Hernando Christian Academy
2015-2016
Student Handbook

Building the HCA Community Since 1981

“Capturing our HCA Pride”

“In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God.”
Romans 15:17

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Preface

This handbook exists to acquaint you with student-related policies that are necessary to provide an environment that reflects our core values and to create an atmosphere in which a quality Christian education can take place. There are many areas that have been updated this year. Students and parents should take the time to review this handbook together and be prepared to comply with the policies herein stated.

Building our community since 1981 - let’s pray that God will make this our best year yet!

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Statement of Faith
• We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative, inerrant Word of God. (II Timothy 3:15, II Peter 1:21)

• We believe there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons – the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28:19)

• We believe in:
  Christ’s deity (John 10:33)
  His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14, Luke 1:35)
  His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15, 7:26)
  His miracles (John 2:11)
  His vicarious and atoning death (I Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7)
  His resurrection (I Corinthians 15:4, John 11:25)
  His ascension to the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19)
  His personal return in power and glory (Revelation 19:11)

• 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 through faith alone we are saved. (John 3:16-19, 5:24, Romans 3:23, 5:8-9, Ephesians 2:9-10, Titus 3:5)

• 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 damnation. (John 5:28-29)

• We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 12:12-13, Galatians 3:26-28)

• We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit whose indwelling empowers the Christian to live a Godly life. (Acts 1:8, Titus 2:11)

Mission Statement
This Christian school ministry exists for the purpose of “building leaders with Christian character.”

Core Values
Core Values express what we believe and hold dear as an organization. When accompanied by the Mission Statement they become the filter through which we evaluate everything that we do.

We Value:
  1. The Word of God
     Therefore . . . it is central to all that happens at HCA and is the “screen” for all decision-making.
  2. Right Relationships
Therefore . . . we work to resolve all disputes or differences quickly and Biblically and provide an atmosphere structured for right relationships.

3. Prayer
Therefore . . . each day, each class period begins with this vital aspect and we continually seek God’s direction.

4. Changed Lives
Therefore . . . we look for “teachable moments” and purpose to use them to continually seek God’s direction.

5. Families
Therefore . . . we remember that parents are our students’ ultimate earthly authority and strive to work with them, complement their teachings, respect their opinions, and communicate directly with them on a regular basis.

6. Churches
Therefore . . . we recognize that the local church is ordained by God as His instrument to accomplish His work in the world. We encourage regular attendance and participation in Bible-believing local churches and will model this in our lives.

7. Children
Therefore . . . we recognize their inherent God-given worth and purpose to love each child unconditionally.

8. Discipline
Therefore . . . we conduct our classrooms in an organized, controlled and loving environment where right is upheld and students are discipled in an equitable and loving manner.

9. Education
Therefore . . . we strive to provide the best learning that we are capable of providing through consistent preparation, relevant and dynamic presentations; and purposed evaluation.

10. Excellence
Therefore . . . everything that we do will reflect this quality. Our mindset will be that we do all for the glory of God.

Parental Responsibilities
(Note: the word “parents,” as used in this Handbook, represents either or both parents and/or legal guardians of our students.)

As a parent of a child at HCA, I realize that:

• I am responsible for the education of my child. I will commit my child and his or her education to the Lord. I will pray faithfully for my child’s teachers that they may be effective in their teaching.

• I am expected to express my support for the school: its staff, faculty and administration; and I will withdraw from the school family rather than spread criticism or be divisive. (Psalm 133:1)

• If I have problems with the school, I must go directly to the staff member involved and try to solve them, demonstrating the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15 and in the spirit of Galatians 6:1. This will promote
effective communication and help to avoid misunderstandings.

If there is not a satisfactory resolution to the issue, then consult with the appropriate administrator. If you still would like to take the concern to the next level, discuss the matter with the superintendent. If, after all steps have been utilized, you have not come to a reasonable conclusion, then you may put your concerns in writing and submit them to the School Board for review. The School Board shall then determine the severity of the concern and whether a meeting will be necessary.

