed Himself to mankind through the Bible, creation, and the person of Jesus Christ.

CREATION

All things were created by God and are sustained by God. Creation consists of a physical realm and a spiritual realm. All of creation was originally good but is now in a fallen state due to the sin of man.

HUMANITY

Humans were created by God in His image and likeness. Consequently, all human life has intrinsic value. At the same time, man lives in a fallen state as a result of sin. Man's sinful condition alienates him from God and renders him unable to worship God properly, live righteously, understand spiritual things, and recognize that all truth in creation reveals the Creator. People can be restored to relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

MORALITY

Morality is based upon the character and nature of God, not upon the consensus of society or culture. It is absolute, not relative. God's moral law is revealed in Scripture, and God commands our compliance with that law.

PURPOSE

God has commanded mankind to have dominion over the earth. Believers are to seek for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven and are to be witnesses of Christ to their culture. History is linear, not cyclical, such that humans have only one life to live, and their decisions in that life will affect their eternal destiny.

Statement of Faith

All Scripture is self-attesting and being Truth, requires our unreserved submission in all areas of life. The infallible Word of God, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is a complete and unified witness to God's redemptive acts culminating in the incarnation of the Living Word,

the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible, uniquely and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, is the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks. On this sure foundation we affirm these additional Essentials of our faith:

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative, inerrant Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21).
2. We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28:19, John 10:30).
3. We believe in the deity of Christ (John 10:33), His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:35), His sinless life (Hebrews 4: 15, 7:26), His miracles (John 2:11), His vicarious and atoning death (1 Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 2:9), His Resurrection (John 11:25, 1 Corinthians 15:4), His Ascension to the right hand of God (Mark 16:19), His personal return in power and glory (Acts 1:11, Revelation 19:11).
4. We believe in the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature and that men are justified on the single ground of faith in the shed blood of Christ and that only by God's grace and through faith alone are we saved (John 3:16–19, 5:24; Romans 3:23, 5:8–9; Ephesians 2:8–10; Titus 3:5).
5. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, and they that are lost unto the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:28–29).
6. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 2:12–13, Galatians 3:26–28).
7. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life (Romans 8:13–14; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19–20; Ephesians 4:30, 5:18).

Position and Biblical Morality Statements

Myrtle Grove Christian School bases its beliefs and teachings on Holy Scripture because we believe in the Lordship of Jesus Christ and that the Bible is the inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God, serving as the source for faith and practice for all people. In all matters, we seek to point our students to God's Word as the source of truth. With this in mind we wish to explicitly communicate our positions on current key topics and our policy regarding biblical morality. It is our goal to share this information in order to partner with families that align themselves with these statements and policy.

MGCS Position Statements

PREFACE

Because we live in a pluralistic society, enrolled families or prospective families may hold a wide range of beliefs on moral issues. For this reason, we believe it is necessary to declare Myrtle Grove Christian School's positions on key topics. MGCS has adopted the position statements of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, summaries of which are found below. The full statements may be found at www.epc.org.

In most grade levels, it is highly unlikely that these topics would arise in discussion, or that teachers would give place to them. However, it is possible that questions on these subjects may arise in seventh or eighth grade. In such cases, teachers at MGCS will affirm the school's positions and refer the students to their parents and pastor.

HUMAN LIFE

God has an infinite value and unequivocal love for human life. After the fall of mankind as indicated in Genesis 3, the remainder of the biblical story is the story of God's loving pursuit to reestablish at-one-ment [reconciliation]. That atonement is finally and fully established in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

God's unequivocal love is manifested in the ministry of Christ where we see revealed the ultimate ground for the valuing of human life. The persons most rejected by human society, most despised by men, are the very ones to whom Jesus reached out with tender love and concern. Above all, His sacrifice on the cross affirms God's love and concern for us as human beings as being of great value, precious in His sight.

ABORTION

We are convinced that the Bible strongly affirms the dignity and value of every human life. "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." (Jeremiah 1:5)

"My frame was hidden from Thee when I was being made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth." (Psalm 139:15) "And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit." (Luke 1:41)

The Scripture passages cited above, and others, are evidence that God accords human value, dignity, and personhood to the unborn child. The Bible does not distinguish between prenatal and postnatal life. Thus, the willful termination of unborn life is a violation of God's moral law.

We also affirm that this position obligates the people of God to nurture and support women who are facing unwanted pregnancies; confront men who respond with indifference to their responsibilities and role in such crises; support and care for children who result from unwanted pregnancies; serve as a therapeutic community to those suffering from the physical, spiritual, and emotional wounds of abortion.

HUMAN SEXUALITY

Human sexuality is a gift from God. Being made in the likeness of God as male and female, we reflect the loving complementarity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Scriptures present a grand vision of husband and wife mirroring the intimate fellowship of the Trinity through union with a covenant partner who is both similar (human) and different (opposite gender), leading to fruitful

procreation of humanity. In this profound mystery, we discover God's purposes for our sexuality and His will for how we are to express our sexuality.

We believe that the fundamental problems with most contemporary views of sexuality are, first, that the focus is limited to individual pleasure, relational intimacy, and self-fulfillment; and, second, that biblical marriage is rejected as the exclusive context for sexual intimacy. While the Scriptures teach that human sexuality is indeed a gift for our enjoyment, its primary purpose is to glorify God. Whether young or old, male or female, single or married, whether attracted to the same, the opposite, or both sexes, all humans are obligated to glorify our Creator in our sexuality through faithful conformity to God's design, revealed in the Scriptures.

We desire to adhere fully to biblical sexuality. Out of love we share with others the message of God's judgment upon all forms of sexual immorality. We also believe that there is no place for any form of cruelty, hate or denigration of those who either disagree with these positions or hold to other positions. We unequivocally condemn all injustices, sinful intimidation, and physical violence perpetrated against anyone because of sexual attraction or practice.

THE MARRIED LIFE

When God created us male and female, He also instituted the ordinance of marriage in which one man and one woman are bound together for life in a solemn covenant, which beautifully illustrates God's covenantal relationship with His chosen people. God directs His people who marry to wed only fellow believers—those who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation and have joined His Church. It is within the covenant of marriage alone that God—for His own glory, the mutual encouragement of the spouses, procreation, the strengthening of the family, and the welfare of humankind—has instructed husbands and wives to engage in regular, intimate sexual love. In this uniquely sexual relationship, the married couple seeks to remember, celebrate, and model Christ's love for His Church and His Church's devotion to her Lord and to serve one another with godly affection.

MGCS Biblical Morality Statement

An integral part of Myrtle Grove Christian School's mission is to foster spiritual development and a biblical worldview in the lives of its students. This includes leading students to develop a biblical understanding of morality and to pursue a life that is governed by the biblical moral code. The school works in partnership with families to achieve these desired outcomes, which necessitates that both the school and home come under the authority of God for the benefit of the student.

For this reason, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student if the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home or the activities or behaviors of the student are counter to or are in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, or participating in sexual immorality, homosexual activity, bisexual activity, or gender assignment, transgender, identity or expression; promoting such practices; or being unable to support the moral principles of the school. (See Romans 1:27; 1 Cor. 6:9-20; 1 Cor. 7:1-2; Eph. 5:3-5; 1 Thes. 4:2-4; 1 Tim. 1:9-10.)

Governance

Myrtle Grove Christian School works in partnership with Myrtle Grove Presbyterian Church and is operated as a separate nonprofit corporation with a separate and independent board of directors.

The school board operates under Policy Governance®, whereby the board determines the desired results of the school (Ends) and the boundaries within which those results may be achieved (Executive Limitations). The head of school is then responsible for all day-to-day operations and decisions at the school, aiming to achieve the Ends while operating within the prescribed Executive Limitations. The board governs with an emphasis on biblically-based integrity, outward vision, strategic leadership, collective decision making, a pro-active focus on the future, and a clear distinction between board responsibilities (governance) and head of school responsibilities (management).

Accreditation

Recognizing the value of having someone else to testify about the standards at our school, we have chosen to be accredited through the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), and AdvancEd.

ADMISSIONS

Policy Overview

Myrtle Grove Christian School seeks to enroll students whose parents want them to have a Christian education. Both students and parents should be informed of the school's Christian emphasis and agree to support this part of the training.

Prospective families must first complete an application packet and submit all of the required documentation. Students applying for grades kindergarten through eight must then schedule and complete an admissions test. After a review of the application packet and test results, the student may be required to visit the school for observation in academic and social settings.

The student application will be evaluated for admission based on previous grades, attendance records, teacher/principal recommendations, parent cooperation with school, student interview, test scores from previous school, our testing results, and a student visit.

The admissions process is designed to identify families and students for whom MGCS provides a good academic and spiritual fit. The school will enroll students based upon a variety of criteria, not on a first come first served basis. Myrtle Grove Christian School may, at its sole discretion, decline admission or discontinue enrollment of a student/family for any cause or reason determined to be in the best interests of the school and in keeping with board policies.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

Myrtle Grove Christian School admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs and athletic or other school-administered programs.

Priority Enrollment

Re-enrollment

MGCS offers priority enrollment for presently enrolled students, provided the re-enrollment forms and registration fees are submitted by the early registration deadline.

Sibling Enrollment

Limited priority enrollment for qualified, new students is offered, as space is available, to siblings of currently enrolled students. The enrollment privilege must be exercised by the priority enrollment deadline.

Admission Standards

Behavioral Standards

All students and parents must be willing to abide by MGCS's Discipline Policy. Generally, the school does not enroll students who have been expelled from other schools or who have been in serious disciplinary trouble in their former school or their community.