- My child will be disciplined in accordance with school policies and Biblical methods, and should his or her attitude remain uncooperative, the privilege of attending HCA may be withdrawn.

- Completion of class and homework assignments is vital to the academic success of my child. I will strive to provide adequate study time, to teach good study habits, to review assignments with my child to ensure he/she understands what needs to be accomplished, to encourage him or her to do neat, quality work which is completed in a timely fashion, and teach him or her to do all unto the glory of God.

- The students at the school are dressed uniformly. When visiting the school I will use discretion and dress appropriately.

- I am invited to be a partner with the school in prayer, service, and gifts to Hernando Christian Academy.

- HCA is a smoke-free environment for all students, parents, and guests.

- HCA has the right at any time in its sole discretion to void enrollment of my child.

- I agree to remain familiar with and obey all policies and procedures put in place by Hernando Christian Academy.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy of HCA to admit students and hire faculty and staff of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, and to provide to them all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available at the school. HCA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and/or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and tuition discount programs, personnel policies or other school-administered programs.

**Accreditation**

Hernando Christian Academy is accredited through the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (AdvanceEd/SACS). The State of Florida does not accredit any schools, public or private; hence all accreditation in Florida is accomplished by accrediting agencies.
Admissions
Hernando Christian Academy offers educational and athletic programs for students and families who desire an outstanding education and challenging athletics within a Christian environment. The educational programs are stimulating and demanding; therefore, students and families should be aware of the academic challenges that will occur during the year.

Academic excellence is embodied among the instructional staff at all grade levels, and that level of excellence is expected of students. This practice is to prepare students for a rigorous academic career eventually leading to university and career success. To this end, it is desirable that students who attend HCA come from homes that reinforce the values and beliefs taught during the school day. HCA sees its academic practices as a means to achieve its mission in building leaders with Christian character.

Requirements for K3, K4 and K5: (all must be completely potty-trained, including nap time):
- Children entering K3 must be three years old on or before September 1st.
- Children entering K4 must be four years old on or before September 1st.
- Children entering K5 must be five years old on or before September 1st.

All new incoming students up to and including 5th grade may be required to be tested for placement evaluation. Testing for secondary students may be required at the discretion of administration.

Minimum testing requirements for acceptance to HCA is for a student to have scored at or above the 25th percentile in any part of a national standardized test or the FCAT.

Students and parents alike must understand that it is a privilege to attend HCA, not a right. HCA reserves the right of setting and maintaining its own standards of student conduct, dress, attendance, and academic requirements. The school maintains the right to refuse admission to anyone it so chooses, and to suspend or expel anyone who violates its standards. Parents understand that HCA has the right at any time in its sole discretion to revoke a child’s enrollment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Before School Care</th>
<th>School Day</th>
<th>After School Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-3 &amp; K-4</td>
<td>7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>8:00 a.m. to Noon</td>
<td>12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-5 to 5th</td>
<td>7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th to 8th</td>
<td>May wait in designated areas</td>
<td>8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th to 12th</td>
<td>May wait in designated areas</td>
<td>8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Students will be allowed to enter their classrooms at 7:50 a.m., providing the teacher has arrived. All students arriving at school before 7:50 a.m. will be asked to wait in the gymnasium or another designated area. As of 3:15 p.m., all students from kindergarten through 12th grade who are not under other supervision are required to go to after school care for supervision.

Attendance Policies
In order for a student to progress satisfactorily, he or she must be regular in attendance. Research indicates that there is a strong relationship between school attendance and academic achievement. It also indicates a strong relationship between poor attendance and suspension, expulsion, and dropout rates.

1. **Maximum Allowed Absences** – Any student from Kindergarten through 8th grades who has 18 or more absences in a given school year may not receive credit for the school year. The child will not be promoted to the next grade. An exception may be considered by Administration if extenuating circumstances exist.

   Parents may fill out the required form to request consideration for extenuating circumstances by contacting the elementary and secondary principal offices. This attendance policy applies to each and every class of which a student is expected to be in attendance.