Academic History

Students applying for Kindergarten through eighth grades will be required to meet MGCS's promotion requirements for their prospective grade and have passing grades of "C" or better on grade-level work in all major subjects.

Admissions Testing

An entrance test on reading and math will be required. Students' test scores should be on grade level or above. Students applying to first through eighth grades should score in the 40th percentile or above on the reading and math sections of the Stanford Achievement Test in order to be considered for admission. Kindergarten applicants must score in the 60th percentile or higher on the Dial 4 Development Assessment.

Special Learning Needs

A student with an exceptional learning need will be accepted only if there is a reasonable expectation that MGCS can meet the needs of the student. Depending on the specific need and the training and experience of the classroom teacher, we may consider the composition of the class to determine if we are able to meet a prospective student's needs.

Age Requirements

- A child must be three years old by August 31st of the year upon entering the Three-Year-Old Preschool Program. Three-year-old preschool students must be completely potty trained before entering school.
- A child must be four years old by August 31st of the year upon entering the Four-Year-Old Preschool Program.
- A child must be five years old by August 31st of the year upon entering the Kindergarten Program.
- A child must be six years old by August 31st of the year upon entering the First Grade Program.

Financial Obligations

If a prospective student is coming from a private school, his/her financial account at that school must be settled.

Waiting Pool

If an applicant meets the admission requirements for enrollment but is applying for enrollment

in a grade that is full, the applicant will be placed in a waiting pool for his/her grade level. Unlike a waiting list, a waiting pool does not imply a “first listed first served” commitment on the part of the school. When vacancies do occur, the principal will select from students in the waiting pool based on a variety of criteria.

Probationary Status

All students admitted to MGCS are accepted on a probationary basis for the first twelve weeks of school. They are expected to abide by all policies set forth in the MGCS Student Handbook. Grades should be maintained in the “C” average range. If grades fall below that range, the student may be required to receive tutorial assistance at parents’ expense in order to maintain their position at the school.

Failure to meet academic or behavioral standards during the probationary period may result in the student’s dismissal from the school.

Birth and Health Records

Upon acceptance of enrollment, a parent must provide current health and immunization records and a copy of the child’s state birth certificate. Immunizations must be up to date according to state law, or else a legally valid exemption must be on file.

Student Withdrawal

A student is not considered withdrawn until the school office has been notified, in writing, by the parent. In case of dismissal, the parent will be notified. Please refer to the “Financial Policies” section for information on tuition refund policies.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Fees

- The Application Fee is required for all new students and is due at the time of application. This is a non-refundable fee that covers some of the cost associated with the admissions process, including student testing.
- The Enrollment Fee is expected at the time of or re-enrollment for current students or within five business days of acceptance of new students. This fee is non-refundable.

Payment Policy

- Tuition installments may be made in one annual invoiced payment to MGCS or twelve monthly installments through FACTS Tuition Management. Monthly installments will be automatically drafted by FACTS on the 5th or 20th of each month May-April.
- After School Care Fees will automatically be drafted by FACTS Tuition Management on the 25th of each month August-May.

Delinquent Accounts

Delinquent Accounts

- FACTS will notify families of monthly tuition installments returned by the bank and a return fee will be charged by FACTS in accordance with your tuition agreement.
- FACTS Tuition Agreements in **arrears 1 month** will receive a letter from the school business office notifying the family of the agreement status and asking for an expectant date of payment.
- FACTS Tuition Agreements in **arrears 2 months** will receive a letter from the school business office notifying the family of the agreement status and informing them that failure to bring the tuition agreement balance current may result in the student(s) withdrawal from MGCS within 10 days. A request for payment arrangements must be submitted in writing and approved by the administration prior to the designated withdrawal date.
- If a student(s) is involuntarily withdrawn from MGCS due to non-payment, the student(s) will be ineligible for re-admission to MGCS for the remainder of the school year.

Student Withdrawal

Upon the enrollment of a student(s), MGCS makes a year-long financial commitments and incurs expenditures that are non-recoverable. For this reason, the first 2 tuition installments (May and June or the equivalent thereof) are non-refundable if a student withdraws at any time.

If a student(s) withdraws during the school year, the family is responsible for tuition for the entire month of withdrawal. If tuition has been paid beyond the month of withdrawal, a refund will be given.

The family must complete a Student Withdrawal Form and submit the form to the office two business days prior to the next scheduled FACTS Tuition withdrawal to stop the bank automatic draft.

Policies concerning student withdrawal apply whether the withdrawal is voluntary (family decision) or involuntary (school decision).

Morning Care and After School Care Fees

Morning Care is available for preschool through 8th grades. After School Care is available for preschool through 5th grade students for an additional fee. Fees will be billed through FACTS Tuition Agreement on a monthly basis. MGCS will publish the fee schedule yearly.

Annual Fund

But as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us – see that you also excel in this grace of giving. – 2 Corinthians 8:7

As a new or re-enrolling family to Myrtle Grove Christian School, it is our hope that you see your relationship with Myrtle Grove as one that will last multiple years, whether your student is entering as a Pre-K student or an 8th grader. Making the decision to enroll or re-enroll your student(s) is not only a spiritual one but a long-term financial commitment. In order for you to make your current and future financial decisions regarding your child's education, it is important that you understand the school's commitment to keeping your costs to a minimum

while providing excellence in Christian education. While tuition covers the cost of running the school, the Annual Fund helps with scholarships and a variety of projects that require extra income for each school year. Your support and participation in the annual fund are appreciated.

Participation

Our goal is 100% participation from families, faculty/staff, and board. This monetary support, whether large or small, signifies a note of confidence that our community members support the mission of MGCS. This percentage significantly impacts gifts from outside sources. Most corporations and foundations consider parent participation before donating to the school.

Matching Gifts

Matching gifts allow you in many cases to double your gift to the school. Please contact your human resources department to confirm that your employer is a matching gift corporation.

ATTENDANCE, ARRIVAL, AND DEPARTURE

Attendance Introduction

Parents have the responsibility to see that students are regularly in attendance. Proper education relies on continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, student-teacher interaction, peer interaction, and structured study. Because this is so important to successful academic progress, students who have excessive absences may be subject to failure and/or permanent dismissal from MGCS.

Absence

Our school strives to remain in compliance with both North Carolina Non-Public Education requirements and our accrediting association with rules for attendance. The law allows school administrators to excuse students temporarily from attendance “*on account of sickness or other unavoidable cause.*” In accordance with this statute, MGCS has adopted three categories of absence: *Unexcused*, *Excused*, and *Planned*.

Unexcused Absence

When a student is absent from school, the absence will be recorded as *Unexcused* unless and/or until it meets the criteria of an *Excused* or *Planned* absence.

If a student accumulates excessive unexcused absences in a school year, the school may be required to take specific action under the law, including notifying the department of social services that the parent or guardian may be in violation of the compulsory attendance law. Additionally, students may lose credit for academic assignments missed during each day of unexcused absence.

Excused Absence

In order for an absence to be recorded as *Excused*, the parent must provide the teacher with a written excuse within a reasonable amount of time. If a written excuse is not provided within that time frame, the absence may be recorded as *Unexcused*. The following are examples of excusable absences:

- Student’s illness or injury

- Death of a relative
- Doctor's appointment

Planned Absence

The compulsory attendance law does not condone or encourage unnecessary absence for any reason. However, it does leave some flexibility for school administrators to permit planned absences. Accordingly, students at MGCS may be allowed planned absences during a school year for reasons such as family vacations and non-school sponsored educational activities, per the following guidelines:

1. A *Planned Absence Notification* should be completed prior to the period of absence.
2. Planned absences for the student must not exceed five (5) school days cumulatively in the course of a school year. (Planned absences in excess of five (5) days will be recorded as *Unexcused*.)
3. The student and parents should expect extended absences to have a negative impact on the student's grades.
4. Students may makeup assignments, quizzes, and tests under these conditions:
 - a. Assignments may be secured from the teacher in advance. Teachers will endeavor to provide students with work for the period of planned absence; however, teaching responsibilities may not permit the preparation of assignments in advance.
 - b. Assignments obtained in advance are due the second day of class following the absence period.
 - c. If assignments are not obtained in advance, the student will be allowed one (1) day per day of absence to make up work. However, the student will also be responsible for keeping up with current assignments during the same period that he/she is making up missed assignments.
 - d. Work turned in after the allotted period of time will be considered late and may result in point deductions or a grade of zero (0) on the assignment, according to the teacher's grading policy.
 - e. The student and parents must arrange to make up tests and quizzes after school or otherwise outside of instructional time.
 - f. The teacher cannot provide makeup tutoring. The student and parents will be solely responsible for ensuring that the student learns the material taught during the period of absence.
 - g. Makeup testing for any standardized testing will not be offered for planned absences.

Participation in After-School Activities

A student must be in attendance the day of an after-school activity in order to participate in that activity. In order to be counted present, a student must be at school for at least half of the day. Half of the day is remaining past 11:30 A.M.

However, if a child has signed out due to illness during the school day he/she will not be allowed to participate in any after-school event that day. For the health of everyone involved, your child should be "symptom-free" for 24 hours before being exposed to other students or staff.

Weekend school-related events will be handled by the supervising teacher if the student

misses the last day of the school week.

Retention Due to Absences

For students to be promoted for the year, total absences for the year may not exceed twenty (20). This ruling applies whether the absences are excused, unexcused, or planned and regardless of the student's academic performance. Exceptions may be granted under unusual circumstances after parental consultation with the administrator.