   Any student, 9th through 12th grades, having 9 or more absences in a given school semester will receive no credit for the semester. An exception may be considered by Administration if extenuating circumstances exist. This attendance policy applies to each and every class of which a student is expected to be in attendance.

   Because HCA does not want to encourage ill students to attend classes, the school will not recognize students for “perfect attendance.”

2. **Class Minute Requirements** – Elementary attendance is taken by the half day. If a student misses more than one hour due to tardiness or a sign-out before the end of the school day, they will be considered absent for a ½ day. If elementary students are not present for at least 4 hours in one school day, they will be considered absent for the full day.

   Upper school students who miss twenty minutes or more of class due to tardiness or a sign-out before the end of the class will be considered absent.

3. **Family Vacations/Trips** – It must be recognized that absenteeism for any reason may be detrimental to a student’s progress. Parents are strongly encouraged to plan vacations/trips during times that school is closed. Families should not plan trips to take place during semester or standardized exam days. If a student is absent due to a family vacation or trip, those absences will apply toward the student’s overall allotted absences per semester/year.
To obtain work prior to the absence, parents should submit a written request to the appropriate principal’s office three days prior to the absence.

4. **College Visits**- Juniors and seniors are allowed two additional absences for college visits per year. These absences will be recorded as “school business” absences. Students must pre-arrange college visits and get approval for the absence at least one week in advance of the planned absence(s).

5. **Absence Verification** – Parents are asked to call the elementary (for students in grades K3 – 5) or upper school office (for students in grades 6-12) to notify the school of the absence. If no notification has been received, a representative from the school may initiate a phone call to the parent when the morning attendance has been reported.

6. **Make-Up Work** – All students will have the opportunity to turn in “make-up work” regardless of the reason for the absence. This includes class work, homework assignments, tests, and quizzes given to the class while a student is absent. **On the day of return from an absence, students should obtain their make-up work. It is the responsibility of the student to check with classroom teachers to get all assignments missed.**

   Students will be given two days for every absence to make-up work. For example, if a student is absent one day, he or she will be given two days to complete the make-up assignments. If absent two days, the student will have four days to complete the work, etc. up to a maximum of five days. Make-up work must be done to the satisfaction of the teacher and within the time period allotted. Work not received on time will be recorded as a “zero.”

   If a student is absent and returns to school on the day of a test or the due date of a project or essay, it is at the teacher’s discretion whether or not the student will be required to take the test or submit the work. Typically, if a test, project or other assignment was announced prior to the absence, the student must honor that deadline regardless of absences unless there are extenuating circumstances which would necessitate an extension, or new material was covered and included on the test/project.

7. **Requests for Homework** – Students and parents are reminded to check RenWeb first as assignments are typically posted there. If assignments are not listed on RenWeb, parents can email their child’s teacher or request assignments from elementary/secondary office before 10:00 a.m. to allow time to gather assignments and books by the close of the school day. If you request homework be gathered, please pick it up from the school office by 3:45 p.m.

**Tardiness**
School begins at 8:00 a.m. Students should arrive and be seated by the 8:00 a.m. bell. Preschool and Elementary students arriving late (after 8:00 a.m.) must report to their principal’s office for a tardy pass. Middle and high school students must sign in at the secondary school office.
Tardiness causes disruption in the educational process for the student who is late as well as the other children in the class. However, HCA does recognize that events do occur (a medical appointment that runs late, excessive traffic, an accident, etc.) that prohibit a timely arrival. Because of these extenuating circumstances that occur from time to time, students will be permitted three penalty-free tardies per quarter.

The following fine system will be imposed for tardiness in excess of the three penalty-free tardies per quarter for their first scheduled class of the day:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 – 3 Tardies per Quarter</th>
<th>No Penalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 or more Tardies per Quarter</td>
<td>$10.00 fine per tardy per child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For secondary students, the following consequences will result for tardiness in all classes after their first scheduled class: For each quarter

- 3rd tardy in one class - lunch detention
- 6th tardy in one class - one hour after school detention
- 9th tardy in one class - in-school suspension

Health Requirements

All students in Pre-K through 12th grade who enroll in Hernando County schools, public or private, MUST have a complete up-to-date certificate of immunizations on file PRIOR to attending. The following immunizations are required:

- **DPT** – Five doses, unless the 4th primary dose was administered on or after the 4th birthday, then only four doses are required.

- **POLIO (TOPV)** – Four doses, unless the 3rd primary dose was administered on or after the 4th birthday, then only three doses are required.

- **MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA (MMR)** – One dose at 12 months of age or older. A second dose is required before entering K5.

- **HIB** – Two or more doses for K3 & K4.

- **CHICKEN POX VACCINE** – All students in K3 through 6th grade in Florida schools are required to have two doses of the varicella (chicken pox) vaccine or documentation from the student’s pediatrician that he/she has had chicken pox.

- **HEPATITIS B** – All students entering K3, K4 or Kindergarten (K5) as well as 7th grade students must provide documentation of having completed the Hepatitis B vaccination series of shots.

- **ALSO REQUIRED FOR 7th GRADERS:** one tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap) or tetanus-diphtheria booster (Td).

Not required, but strongly recommended:
- 2 doses of Hepatitis A before entering 6th grade
- 1 dose of Meningococcal
If the student is a transfer from within the state, no physical examination is required. However, if it is the student’s initial entrance into a Florida school, a physical examination that has been completed within the past 12 months is required **prior to attending school at any grade level.**

**School Clinic**  
All students, when not feeling well or when injured, must report to the clinic for observation, at which time office personnel will contact parents. If a student is hurt or ill and needs to speak with his or her parent, the clinic staff will allow the student to use the clinic phone. In the event of illness, clinic staff will call parents to pick up their child from school.

If school personnel determine that a child is too ill to return to class or may pose a health risk to other students, the parent must remove the child from school. For any condition requiring a doctor’s release, parents must furnish a doctor’s note stating that the child has been seen, is under treatment, and the date that he or she may return to school.

**Medication Policy**  
Medications should be taken before or after school hours. In the event that this is not possible, clinic staff may dispense and/or administer medication to students who comply with the following procedures or conditions:

1. A long-term illness or disability that requires maintenance-type medication, where failure to take prescribed medication could jeopardize the student’s health, and when the medication schedule cannot be adjusted for administration of medication at home.

2. An authorization for administration of prescribed medication/treatment form (complete with physician signed authorization as well as parent/guardian notarized signature) must be filed for medication given during school hours. This form gets filed only once during the school year unless there is a change in the medication, or the procedures under which it is to be given.

3. All medication will be properly labeled in its original container with the name of the child, the prescribing physician, the name of pharmacy, and directions for administration. The medication will not exceed the dosage required for two weeks. All dates must be current.

4. Medications must be brought to the school by the parent/guardian. Students are not allowed to bring their own medication to school.

5. Students will not be allowed to take their medications out of the clinic. The parent or guardian must pick up any extra medicine.

6. Due to the possible side effects of “non-prescription” medications such as aspirin, Tylenol, or any other over-the-counter products, those medications will not be dispensed without a completed authorization form.

7. Failure of a parent/guardian to adhere to these rules will result in the school’s refusal to administer or dispense medications to the student.

8. No student may at any time give or sell medication to another student.
Parking Lot
The speed limit on campus is 7 mph. Please, no parking unattended vehicles in driving lanes from 7:30 to 3:15 p.m. Visitors should park in second row of the parking lot and use pedestrian walkway to the crosswalks. Students in drop off lanes should walk the white lines to the crosswalks when exiting vehicles. This enables traffic to flow more smoothly and is easier for drivers to see students. Writing notes, signing papers, finishing breakfast and dressing before students exit vehicles slows traffic. Should you need to do any of these things, please park in the parking lot.