Students who miss assignments due to illness or other excused absence will be allowed a minimum of one (1) day per day of absence to make up work. Guidelines for making up work missed during a planned absence are described above.

Signing Students Out Early

When coming to check out a child early from school, an adult must go to the school office. All students will be called to the office to be checked out. If someone different than the parent is checking out the student, the parent must send a note or call ahead of time.

Tardiness

Tardiness Introduction

Parents should make every effort to get students to school on time. Tardiness is discouraged for several reasons:

- It develops bad habits concerning punctuality.
- It starts the student's day off on a negative note.
- It causes the student to miss the beginning of the classroom day (announcements, instruction, etc.).
- It distracts the class.
- It requires the teacher to have to repeat instructions, lessons, etc.

Excused/Unexcused Tardies

- A child is tardy after 8:15 A.M. Tardies will be recorded as excused or unexcused.
- Five (5) unexcused tardies in a nine-week grading period may result in a parent-teacher conference.
- **Five unexcused tardies in a year will prevent a student from being awarded "Perfect Attendance" status.**
- Every fourth tardy for students in 5th-8th grade will result in a silent lunch. Chronic tardiness may result in an administrative conference, suspension or dismissal.

Possible Reasons for Excused Tardies:	Possible Reasons for Unexcused Tardies:
Student has a doctor's appointment	Late
Sickness of student (non-contagious)	Overslept
Car trouble on the way to school	Regular traffic situations
Traffic due to inclement weather like snow/ice/heavy rain	Repeated car trouble excuse

School Arrival and Dismissal Schedules

Arrival and dismissal times are set by the Administration before the start of each school year. Please check Renweb/FACTS or the front office for the current times.

School Cancellation

If the school needs to vary from the regular school calendar schedule, attempts will be made to communicate those changes via the following sources:

- Email Notification
- Parent Emergency Notification Service (phone call and/or text)
- WWAY TV3/WECT TV6
- Social Media and mgcs.org

Traffic Patterns

Our carpool system is designed to provide safety, order, and supervision for each student's arrival and departure. The traffic pattern at MGCS is designed for maximum safety for our students. Parents are asked to observe all traffic flow patterns. Since the safety of hundreds of students is involved, please give wholehearted cooperation in observing these regulations, in spite of the occasional inconveniences inherent in carpool lines. Designated drop off/pick up zones are clearly marked. Please advance far enough so that other cars may pick up their riders. Please do not leave cars unattended in the car line and park in designated areas only. Please watch your speed. Traffic pattern information can be obtained from the school office.

Arrival Procedures

Parents or carpools should deliver students to a designated drop-off location between 7:45 A.M. and 8:10 A.M.

Morning Care Guidelines

Beginning at 7:15 A.M., an early morning staff person will be on duty for students who are dropped off between 7:15 A.M. - 7:30 A.M. All students arriving before 7:30 should go directly to the library where they will sign in and wait for the daily morning care teacher to arrive. Students who arrive between 7:30 A.M and 8:05 A.M. are to report immediately to the designated morning care teacher who will sign them in and record their arrival time.

All students reporting to morning care should enter quietly and take a seat. They will be expected to read, do homework, study or have a quiet devotion time.

Staff persons are in morning devotions until 8:05; therefore, students may not report to their own classrooms and be unsupervised. A student arriving early may stay with an adult, but that adult must be responsible for supervising that student until the homeroom teacher arrives.

Drop-off Guidelines

To help our morning drop-off run more smoothly, please observe the following guidelines:

- Remember to yield to other traffic.
- Do not allow children to exit your car until you reach the designated drop-off point.
- Only drop off students at designated drop-off locations.
- All pedestrian traffic must cross at the crosswalk. Children should cross with an adult.
- Young children should not be left alone in cars.
- Refrain from using cell phones while driving in the parking lot.
- Please park in designated parking spots.

Drop-off Locations

- Traffic will flow counterclockwise. Students may be dropped off at the Front Office entrance, the Upper School door, or Building 2 entrance (“the horseshoe”).
- Cars dropping off students at the Building 2 (“the horseshoe”) must enter the circle at the entrance on the right side.
- Cars dropping off students at the Upper School door must enter the area from the main parking lot exit onto the King’s Highway.
- Students should exit cars on the sidewalk side of the car, if possible so that they will not be in the line of traffic or will not have to walk in front of cars.

Dismissal Procedures

Classes are dismissed on a staggered schedule to eliminate long lines of cars and the amount of waiting time. It is important for drivers to arrive as closely to the appointed time as possible.

Pick-up Guidelines

In the interest of safety and out of courtesy for students, staff, and other drivers, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- If you are at the beginning of the pick-up line and your rider’s class has not come out yet, but the other classes have; do not wait at the front of the line.
- Please do not conference with teachers during the pick-up procedure.
- Park in designated spaces only. Do not park your car in the drive-through. Do not park along the perimeter of the parking lot.
- All pedestrian traffic must cross at the crosswalk.

Pick-up Locations

- Students will be dismissed at the front entrance by the overhang. Cars should enter from Piner Rd. on the right side of the sanctuary and follow the traffic flow around the perimeter of the parking lot until they reach the pick-up zone.

Late Pickup

Students will remain outside for up to 15 minutes after their dismissal time. If no one has picked them up, they will be taken to their classroom where they will remain until 3:30, then they will be taken to aftercare. Late parents will be billed a charge of \$7.00 per 15 minutes for late pickup.

Off-site After-School Care Vehicles

After-school care vans may be picking up students in the afternoon at the upper school driveway. Parents are responsible for arranging all after-school care and notifying after-school care providers of student absences, school schedules, closings, etc. Parents will need to contact the after-school care centers to verify which ones currently pick up at our school.

Changes to Afternoon Routine

Please notify the school as soon as possible if your student will be going home with someone else. We cannot just send students home with an emergency contact, without notice from the parent.

ACADEMICS

Curriculum

The curriculum at Myrtle Grove Christian School is designed to achieve Expected Student Outcomes. We have selected a blend of both Christian and secular textbooks based on their anticipated effectiveness in achieving learning objectives. Supplemental material is added where deemed necessary. Biblical worldview principles are incorporated into instruction in every subject area.

Grading Scale

<u>Kindergarten</u>	<u>Grades 1 & 2</u>	<u>Grades 3 - 8</u>
E = Excellent	4 = Exceeds grade level expectations	A = 100 – 93
S = Satisfactory	3 = Satisfies grade level expectations	B = 92 – 85
N = Needs Improvement	2 = Progressing toward grade level expectations	C = 84 – 77
I = Improvement Noted	1 = Performs below grade level expectations	D = 76 – 70
U = Unsatisfactory		F = 69 –below

Enrichment grades for K - 5 are S, N, and U

Homework

Purpose of Homework

It is the policy of MGCS that all classes in grades K-8 be assigned regularly scheduled homework, with the exception of Wednesday nights. Homework serves the following purposes:

- To practice skills learned in class on an independent level
- To help students learn responsibility
- To help parents stay aware of what students are learning
- To prepare students for material that will be covered the next day
- To develop positive study habits

Homework Assignment Guidelines

The following is a guideline for the amount of homework to expect at each grade level:

Kindergarten	10 minutes
1st grade	15 minutes
2nd grade	20 minutes including 10 minutes of reading (Total 20 minutes)
3rd grade	30 minutes including 15 minutes of reading (Total 30 minutes)
4th grade	40 minutes including 20 minutes of reading (Total 40 minutes)
5th grade	50 minutes including 25 minutes of reading (Total 50 minutes)
6th grade	15-20 minutes per core
7th – 8th grade	15-30 minutes per core

This homework time may not include special projects, book reports, etc. All students should

read, or be read to, at home on a regular daily basis.

Report Cards

Kindergarten through eighth grade report cards will be issued four times per year—every nine weeks. Distribution dates are listed on the school calendar. Any questions concerning the grades should be brought to the classroom teacher. Progress reports will be sent by e-mail to 3rd through 8th grade students, mid-way through each quarter. Three and four old year old preschool progress reports will be issued twice a year.

Late and Missing Assignments

Grade Deductions

If an assignment is late, the teacher may lower the grade each day the assignment is not turned in. Up to 10 points per day may be deducted for grades 5-8 and up to 5 points per day for grades K-4.

Make-up Due to Absence

Students who miss assignments due to illness or other unplanned absence should be allowed a minimum of one day per day of excused absence to make up work. Such decisions are made at the teacher's discretion.

After School Detention

Teachers may assign an after-school detention as needed for students who do not turn in homework assignments. We realize that this is inconvenient for the parents who must rearrange their schedules to provide transportation home for their child, but our belief is that this will provide an extra incentive to the student to make every effort possible in the future to get homework done.

Promotion Guidelines

Promotion to Kindergarten

Students should score 60% or higher on the readiness test. Students should be at a minimum developmental level of 4.5 years of age from a spring evaluation in the areas of gross motor skills, fine motor skills, self-help skills, speech and language skills, social and emotional development and general knowledge and comprehension. Promotion from preschool to kindergarten is based on a recommendation from the preschool teacher.

Promotion to First through Eighth Grade

Student promotion will be largely determined by three factors: student achievement in the classroom, Standardized test results, and the teacher/administrators recommendation based on an evaluation of student's maturity and readiness for the next grade level. For promotion, a student should pass all major academic subjects (Language Arts, Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Bible) and score above 50% on the standardized test. A student scoring below this standardized test level may be promoted with a teacher recommendation but will be on academic probation through the first twelve weeks of the school year. During this probation period, the school may determine that the student must receive tutoring from an outside source which may include the summer as well as the school year. The school administrator will make final decisions on all circumstances not covered in this promotion policy.