Students must park in the north parking lot. **No students will be allowed to go to their vehicles for anything at anytime throughout the school day unless they have permission from an administrator.** Students may only go to their vehicles upon appropriately signing out to leave campus. Any student driver who violates the rules of the HCA parking lot will face consequences. No loitering in the parking lot before or after school.

Afternoon Dismissal: Lane 1 (closest to the school) is for preschool and elementary. Lane 2 is designed as a pull out lane. Lane 3 is designed for middle school and high school. No parking is permitted in any of these lanes.

**Fundraising**
ALL fundraising ideas, plans, or projects should be submitted in writing for approval by the superintendent using the standard form. Forms can be obtained from the upper school office. The person in charge of the fundraiser will be expected to discuss in detail all aspects of the fundraiser with the superintendent.

**Visitors**
Parents and other guests visiting the school for any reason must first come to the Front office. Please do not go directly to the classroom as this disrupts the learning process. All visitors, parents included, are required to wear an identifying badge obtainable from the front office. Lunches, homework, books, etc. must be left at the office to be delivered. Parents must be out of the classrooms and hallways between 7:55a.m. and 3:00p.m. If a parent would like to speak with a teacher, he/she must schedule an appointment and not attempt to have an impromptu conference with the teacher.

**FINANCIAL POLICIES**

**Tuition**
Upon enrollment, the full year’s tuition (prorated) is due. HCA offers convenient payment plan options. Please see below (Tuition Payment Policy) or consult the Business Office for more information concerning the available payment options.

**Tuition Payment Policy**
Tuition amounts are based on the number of school days. Students enrolling after the first day will be charged for the days left in the year. HCA offers Financial Aid to qualified families. HCA also participates in Step Up for Students (the Florida Corporate Tax Credit) and the McKay Scholarship programs. Visit our web site for more details.
For accounts that are paid in full: all documents will be released to parents and other schools and reenrollment will be available for consideration depending on academic, disciplinary and space issues.

Accounts with a balance for students not re-enrolling for the following year, including graduating seniors: all documents representing HCA service to the student will be withheld until the account is paid in full for a single student or for seniors with siblings at HCA, paid in the portion for that student.

Should any account become delinquent for 30 days, the students may be suspended from school and all school activities.

Should the account become delinquent for 45 days, the student may be withdrawn, from the school.

**Additional Fees**

Field trips, special class projects, private instruction, music lessons, tutoring, before or after school care, are *examples* of additional costs that may occur at any time throughout the school year.

**Lunch Account**

HCA’s lunch program is cashless. Charges will be posted monthly to each family’s account. Students in grades 6 – 12 have ID cards that they must use for purchasing lunch and snacks. Should a student lose the ID card, there is a $5.00 fee to replace the card. Should a student not have his/her ID card and want to make a purchase, there is a $1.00 additional fee for that purchase.

HCA strongly encourages parents to take an active role in monitoring their child’s ordering activity. A parent may get a detailed record of his/her students’ lunch purchases online. Parents have 60 days from the issuance of their bills to reconcile any billing questions. Please contact the Business Office for more information on how to monitor student accounts.

**Automatic Child-Care Program**

1. $4.00 per hour charged to the nearest ½ hour
2. Arrival prior to 7:30 a.m. and departure after 3:15 p.m. (12:15 p.m. departure for preschool students)
3. $1.00 per minute per child after 6:00 p.m.

**Miscellaneous Fees**

1. **Required**
   a. Commencement/Graduation fee – K5 & 12th grade - $45.00 per child
   b. Student Lock $7 (middle and high school students only)
2. **Optional** (per participation)
   a. Tutoring – $30.00 per hour ($15.00 per ½ hour)
   b. Athletic Fee
      i. Football - $250.00 per season
      ii. All other sports - $100.00 per season per sport
c. Yearbook - One yearbook per family will be ordered and charged to the family account, additional copies for multiple children in a family can be purchased in the business office. If a family does not want to receive a yearbook they must notify the business office before October 1st. Cost is set annually, ordering information will be provided to families when requested.

d. AP Testing- $100 per test

3. Penalty

a. NSF check – $35.00 per item
b. Replacement lock for locker - $7.00
c. Tardy fee – See “Tardiness” policy
d. Tuition late fee – $20.00 HCA
e. Withdrawal fee – $100 to cover administrative cost.