A student passing a major subject with a yearly average of “D” may be required to receive remediation during summer vacation. If a student has a yearly average of “D” in two major academic subject areas, this may be the reason for retention to the current grade level for the student, and summer remediation may be required.

Promoting Students with Modifications

Any student who has passed all academic courses under a modified curriculum or with special consideration must be evaluated by the Student Support Team, the academic core teachers, the parents, and the appropriate administrator before promotion or retention is determined.

Academic Probation

Purpose: Student grades will be reviewed quarterly to prevent the possible failure of a student. This brings the Administration and the parent together in order to create a viable, tangible solution for the struggling student.

Process: This process may be initiated at the discretion of the respective Principal in consultation with the Head of School.

- If the student is making any F’s or more than one D the student may be placed on academic probation.
- The Principal will notify the parents of the academic probation.
- A conference will be held with the parent and student in regard to academic probation.
- The student, parent(s), and Principal sign the Academic Probation Form. Copies are distributed to all respective parties.
- If the student is still failing after two successive quarters, the parents may be asked to withdraw their child due to the school’s inability to meet the student’s academic needs.

Honor Roll

- The “A Honor Roll” represents all A’s in all subjects and character marks at the S (satisfactory) level or above.
- The “A/B Honor Roll” represents all A’s and B’s in all subjects and no more than one N (needs improvement) on character traits.
- “Year-End Honor Roll” is determined by the yearly averages in all subjects.

Junior Beta Club

Members are selected from seventh through eighth grades based on above average grades and strong character. Below are the criteria for selection:

Seventh Grade Inductees

- Must have achieved an overall average of 92 in core subjects (Math, Reading, LA, History, Science, Bible, Spanish) in sixth grade.
- Must have achieved an average of 92 in each nine weeks in core subjects (Math, Reading, LA, History, Science, Bible, Spanish) in the seventh grade.
- Must not have received a grade of D or F in any subject in seventh grade.
- Must be recommended by their teachers as an example of strong character.

Eighth Grade Inductees

- Must have achieved an overall average of 92 in core subjects (Math, Reading, LA, History, Science, Bible, Spanish) in seventh grade.
- Must have achieved an average of 92 in each nine weeks in core subjects (Math, Reading,

LA, History, Science, Bible, Spanish) in the eighth grade.

- Must not have received a grade of D or F in any subject in eighth grade.
- Must be recommended by their teachers as an example of strong character.

Character Standards

Character is based on Ephesians 4:25-32. Students should be individuals of integrity at school and in the community—being honest, of strong character, with good manners, and exhibiting respect and understanding for others. There should be no grade other than “S” in Character Development. There should be no record of serious disciplinary action taken by teachers or administration during the current school year and no record of chronic discipline measures taken by teachers or administration that result in silent lunches or after school detentions.

Transferring Students

Students transferring into MGCS who were inducted into Junior Beta Club at a previous school will be automatically transferred into the MGCS chapter. Other transferring students must have been enrolled at MGCS for a minimum of three nine-weeks before being nominated for induction.

Probation

If a Beta Club member’s grade average in core subjects drops below 90, the student will be placed on temporary probation pending improvement in the following nine weeks. If a student receives a D or F for any subject, the student will automatically be placed on probation.

Student Support Team

For a student who is struggling to succeed in the classroom, a Student Support Team (SST) is in place to help assess the student’s needs and develop a plan for academic support. In some instances, the SST may offer onsite support services, such as diagnostic testing and short-term remediation. In other cases, they may refer the family to a physician and/or psychologist for a professional evaluation so that the school can become better informed about how to help the student succeed. MGCS will determine which accommodations we are able to meet given our available resources. However, we will not make ongoing accommodations without a copy of a psychological evaluation report completed in the past three years. For a limited number of students, the Timothy Center offers academic instructional support and onsite tutorial services for an additional fee.

Enrichment Classes

In addition to core academic subjects, enrichment courses are offered in order to achieve specific expected outcomes and to enhance the overall academic experience. In grades K-5, enrichment courses include physical education, computer, music, art, and foreign language instruction, and after school clubs. Additional elective classes are available to students in grades 6-8.

Library

MGCS strives to ensure that textbooks, literature, films, videos and other materials that are used in the classroom or recommended by the school are likely to enhance the spiritual, emotional and mental development of its students. MGCS will strive to censor clearly inappropriate literature from its students, regardless of the source. However, it is the position of the school that parents are primarily responsible for the overall development of their

children. As the primary caretakers of their children, parents must know what their children are reading or viewing, with special attention given to literature, books or other materials not used at school in a classroom setting or not recommended by the school.

MGCS gratefully acknowledges donations of books, periodicals, and/or educational materials for classroom and library use. Each item received will be evaluated in accordance with a Selections Guidelines Policy. Any materials not selected for inclusion in the classroom or library collection may be returned to the donor.

Library fines for 6th – 8th grade are 20 cents per day, per book. If fines are not paid or books not returned, the school may intervene.

DRESS CODE

Rationale

The guiding principles for school apparel and personal appearance are modesty, appropriateness and neatness, as well as an alignment with the student's biblical identity in Christ. The MGCS dress code is designed to create an atmosphere that is both conducive to sound educational practices and reflective of modesty and consideration of others. We acknowledge that many of our dress guidelines do not carry the weight of biblical mandates. As we are an academic institution, many of our requirements are simply traditional good standards for the educational "marketplace." We believe that a degree of professionalism in students' dress and appearance often correlates with higher quality in their work and conduct, and also limits distractions for other students. Our administration reserves the right to assess student compliance or non-compliance with our guiding principles for dress code and personal appearance in all school settings or school sponsored events.

It is also our desire to make dress a "non-issue" by eliminating the social differences and status symbols that students sometimes associate with clothing and by eliminating the need for staff to make subjective judgments about the appropriateness or inappropriateness of particular articles of clothing. Adherence to our dress code, along with a consideration of others, will allow us to move on together to the deeper questions of life and godliness.

Girl's Dress Code

(Please see Casual Day Dress Code Policy in the next chapter for those requirements)

Tops: Kindergarten through 5th grade girls may wear white, navy blue, dark green or burgundy short or long sleeved classic collared polo shirts with buttons without a logo. 6th- 8th graders may wear any solid color shirt or long sleeved classic collared polo shirt without a logo. Polo shirt's may not be form fitting.

- Sweaters and sweatshirts (plain without a logo, no writing, etc.) are permitted in navy blue, dark green, burgundy, black, gray, white, light blue or pink.

- MGCS sweatshirts (sold by MGCS) are approved for classroom wear.
- Turtlenecks or t-shirts in white or the color shirt they are wearing are approved for under the uniform top.
- MGCS official T-shirts may be worn on Spirit Wear Friday with uniform bottoms.
- Students may have any color/style outer coat but it may not be worn in the classroom.
- Uniforms should conceal the midriff area.

Bottoms: Pants, shorts, skorts, jumpers, and Capris in navy blue or khaki are permitted. They must be traditional in cut and style and not tight-fitting. No jean type, skinny type, sweatpants, athletic, corduroy, leggings, or velour fabrics are allowed.

- K-5th graders may wear solid white or navy tights or leggings under shorts or skirts.
- All bottom wear must be of a length that reaches or exceeds the tip of the middle finger when standing erectly. Please consider future growth when purchasing uniform items.
- Shorts or bloomers may be worn under skirts.

Footwear: Dress, casual, tennis shoes or sandals are allowed but no flip-flops. All shoes must have a heel strap. No shoes with wheels. Sneakers/tennis shoes are to be worn for P.E.

Socks: Any socks, as long as they are not offensive, are permitted.

Hair: Should be clean and neat at all times, with no distracting colors or styles.

Jewelry: No pierced body jewelry, beside small earrings, may be worn due to safety issues.

Make up: Should be subtle and not distracting.

Boy's Dress Code

(Please see Casual Day Dress Code Policy in the next chapter for those requirements)

Tops: Kindergarten through 5th grade boys may wear white, navy blue, dark green or burgundy short or long sleeved classic collared polo shirt with buttons without a logo. 6th-8th graders may wear any solid color shirt or long sleeved classic collared polo shirt without a logo.

- Sweaters and sweatshirts (plain without a logo, no writing, etc.) are permitted in navy blue, dark green, burgundy, black, gray, white, light blue or pink.
- MGCS sweatshirts (sold by MGCS) are approved for classroom wear.
- Turtlenecks or t-shirts in white or the color shirt they are wearing are approved for under the uniform top.
- MGCS official T-shirts may be worn on Spirit Wear Friday with uniform bottoms.
- Students may have any color/style outer coat but it may not be worn in the classroom.
- Uniforms should conceal the midriff area.

Bottoms: Pants or shorts in navy blue or khaki are permitted. Cargo type shorts are permitted. They should fit appropriately and not be too tight or saggy. Pants should be the long, classic style khaki type pants. No denim, athletic, corduroy or sweatpants are allowed.

- All bottom wear must be of a length that reaches or exceeds the tip of the middle finger when standing erectly. Please consider future growth when purchasing uniform items.

Footwear: Dress, casual, tennis shoes or sandals are allowed but no flip-flops. All shoes must have a heel strap. No shoes with wheels.

Socks: Any socks, as long as they are not offensive, are permitted.

Hair: Should be clean and neat at all times, with no distracting colors or styles. Hair must not be below the eyebrows unless it is pulled back and must be kept back away from the face. All young men must be clean-shaven with hair no longer than collar length.

Jewelry: No boys may have earrings or body jewelry.

Casual Dress Policy

The **FIRST FRIDAY** of each month is designated as Casual Dress Day, in addition, other casual day dress days may be added. On all other Fridays (Spirit Wear Friday's) students may wear MGCS T-shirts with uniform bottoms. During casual dress day students should abide by the following guidelines:

Pants and Shorts

Casual dress may include blue jeans in good condition. Jeans may not be ragged, baggy, tight-fitting or have holes. Students may NOT wear spandex pants, cotton stretch pants, sweat pants, or other athletic pants with an elastic waistband. All pants should be worn at or near the waist as intended. No athletic shorts or other shorts with an elastic waistband are allowed. All bottom wear must be of a length that reaches or exceeds the tip of the middle finger when standing erectly.

Shirts/Tops

Casual dress may include T-shirts. T-shirts must be in good condition and not have any inappropriate words, artwork, or "groups" featured on them whose work is contrary to the philosophy of MGCS. Tank, midriff, halter, low-cut, tight-fitting, see-through, form-fitting or cropped tops are not allowed.

Dresses

For special events, the administration may give certain guidelines. Strapless dresses or tops are never allowed. Dresses should not be short.

Shoes

Casual, dress, tennis shoes and sandals with heel straps are allowed. No flip-flops or shoes without rear straps are allowed. No shoes with wheels (Heelies) or shoes of that type are permitted.

Not Allowed

- Hats (except for designated days)

- Distracting hair colors (except for designated days)
- Body piercing jewelry or visible tattoos

Exceptions

Exceptions to this uniform policy are made on certain occasions as approved by the administration. However, if students choose not to participate in these activities, a school dress code must be worn.

Dress Code Violations

Kindergarten through fifth grade students in violation of the dress code will receive a note from their teacher. Continued violation may result in a loss of recess time, a parent conference with the teacher or an administrator, or other disciplinary action.

Students in sixth through eighth grades who violate the dress code will first receive a silent lunch and be communicated to parents. In certain circumstances, a student may be asked to call home for a change of clothes. On the second violation, parents may be contacted to bring a change of clothes. The third violation may result in a parent-teacher conference.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Disciplinary Philosophy

Jesus said in Matthew 22:37-40 that all of God's law was summed up in two commandments:

1. *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*
2. *You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*

Each of us has an obligation to live rightly by loving rightly, yet it is certain that apart from God's grace, we will not. Authority structures are set in place by God to promote good and restrain evil (Romans 13:1-6). These structures provide the accountability that people need in order to make wise choices and to learn from sinful ones.

With these principles in mind, teachers and administrators assume roles of authority at MGCS. We undertake the disciplinary task with a desire to balance grace with truth, justice with mercy, and internal motivation with external motivation. The ultimate goal of Christian discipline is to see the individual reconciled in their relationships with God and other people, and growing in their hatred of evil and love for good.

In an effort to accomplish this training in godliness, teachers and administrators will not ignore student offenses, because to withhold discipline would be unloving (Prov. 13:24, 23:13-14). Employees will assign disciplinary consequences based on a careful evaluation of each case. Factors to consider will include the seriousness of the offense, age of the student, the frequency of misconduct, and the attitude displayed by the student.

Disciplinary Options

Teachers and administrators may choose from a number of disciplinary measures. The most common of these are listed below, although this list is not exhaustive. **While disciplinary action is generally progressive in nature, some situations may warrant immediate escalation at the discretion of the teacher or administrator.**

- Reprimand
- Redirection
- Warning
- Counseling
- Separation in class
- Additional assignments
- Time-out
- Silent Lunch
- After School Detention
- Student-Principal Conference
- Teacher-Parent or Principal-Parent Conference
- Removal from class
- In-school Suspension
- Out-of-school Suspension
- Disciplinary Probation
- Dismissal

Dismissal

Eligibility for Re-enrollment

A student who has been dismissed from school is ineligible to re-enroll during that school year or the following school year.

Attendance at School Events

Students who have been dismissed may not visit the campus or attend school functions.

Corporal Punishment

Myrtle Grove Christian School does NOT use corporal punishment.

Offenses and Consequences

Some violations of school policy and suggested consequences are listed below and grouped according to the seriousness of the offense. THIS LIST IS NOT INTENDED TO BE ALL INCLUSIVE. Modifications will be made when necessary, at the discretion of the administrator. Additional infractions will be added, and penalties will be modified as the need arises. In all instances, the school will make every effort to administer consequences equitably and fairly.

Level I Offenses

- Gum Chewing
- Use of electronic devices during school hours
- Inappropriate or disorderly conduct in the hallway, restroom, outdoors or elsewhere on campus.
- Poor sportsmanship
- Throwing objects
- Failure to bring appropriate materials to class
- Talking without permission or other disruptive classroom behavior
- Out of seat without permission
- Sleeping in class

- Eating or drinking in class without permission
- Selling items on school property without permission
- Scuffling or horseplay
- Repeated dress code violations
- Rude or disrespectful behavior toward another student*

**This may constitute a Level II offense.*

Level I Consequences

Level I consequences are determined by the teacher, up to and including afterschool detention.

Level II Offenses

- Persistence of Level I behaviors
- Stealing or being in possession of another person's property
- Profanity, obscene gestures, slanderous statements
- Disrespect or rebellion toward a staff member
- Public display of affection (kissing, holding hands, embracing, etc.)
- Refusal to participate or complete classroom assignments and activities
- Lying, Forgery, cheating, or plagiarism
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Cruel remarks
- Harassment or bullying including cyberbullying (see section below)
- Unauthorized recording on school premises
- Threats to student or staff *
- Using physical force or verbal intimidation*
- Involvement in immoral activities or activities that are contrary to the philosophy and objectives of MGCS**
- Possession of fireworks, cigarettes, pornographic material **

* *The first consequence may be skipped for fighting and serious threats.*

** *This may constitute a Level III offense.*

Level II Consequences

Level II consequences are teacher and/or administration directed, up to and including in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension. Academic cheating which may result in a grade of zero.

Level III Offenses.

- Persistence of behaviors in Levels I and II
- Vandalizing or destructive behavior to property or persons within the school or community
- Bringing weapons, drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcoholic beverages, pornographic materials to school

Level III Consequences

Level III consequences may result in a dismissal from school

General Expectations

The School may take all action necessary to ensure the operation of the School in all matters as it may apply to the Student. A positive and constructive relationship between the School and Parent or other adults interacting with the School and/or School community by virtue of their relationship with the Student is essential to the mission of the School. Thus, if the behavior, communication, or interaction on or off campus (including during School-sponsored events) of Parent or other adults interacting with the School and/or School community by virtue of their relationship with the Student is disruptive, intimidating, overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence or serious disagreement with the School, including but not limited to disagreement with its policies, procedures, responsibilities, personnel, leadership or standards, or imperils accomplishment of its educational purpose or program, Parent understands and agrees that the School has the right to dismiss the Student and/or the Student's family from the School community. In addition, Parent understands and agrees that the School has the right to place restrictions on that party's involvement with or activity at the School, on School property, or at School-related events if the party engages in behavior that the School determines in its sole discretion to warrant such a restriction.

Student Harassment Policy

Myrtle Grove Christian School is committed to maintaining an academic environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect. It is to be a school that is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation, and harassment, including sexual harassment. We are prepared to take action to prevent and correct violations of this policy. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination or expulsion.

Any student or staff member subjected to or observing harassment of any kind is to report it immediately to the principal or administrator. All reports will be handled confidentially; however, any reports involving a student will result in parent/guardian notification. All reports will be investigated promptly and thoroughly without discrimination or retaliation against any person involved in any manner.

Bullying

Bullying behavior is a form of harassment and antisocial behavior which does not know any geographic, racial, or socio-economic boundaries. It is defined as intentional hurtful behavior perpetuated over a period of time, in a relationship characterized by an imbalance of power. Bullying is unacceptable behavior.

Bullying can occur in three main ways:

- Physical: where the person being bullied is hit, kicked, or when belongings are taken or damaged

- Verbal: consists of name-calling or insulting, racist or sexist remarks
- Indirect: when malicious rumors or stories are spread or the person is excluded from the social group

Any student who believes that this policy has been violated by another person should immediately report the violation to the administration.

Digital Citizenship

Neither the school's network nor the broader Internet (whether accessed on campus or off campus, either during or after school hours) may be used for the purpose of harassment. All forms of harassment in cyberspace, often called cyberbullying, are unacceptable and disruptions of the school atmosphere.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful email messages, text messages, electronic messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings (including blogs). Often the author (sender or poster) of the inappropriate material is disguised (logged on) as someone else.

Students who feel that they have been the victims of such misuses of technology should not erase the offending material from the system. They should print a copy of the material and immediately report the incident to a school official (the director of technology, media center, specialist, or administrator). All reports of harassment in the form of cyberbullying will be investigated fully.

Threats

All threats communicated by any person against any student (including himself), students, or school or church property will be treated at face value. Such threats will be communicated to the school and/or church administration and the parents of any student involved. After investigation of the situation, law enforcement authorities may be notified for legal action.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Electronic devices may be brought to school only if they can be turned off. All electronic devices including cell phones, "smart watches" or "smart wearables" (including Apple, Samsung, Fitbit, etc.), etc. must be turned off from 8:15 A.M. until the end of the day and should not be used until after carpool line. Students should secure electronic devices in their book bags or lockers for the entire school day. If an electronic device is discovered outside of a book bag or locker during the school day, the student may receive afterschool detention. The device may also be confiscated and/or the student may lose this privilege. In-school suspensions will be given to students who violate the policy after receiving detention.