Student Withdrawal Process

In order to meet current school and state requirements, the following procedure will be used in the process of withdrawing a child. A withdrawal request form must be completed to start the withdrawal process, and a request for an exit interview may be made by administration.

Three main areas will be addressed prior to completing the withdrawal process:

• Financial
When you enrolled your child at HCA, tuition for the entire year (pro-rated) was due. You may have chosen a convenient monthly payment plan; however, the entire tuition amount was due at enrollment. In your enrollment package you agreed to a withdrawal fee of $100 per child. This fee will be added to your account balance.

Note: All fees paid for international students are non-refundable.

HCA-issued textbooks, library books, and athletic uniforms must be returned at the time of withdrawal. The replacement value of any materials that are not returned will be added to your account balance.

• Academics/Athletics
Final grade compilation, report card/transcript updates and teacher notification all must be completed. These tasks must be completed to ensure proper recordkeeping for your child’s schooling history and to prevent truancy issues with the state of Florida. Furthermore, if your child is a high school athlete, there are FHSAA regulations that apply to students transferring to another school.

• Records
Several databases concerning: grades, attendance, contact information, enrollment status and finances must be updated and/or closed. Paper records in the student’s cumulative folder and each teacher’s records must be properly handled for accuracy. Several forms must be signed and distributed to document the withdrawal and the agreement to terms.
Financial Aid Introduction
Families enrolling into Hernando Christian Academy (HCA) have three options for Financial Aid available to them: (1) Step Up for Students; (2) McKay Scholarship; and (3) HCA Tuition Assistance. (4) Pasco Hernando Early Learning Coalition. The state regulates Step Up for Students and McKay Scholarship. HCA’s policies and procedures as provided below govern HCA Tuition Assistance.

Step Up for Students
Step Up for Students is available for those families showing financial need and having attended a public school the prior year. If your student is going into Kindergarten through fifth grade, he/she does not need to have attended a public school the prior year. Please go to the website www.stepupforstudents.org for more information and an application. This scholarship is subject to funding availability.

McKay Scholarship
McKay Scholarship is for students with documented academic or behavioral difficulties. This documentation is in the form of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan. We only accept McKay scholarship students after a thorough evaluation that determines that HCA has the ability to meet or exceed your child’s academic or behavioral need.

HCA Tuition Assistance Program
If a family has pursued every other option to pay tuition – personal income, family members, church membership, credit card, or bank loan – HCA Tuition Assistance is available for families showing a financial need based upon an evaluation of a families’ financials by the HCA Tuition Assistance Program. The Tuition Assistance Committee will consider factors including, but not limited to:
• Families who positively support HCA’s mission and vision
• Students who succeed academically (C average or above)
• Students who succeed behaviorally

Pasco Hernando Early Learning Coalition Scholarship
School readiness funds pay a portion of child care costs for low to moderate income earning families so that they may seek and maintain employment to support their families. Eligible families are assessed a fee on a sliding fee scale according to income.

The children in School Readiness programs are assisted through screenings, assessments, and developmentally-appropriate early learning programs to prepare them for school. School readiness programs serve children birth to eight and some school-age children receive services before and after school.

HCA reserves the right to deny, modify or rescind tuition assistance at its discretion.

Families interested in pursuing financial aid opportunities should go to HCA’s website and click on the link to apply for the Tuition Assistance Program. You will need previous tax and bank information to complete the application. Applications must be completed early to best assure the availability of funds.

All financial assistance is awarded one year at a time, parents must reapply annually. HCA has a limited budgeted amount of money available which is based on enrollment.
Textbooks

- **Elementary**
  Elementary students will be provided with all required textbooks and workbooks. Students are expected to keep books clean and prevent any damage to them. Hardback textbooks should be covered with paper covers (no tape should be applied directly to the book!). Charges will be assessed for damage to inventory barcodes and for damage to the books themselves.