No electronic devices (other than approved calculators) may be used at any time during tests. Any such use will be considered cheating and will be dealt with in accordance with the conduct policy.

Because of the disruptive and potentially harmful nature of the misuse of electronics, the school reserves the right to read text messages or other content when there is a reasonable suspicion that the device is being used illegally or in violation of school policy.

Care of Facilities

Our facilities belong to God, and students are expected to take care of the building and grounds as good stewards of the King's property. Willful disregard for the upkeep and cleanliness of the property may result in disciplinary action. Any damage to school property, intentional or accidental, will be paid for by the student/parent.

Lunch Guidelines

- Teachers will enforce proper table etiquette and the use of good manners at all times. **Students should not share food or beverages at lunch.**
- During the first 10 minutes students will be asked to eat quietly, or even silently, depending on age to assure that they have time to eat. After that, voices should be respectfully low.
- Students may not leave the tables until the area is cleared and they have been dismissed by a teacher.
- Tables will be cleaned using an appropriate disinfectant.

Playground Guidelines

Age and Grade Level Use

MGCS provides several age-appropriate playgrounds for our students. The preschool and kindergarten classes will use the playground on the preschool wing of Building #1. This playground is for preschool and kindergarten students only. The first through fifth grade students will use the playground at the back of Building #2. Preschool through fifth grade classes will be assigned playground times. Upper school students will use the gym, blacktop area, and fields.

Playground Rules

- Students should observe the following rules at all times while on the playground:
 1. Students are to use only the playground designated for their age group.
 2. Students are not to engage in aggressive physical contact.
 3. Playground equipment is to be used properly or loss of privileges will result.
 4. Students are to stay within the fenced-in area unless given permission to be elsewhere.
 5. Students are not to climb fences or trees.
 6. Students are not to throw sand, rocks or other objects.
- Failure to observe these rules may result in a time-out period or other consequence that is age-appropriate.
- Parents must supervise their children when using the playgrounds during after-school hours. Children should never be left unattended on the playgrounds.
- After-school daycare students will have a scheduled playtime on both of the soccer field playgrounds from 3:45 until 5:30. During this time, no other students will be allowed on these playground areas.

Acceptable Use Policy for Computers

We are pleased to offer computer technology to our students. Student use of the school's technology is a privilege which, at the discretion of the school administration, may be revoked by the school at any time. The school reserves the right to take disciplinary action for misuse and/or to seek financial restitution for any damage(s) caused by a student or other users.

Students will be given an agreement that states:

1. Students will use only the computer that is assigned to me and will not attempt to access any unauthorized computer.
2. Student will not attempt to use any software or hardware with the approval of the instructor.
3. Student will not vandalize any software or hardware.
4. Student will not modify any system settings (i.e. display, screensavers, device properties, etc.)
5. Student will not disrupt the privileges of other computer users or misrepresent other computer users (i.e. log in as another user, or share a username with others except for parents or teachers)
6. Student will not copy, change, read or use anyone else's software or files without prior permission from the instructor.
7. Student will use the Internet exclusively for educational activities which are specified by the instructor.
8. When on the internet, student will not reveal any personal information about themselves or anyone else.
9. When on the Internet, student will not send messages that contain inappropriate content. This includes profanity and any other non-academic activity.
10. When on the Internet, student will not purchase or sell any goods or services.
11. When on the Internet, student will not download, upload, or otherwise gain inappropriate access to any unauthorized or copyrighted material(s).
12. Students understand that violating any part of this agreement may result in disciplinary action.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

Illnesses

Notifying the School

If your child is ill, please notify the school since we are concerned for his/her well-being. If your child is absent because of a contagious disease, please notify us so we can contact other parents.

Sending/Keeping Students Home

Students are required to stay out of school when they have a contagious illness or symptoms of a contagious illness. Those conditions and symptoms include:

- chicken pox
- measles
- scarlet fever
- hand, foot, and mouth disease
- impetigo
- head lice or nits
- pinworms
- ringworm
- pink eye (may return after 24 hours on medication)
- strep throat (may return after 24 hours on medication)

- fever within the past 24 hours
- diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- vomiting within the past 24 hours

When a child must be sent home from school, parents should make arrangements to pick up sick children promptly. Parents should also err on the side of caution when deciding whether a child is too sick to attend school. Children should be free of symptoms for 24 hours before they may return to school.

*****Please see separate COVID-19 Guidelines for changes and additional protocols.**

Medicine

The school office keeps a supply of acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Benadryl, and other simple first aid items. Parents may give permission for their child/children to take or be given these items. The school nurse/school office will not administer acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or Benadryl without parental contact each and every time for PreK-5th grade students. Middle school students may be given the afore mentioned medications without parental contact when parents have given prior approval and students attest that they have not received any of these medications outside of school within the past 4-6 hours.

Any other medicine to be administered to a student must be accompanied by a written parental request, stating the time and the amount to be given. An adult must bring the medication to the office where it will be kept in the health clinic by the school nurse and administered at the required time. All medicine **MUST** be in the original container and administered as prescribed. Medicine should be sent to school in the original box or bottle for which it was purchased. Students should not have medication in their possession during class hours. Prescription medicine must be prescribed to the child to whom it will be administered.

Myrtle Grove Christian School cannot be held accountable for side effects and reactions caused by any medicines, nutritional supplements or herbs. All medicines left in the office at the end of the year should be picked up by the parents.

Cough Drops

Upper school students (sixth-eighth) may keep cough drops in their possession (locker, book bag, or person) as long as they are accompanied by a parent permission note. Lower school students (Pre K – fifth) must keep cough drops in the health clinic accompanied by a parent permission note, and they can get them from the health clinic as needed. A supply of Luden's cough drops are kept in the health clinic and may be given by the nurse as needed for students who do not have their own cough drops at school.

Inhalers

Students with asthma may keep their inhalers in the classroom or at the front desk. The inhalers will be kept in a secure place by the classroom teacher. Prescription information for inhaler use must be on file in the health clinic.

Food Allergies

Some of our students have food allergies, and in some cases, these allergies can be life-threatening. MGCS takes precautionary measures to ensure that these students remain as

safe as possible while in attendance at school or school events.

In some instances, when a student has a severe allergy, the student's class and/or grade, for example, may be declared "peanut free." Other students in that class and/or grade are not allowed to bring peanut food products to school. We consider the risk to the student's life to far outweigh the inconvenience that this policy poses to other parents. We ask parents to use this as an opportunity to model for our students what it means to "consider others better than yourselves." and to "look not only to your own interests but also to the interests of others (Phil. 2:3-4)."

Students may not share food with other students in order to avoid contact with such foods that might trigger an allergic reaction (most notably milk, egg products, peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, soy, fish, and shellfish). Parents' sensitivity to this situation will be most helpful on special occasions when treats are distributed to the entire class.

Parents of allergic students should complete the Allergy Action Plan form to alert the student's homeroom teacher of such allergies.

Search and Seizure Policy

The school reserves the right to search for and confiscate any material that is an illegal contraband (i.e.: drugs, alcohol, weapons, pornography, tobacco, etc.) or any material in violation of school policies from school property (lockers and the like), person or personal property. Searches can be warranted by any reasonable suspicion or possession of an illegal contraband or material in violation of school policies. Lockers and student property may be searched at any time.

Visitors

Anyone other than students and staff must report to the office and sign in as a visitor prior to going anywhere on campus. Each visitor will be required to present an ID at check in. An identification badge will be issued and should be worn at all times while on campus. All visitors are required to check out at the front office before leaving campus. An appointment should be made in advance through the office for a parent to visit a classroom during school hours.

Security Cameras

In order to enhance the safety of our students and staff, security cameras are located throughout the campus. Cameras will not be used in areas of the school where students or staff have a reasonable expectation of privacy. This would include private offices, restrooms, and locker rooms. Conversely, cameras will be used in areas where staff and students lack a reasonable expectation of privacy such as classrooms, entrances, hallways, parking lots, and other instructional or common areas.

Access to video monitoring is limited to the Administrator and Facilities Manager via computer. Video monitoring will be conducted in a professional, ethical, and legal manner that is consistent with the school's existing policies.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS

Family Involvement

One of our most basic beliefs as Christian educators is that God has given parents the primary responsibility for educating their children. MGCS exists as a partnership with the home, and we can only be effective and properly grounded as an institution when that partnership is well-maintained.

For this reason, it is imperative that parents stay involved with their child's educational progress by meeting with teachers when requested, assisting their child at home with assignments, attending school meetings, etc. We also encourage parents to be involved with the Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF), to volunteer at the school, and to attend school activities.

Praying for the School

Perhaps the greatest contribution that parents can make to the school is that of regular, fervent prayer. Below is a sample list of requests that parents could make to God on our behalf. Parents and friends are free to add their own.

- Pray for God's presence and power to reign on our campus.
- Pray for the physical, spiritual, and emotional safety of our students and staff.
- Pray for our teachers to model the Christlikeness, grace, maturity, and responsibility that we hope to see borne out in the lives of our students.
- Pray for wisdom and godly leadership on the part of the administrators.
- Pray for God's provision for every need.

Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) and Athletic Boosters

The purpose of the PTF and Boosters is to help promote the mission and purpose of MGCS by:

- promoting the welfare and Christian growth of our children in the home, school, athletics, community, and place of worship
- developing positive relationships between educators, teachers, and the MGCS staff, and supporting united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in spiritual, physical, mental and social education

The PTF and Boosters work through general meetings, committees, and duly-appointed or elected officers to accomplish the following objectives:

- to enhance communication, understanding, and unity between school administration, faculty, parents and the student body
- to involve parents, school administration and faculty jointly in the growth and welfare of the school, undertaking prayerful support for the school's financial, physical and spiritual needs, as well as making the needs of the school known to the parents, so that they may help where they can
- to provide an opportunity for the MGCS family to get acquainted and have fellowship with each other

PTF and Boosters may sponsor several fundraising events throughout the year.

Volunteer Opportunities

General Guidelines for Volunteers

There are numerous ways that parents can offer their time and talents in assistance to MGCS. There are opportunities to help in the classroom, in the office, on field trips, at school events, or on special projects. All parent volunteers should be prepared to have a background check to ensure the safety of students and staff. Whenever volunteering, parents should:

- Sign in at the office.
- Please dress conservatively/modestly.
- Siblings may not take part in volunteer activities without prior permission.
- Volunteers should refer disciplinary issues to the teachers.

Grade Parent

Each teacher may select a parent to act as a Grade Parent. Parents may volunteer for this position. The role of the grade parent is as follows:

- To assist the teacher when requested
- To organize special classroom activities when requested
- To coordinate classroom parties approved by the teacher

Field Trip Chaperones

Parents may be asked to help supervise and transport students. The role of chaperones is to assist with transportation; to ensure student safety, and to help maintain proper group decorum. See "Field Trips" policy in the *Miscellaneous Policies* section for further information.

Parent Dress Standards

We request that parents uphold the school's dress code standards of modesty and neatness when they are on the school campus, chaperoning field trips or attending school functions.

Child Custody

The school recognizes that issues related to the legal and physical custody of students are complicated and can impact the student's educational experience. Parents and legal guardians of students are strongly encouraged to stay involved with their student's academic progress. Unless a court order decrees otherwise, either parent or a legal guardian may view education records and attend school functions or school meetings regarding the student.

Official notices and report cards will be sent to the parent or legal guardian with primary physical custody of the students during the school year. It is the responsibility of the parent or legal custodian with primary physical custody to provide current copies of court orders to the school.

Child visitation and exchange of custody should not take place during school hours or on school property. The school will assume no responsibility for enforcing visitation or custody orders and reserves the right to prohibit parents or legal guardians from entering the school property if their conduct becomes disruptive to the school environment.

Court orders regarding child custody issues must be in the child's educational file. Only court orders signed by a judge will be honored. Notarized forms or letters from parents are not acceptable. Please notify the office prior to the first day of school if there are child custody orders regarding procedures for parent pick-up or visitations.

Parent/Teacher Relations

General Guidelines

- Teachers at Myrtle Grove Christian School are professionals and should to be treated as such.
- If the student has a school-related problem, it should be reported to the teacher as soon as possible. It is never appropriate for parents, guardians, other adults to deal with a student other than their own at school.
- Disciplinary concerns about any student on campus should be directed to a faculty member or the administration, preferably the student's teacher.

Conferences

- There are scheduled conference opportunities in the fall and spring. Other conferences may be requested throughout the year. We encourage parents to request conferences as needed.
- If a conference is needed, please call to schedule an appointment. Please resist the temptation for having a "mini" conference in the hallway or in the pick-up line.
- Upper school parents should schedule group conferences through the student's homeroom teacher. The homeroom teacher will try to facilitate a joint meeting with all teachers instructing your student. Individual conferences may be scheduled directly with the relevant teacher.

Communication

- All teachers and administration have e-mail addresses. Please feel free to send them your questions or requests. Teachers and administrators will attempt to respond within 24 hours during the work week, but if they have not, please resend the message. A delay in response may mean that something has been lost in the translation of the message.
- If there is no response, please let the administration know that you are having difficulty making a connection with the teacher. It is extraordinarily important that all lines of communication remain open, in order for us to serve your family well.

Conflict Resolution

Constructive criticism is essential to the improvement of our school. However, criticism, if not properly channeled, will be destructive. When problems arise concerning policy, procedures, administration, teachers or students, resolution should be sought according to the Matthew 18 principle. Please remember Matthew 18:15-16 where Jesus commands us: "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you...But if he will not listen, take one or two others along..."

In conflict situations, the appropriate chain of command is:

Teacher
Principal or Director
Head of School

Conflict Resolution Committee of Board

If this chain of command is not followed, you will be referred back to the appropriate person. Teachers are asked to follow the same chain of command and to encourage others to do so. In the event that a parent comes to an administrator with a concern, the administrator will listen

to the subject of concern and then direct the parent back to the teacher. If requested the administrator will be present at the conference in order to aid in a resolution to the concern.

MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES

Office Hours

8:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M. Monday through Friday during the school year

9:00 A.M. -12:30 P.M. Monday through Thursday during the summer, except the week of July 4th which we will close

Change of Address

If you need to change your contact information, please contact our office immediately. It is extremely important for the safety of all students that records are kept up-to-date.

Change in Routine

If there is a change in routine, such as when or by whom your child is being picked up, please send a note to the student's teacher. If it is the same day, please call the office and leave the information with the front desk. Simply having their name on the emergency form is not adequate.

Deliveries

Floral arrangements, balloons, etc. delivered to the school will be held in the office until the end of the day. The recipient will be notified to pick the item(s) up in the office.

Telephone Usage

Cell phones are not allowed to be used during the instructional day. If they are seen at school 7:30-3:30 they will be confiscated. School telephones are business phones and are not to be routinely used by students. In certain situations, and if a student is properly supervised, he/she may be allowed to place a call. Students must receive a phone pass from their teacher to use the phone. Students may not use the school telephone for making social arrangements, or to remind parents to bring forgotten items, unless authorized by the teacher.

Lost and Found

Parents are encouraged to label their child(ren)'s clothes, book bags, lunch boxes, and other belongings. Items left unattended in the hallway, bathroom, gymnasium, or elsewhere will be placed in a lost and found bin. Students should check the lost and found and/or inquire in the office in the event that items are missing. Unclaimed articles will be given to charity at the end of each month.

Insurance

Myrtle Grove Christian School has a supplemental group insurance policy covering students during the school day. Details concerning the policy may be obtained from the office.

Snack

Time may be allotted for students to have a snack break. Please send fruit, crackers, vegetables, granola bars or other snacks that do not contain much sugar. Glass containers, gum, candy, and soft drinks are not allowed at school. Students will not be permitted to charge

snacks from the cafeteria. Some teachers may allow water bottles with water only to be kept on a student's desk.

Lunch

If your child will be bringing lunch from home, please send nutritious lunches. Lunch can be purchased from the school cafeteria. Students are not allowed to bring soft drinks, gum, and candy or glass containers to school without special permission. If a student forgets a lunch or lunch money, he/she will be allowed to call home.

Books

Any schoolbooks issued by MGCS are the responsibility of the student to whom they are issued. All books owned by the school should be covered with book covers. Students will be charged a replacement fee for any lost books. Payment must be prompt, and each student is responsible for making up the work he/she misses during replacement time. A fine will be charged for any damaged books.

Field Trips

Student Guidelines

- School uniforms are required on all field trips unless otherwise specified. (Outerwear must be MGCS code or it must be removed before entering a building.) This policy is enforced to help us easily identify and supervise our group.
- Students must comply with school policy while on field trips.
- Students should respect drivers of your vehicle by using a quiet voice, sitting still, turning off the sound on hand-held electronic games, and following all directions.
- Be responsible for any possessions you bring on the trip, including any gift-shop money.
- Remember that you are a representative of MGCS, and our actions are a direct reflection of the school.
- Wait to eat snacks until you arrive at the desired destination. Respect the vehicle of your field trip driver by eating outside and managing your own trash.

Chaperone Guidelines

Role of Chaperones

Only the parents or guardians of currently enrolled students may chaperone unless special permission has been granted by the administration. The role of chaperones is to assist with transportation; to ensure student safety, and to help maintain proper group decorum. See "Field Trips" policy in the *Miscellaneous Policies* section for further information.

Adult/Student Ratio

For safety purposes, there must be a sufficient ratio of adults to students or the field trip will be canceled. Parents, when accompanying the class, are to take responsibility in helping the teacher supervise the students.

Sibling Attendance

Siblings or other children outside the student's class will not be allowed to attend class field trips. If this causes difficulties in childcare, perhaps parents can take turns keeping siblings. The number of chaperones/drivers will be limited according to need.

Transportation Guidelines

- Each chaperone must provide the teacher with a copy of the automobile insurance and driver's license information. Each driver should have an excellent driving record. Each driver may be required to have a background check. The Administration may regulate the approved driver list
- Teachers will arrange passenger lists. The lists should not be changed unless deemed necessary by the teacher in case of an emergency.
- Preschool through 7th grade students should not ride in the front seat of an automobile with a passenger airbag.
- Field trip drivers should not use cell phones while driving with students.
- Drivers should not schedule extra stops without prior approval.
- Upon arrival at the field trip destination, students should REMAIN in vehicles to await further information unless directed otherwise.
- When returning to school, drivers are to wait with students in an area designated by teachers.
- Out of respect for varying standards of families, chaperones are asked NOT to play movies and music when driving students to school trips and events.

Booster Seats

- Children younger than 8 **and** who weigh less than 80 pounds must be properly secured in CRs appropriate for their weight and height. Belt-positioning booster seats may be used for children over 40 pounds.
- When a child reaches age 8 (regardless of weight) OR 80 pounds (regardless of age) a properly fitted seat belt may be used to restrain the child. Shoulder belts behind the back or under the arm are not allowed.
- If there is no lap and shoulder belt equipped seating position available for using a belt-positioning booster, a child less than 8 years of age and between 40 and 80 pounds may be restrained by a properly fitted lap belt only.
- **WARNING:** Belt-positioning booster seats must NEVER be used with just a lap belt.