- **Upper School**
  All students in grades 6-12 will be required to provide and maintain their own textbooks. Students are required to have necessary books and supplies within the first two weeks after a term begins. Students who fail to do so will incur a grade penalty in that class. (Note: if a book is backordered, simply copy the order statement and submit to the instructor. If a student has not shown proof of purchase within two weeks of the beginning of the term, participation points will be docked per teacher’s discretion). Families should be aware that the correct editions must be obtained. A current listing of all required textbooks with the ISBN’s and edition information is available on the HCA website.

**ACADEMICS**

**Part-Time Student**
A student who is enrolled in fewer than four credit courses instructed by HCA faculty will be classified as a part-time student. Students will be charged by the number of classes taken. There is a $75 registration fee and other miscellaneous fees may apply.

**Full-Time Student**
A student who is enrolled in four or more credit courses instructed by HCA faculty will be classified as a full-time student. Students will be charged the full tuition.

**Activities**
Only full-time students are eligible for graduation, honor rolls, Honor Societies, Student Government and class office, Homecoming Court, Prom King or Queen. Part-time students are eligible to participate in athletics as long as other eligibility requirements are met.

**Outside Courses**
Outside courses (PHSC dual enrollment, Florida Virtual School, etc.) do not count toward full-time HCA status. Part-time students may take dual enrollment courses, online courses or other courses. HCA may have to approve these courses per agreements with other organizations. If a student is eligible for graduation at HCA, these courses will count toward meeting graduation requirements.

**NOTE:** Some scholarships have regulations regarding the number of online or outside courses taken. Please contact your scholarship agency for current requirement.
Homework
We believe that homework is an important part of the school program. Each teacher is at liberty to give homework to aid students in his or her studies. Each student is expected to complete homework assignments. Homework should be neat, complete and done to the best of one’s ability. Students in K5-5th grade are required to use the agenda book provided by HCA. If the agenda book is lost, a new one can be purchased from the elementary office. Secondary students assignments are typically listed on RenWeb, but all students are encouraged to have some type of assignment book to write homework, unfinished assignments and notes in.

Kindergarten – Elementary (K-5 thru 5th Grade)
In the elementary grades, students are expected to master the core concepts and skills for each grade level. Our goal is to have every student reach his or her potential by providing diversified materials that meet the needs of all types of learners. Instruction is provided in reading, English, mathematics, social studies/history, science, handwriting and Bible. To complement and supplement the core subjects, classes are scheduled on a rotating basis to provide students with exposure to and instruction in a variety of electives. Physical education is also included as a daily part of each elementary child’s schedule.

Middle School (6th – 8th Grade)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REQUIRED COURSES</th>
<th>COURSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>Bible 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bible 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bible 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| English          | Language Arts I |
|                 | Language Arts II |
|                 | Language Arts III or Language Arts III Honors |

| Math             | Math I |
|                 | Math II |
|                 | Pre-Algebra or Algebra I Honors |

| Science          | Science 6 |
|                 | Earth/Space Science |
|                 | Life Science |

| History          | Western Civilizations |
|                 | World History |
|                 | U.S. History |

| Additional Courses | Keyboarding (required for 6th graders) |
|                   | Physical Education (required for 6th – 8th grade) |
|                   | Art (available to 7th and 8th graders) |
|                   | Computer Programming (available to 7th and 8th graders) |