No Smoking

Out of consideration for those who have allergies, etc., there should be no smoking in any cars during a field trip, and no parent should smoke within view of the students. If you are a smoker and feel the need to leave the area to smoke, please make sure that you let the teacher know so that someone can assume proper supervision of the students in your group

Overnight Field Trips

Students in grades five (5) through eight (8) may have the opportunity to participate in overnight field trips. Overnight field trips can offer learning experiences, relational bonding, and spiritual growth opportunities that cannot be achieved in the classroom or on a day trip. However, these trips also bring with them added challenges and risks. Accordingly, the following additional policies pertain to overnight trips.

- Overnight field trips are optional. Parents should weigh the risks and rewards of the trip and use their best judgment in determining whether their child should participate.
- If a student chooses not to participate, alternative assignments will be given to substitute for the learning experiences and graded assignments associated with the trip.
- Teachers and administrators will make every effort to identify and manage risks associated with each field trip. Most risks are reasonably managed through advance information about the location of the trip; safe travel guidelines; advance preparation for allergies and other medical conditions; constant supervision of students by staff; and proper conduct of students throughout the trip.
- The teacher and/or administrator will provide details about arrangements for the trip, including travel details, itinerary, sleeping arrangements, and student supervision.
- Ordinarily, only staff members of Myrtle Grove Christian School and Myrtle Grove Presbyterian Church serve as chaperones on overnight trips. Other volunteer chaperones may be used at the Administrator's discretion if absolutely necessary. Volunteer chaperones must be cleared for the supervision of students (criminal background checks, Youth Protection Policy training, etc.)
- Sleeping arrangements for all overnight trips must adhere to the following guidelines:
 1. No members of the opposite sex will be allowed to sleep in the same room, tent, cabin, etc.
 2. There will be a minimum of one adult per room or adjoining room with an open door.
 3. Adults will not sleep in the same bed or bedding with a youth.
 4. There will never be one adult and one youth per room unless they are family members.
- Reasonable curfews should be scheduled and enforced.

Parties

Policy Overview

- Holiday parties, other than birthday parties, will be celebrated with an emphasis on Jesus Christ and His gifts to us.
- Gifts and invitations, if brought to school, must be for the whole class, leaving no one out. If an "all girl" or "all boy" party is given, invitations may be given out at school to all the girls or to all the boys.
- There should be no dictation of the dollar amount for gifts to be given by the students to the staff.

Birthday Celebrations

- Should be arranged with the homeroom teacher
- Should not include goodie bags (except preschool)

Halloween

- MGCS does not celebrate Halloween or take part in any Halloween traditions.

Thanksgiving celebrations

- Should be service-oriented (i.e. Thanksgiving baskets, visiting a shut-in to sending cards, etc.)
- Should be kept small, preferably within the classroom.

Christmas parties

- Must focus on Christ’s birthday (No Santa, please.)
- Personal gifts should not be exchanged at school.

Valentine parties

- Must be Christ-centered (“Jesus loves me.”)
- May include a valentine exchange in which no child is left out

Easter parties

- Should focus on the Resurrection (No Easter bunny, please.)
- May include an Easter egg hunt or a scavenger hunt

Upper School

Upper School celebrations should be limited to lunchtime and arranged ahead of time with the homeroom teacher. Parents, please plan to feed all the students.

Pool Parties

- General field trip guidelines apply for pool parties.
- No parties allowed at the beach, docks, open waters, etc.
- Pool parties are not allowed for preschool. Sprinkler parties are allowed with an adult-to-children ratio of 1:2.
- Girls should wear one-piece bathing suits. Boys should wear a regular boy’s swimsuits.
- All classes are strongly urged to obtain a lifeguard for pool parties. If no lifeguard can be obtained, designated adults must watch the children at all times.
- The ratio of adults to children for pool parties:

Grades	Without Lifeguard	With Lifeguard
K-2 nd grade	Not allowed	1:5
3 rd -4 th grade	1:3	1:6
5 th -8 th grade	1:4	1:7

Student Covenant Agreement
Grades 6 - 8

By initialing each statement and signing below, I am indicating that, as a student at Myrtle Grove Christian School, I agree to accept my responsibilities to:

(Initial beside each statement)



_____ **ATTEND** school regularly, be punctual, and participate in school activities with a positive attitude.

_____ **WORK** diligently to meet the academic requirements and to consistently produce quality work.

_____ **LOVE** my neighbor by being friendly, respectful, courteous, encouraging, and by refraining from any activity which is not a good example to others.

_____ **PURSUE** spiritual growth by studying the Bible, by praying, by confessing my wrongdoing, and by accepting guidance and correction.

_____ **LEARN** the school rules and act in compliance with them.

_____ **SUPPORT** the school staff and the school guidelines for Christian conduct and academic requirements as set forth in the Student-Parent Handbook.

_____ **RESOLVE** conflicts by first praying, then speaking directly with the person involved, and finally seeking the assistance of a staff person or my parents.

_____ **DEVELOP** my God-given talents to their fullest potential and seek to use them in the service of God and His world.

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____
(printed)

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

MYRTLE GROVE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL COVENANT AGREEMENT

Purpose

MGCS strives to have good, Christian rapport between parents, teachers, board and administration. We all have an obligation to conduct ourselves in a manner that prohibits any conflicts of interest being generated. Our objectives must be to provide a safe, Christian environment that promotes the highest degree of education available. Experience has shown that when conflicts are dealt with openly and directly, the school environment can be excellent, communications can be clear and attitudes can be positive.

Constructive criticism is welcomed at MGCS. It is an essential instrument for the evaluation and improvement of our school. Parents must understand and feel assured that there is a planned and orderly process to address problems when they arise concerning policy procedures, administration, teachers or students. MGCS amply demonstrates its commitment by responding effectively to reasonable constructive criticism, however, criticism if not properly channeled, will be destructive to our institution.

Please remember Matthew 18:15-17 where Jesus commanded us: ***“If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.”*** The consequences of not obeying Jesus will be destructive to the Body of Christ at this school and will have a devastating effect on our children, teachers and administration. Please take this Biblical command to heart, and do not allow the temptation to gossip with others about your concerns or issues.

Therefore, when you have a situation or matter to discuss, please follow the chain of authority as indicated below:

- Parent-Teacher
- Parent- Principal
- Parent- Head Administrator
- Parent- Conflict Resolution Committee
- Parent- Board of Directors

In the event that the proper chain of command is not followed, you may be referred back to the appropriate person in an effort to resolve the issue. Resolution to a conflict is only achieved when both parties concur with the solution.

It is essential to our school community to guard against the spirit of strife created by discussing problems in a destructive or critical manner. If at any time you are out of harmony with school standards and/or policy and verbally malign the character of the school staff, every effort by both parties should be made to resolve the issue. Disrupting a student's life by voluntarily or involuntarily having to attend a different school should, and will be the last resort in resolving the conflict.

“There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.” Proverbs 6:16-19

“The parties to this agreement acknowledge that the Bible commands them to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian community in conformity with the biblical injunctions of I Corinthians 6:1-8, Matthew 5:23-24, and Matthew 18:15-20. Therefore, the parties agree that any claim or dispute arising out of or related to this agreement or the relationship between the School and the parents or student shall be settled by biblically-based mediation.

If resolution of the dispute and reconciliation do not result from mediation, the matter shall be submitted to a panel of three independent and objective arbitrators for legally binding arbitration. Each party to the agreement shall have the right to select one arbitrator (unless the parties mutually agree to the use of only one arbitrator). The two arbitrators selected by the parties shall jointly select the neutral, third arbitrator. If there is an impasse in the selection of the third arbitrator, the Institute for Christian Conciliation division of Peacemaker Ministries of Billings, Montana [(406) 256-1583] shall be asked to provide the name of a qualified person who will serve in that capacity. The arbitration shall be conducted in accordance with the “Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation” contained in the Peacemakers Ministries booklet, *Guidelines for Christian Conciliation*.

The parties agree that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of this agreement or the parties' relationship and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit against one another in any civil court for such disputes, except to enforce a legally binding arbitration decision.

Each party, regardless of the outcome of this conciliation process, agrees to bear the cost of his/her/its own arbitrator and one-half of the fees and costs of the neutral arbitrator and any other arbitration expenses. If the parties mutually agree to use only one arbitrator, each party shall bear the cost of one-half of the fees, costs, and any other arbitration expenses.”

By my signature on this form I agree to the following:

- I confirm that I have read the Admissions Policy in the Parent/Student Handbook and will abide by the policies set forth in them
- I believe that discipline is necessary for the welfare of each student, as well as for the entire school. I give permission for my child's teacher and/or other agent of the school to make and enforce classroom regulations in a manner consistent with Christian principles and discipline in accords with policy set forth in the Student Handbook.
- I have read and agree to support and abide by the procedures and policies of Myrtle Grove School, including sports activities and school sponsored trips away from the premises.
- This Covenant Agreement will be in effect as long as my child attends Myrtle Grove Christian School. Myrtle Grove Christian School may, at its sole discretion, decline admission or discontinue enrollment of a student/family for any cause or reason determined to be in the best interests of the school and in keeping with board policies.

I confirm, understand, and agree that continued enrollment and reenrollment of my child/children in Myrtle Grove Christian School is dependent on my parental support of the school, its staff and its policies.

Student's Name

Grade

Parent's Signature

Date