High School (9th – 12th Grades) Graduation Requirements - 25 Credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REQUIRED CREDITS</th>
<th>COURSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 credits of Bible</td>
<td>Bible 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bible 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bible 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bible 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| 4 credits of English | English I or English I Honors |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>English II or English II Honors</strong></td>
<td>English III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English IV</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 credits of Math</strong></td>
<td>Algebra I or Algebra I Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Algebra II or Algebra II Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geometry or Geometry Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consumer Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics for College Readiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Calculus Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Calculus Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 credits of Science</strong></td>
<td>Physical Science or Physical Science Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biology or Biology Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anatomy and Physiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chemistry Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physics Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 credits of Social Science</strong></td>
<td>Geography or Geography Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US History or US History Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>World History or World History Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US Government or US Government Honors (1 semester)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economics or Economics Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 credits of one foreign language</strong></td>
<td>Spanish I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>½ credit Physical Education</strong></td>
<td>Personal Fitness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>½ credit Life Management Skills</strong></td>
<td>Life Management Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 elective credits</strong></td>
<td>Yearbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worship Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Computer Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weight Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Aide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Service</strong></td>
<td>100 Hours of Community Service are Required of Each Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SCHOLARS DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS**

_HCA offers a Scholars diploma option for students who wish to challenge themselves and exceed the basic graduation requirements and demonstrate a level of excellence indicative of advanced study. This diploma option requires four additional criteria as specified below:_

- **Honors/AP Courses**
  Students are required to take the most challenging courses offered by HCA, including at least two science courses with lab components.

- **Additional Credits**
  28 credits

- **Additional Community Service**
  Students are required to perform 200 hours of community service in order to be eligible for the Scholars Diploma.
### Graduation Requirement

A student must be a full-time student in the year of graduation to be eligible for a diploma and participation in graduation ceremonies at HCA. (Note: full-time is classified as students who are taking 4 or more courses instructed by a HCA faculty member.) *Honors distinctions* are awarded at the graduation ceremony. Cum Laude distinction is awarded to students with a 3.5 or higher cumulative GPA. Magna Cum Laude distinction is awarded to students with a 4.0 or higher cumulative GPA.

### Class Rank (9th-12th grade)

For a student to be eligible to be *class valedictorian or salutatorian*, that student must have full-time status in the year of graduation and have completed a minimum of twelve credits on campus at HCA. These twelve credits cannot have been academically modified (ESE, ESOL, etc.) Class rank is determined by the cumulative grade point average (CGPA). Bonus points for outside courses will only be given to match bonus points given for comparable courses at HCA. Valedictorian and Salutatorian are determined and announced at the end of the first semester of the senior year.

### High School Community Service

In order for a senior to graduate from HCA, he or she must have served a minimum of 100 service hours for a standard diploma or a minimum of 200 hours for a Scholars diploma. Students are encouraged to include hours outside of HCA.

The hours must be verified by submitting the completed and signed official forms. The secondary school assistant keeps the records for the students; it is the student’s responsibility to submit the completed forms to the secondary school assistant. Blank forms can be obtained from the secondary school office. HCA reserves the right to accept, modify, or deny hours submitted.

### Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96+</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-95</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 &amp; below</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bonus Points**

Honors and Advanced Placement classes are given bonus points as follows:
- 0.5 bonus point for honors and dual-enrollment courses
- 1 bonus point for Advanced Placement course

Bonus points for outside courses will only be given to match bonus points given for comparable courses at HCA.

**Semester Exam Weighting**

Students in grades 6-12 will take mid-term and final exams. For students in grades 6-8, these exams will count as 2 test grades to be included as part of their term averages and are intended to train students to prepare for cumulative examinations. For students in grades 9-12, mid-term and final exams are averaged as 20% of the semester grade for each course with term grades counting 40% each.

**Exam Exemptions**

Students in grades 9-12 may exempt two exams each semester. They must have an A in both terms of a semester in order to exempt the exam for that course and must be in good standing with no suspensions and no more than nine absences in that semester. Students may only exempt a course exam once per year.

**Grade Replacement**

High School students may retake courses and replace a previous grade. The original grade will not remain on the transcript, and will not be calculated as part of the student’s cumulative grade point average.

**Report Card/Progress Report**

Report cards will be emailed following the close of each grading period. Progress reports are posted for all students each Monday by 5:00 p.m. on RenWeb.

**Honor Rolls**

An Honor Roll is compiled after each 9-week grading period for first through 12th grades according to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Elementary</strong></th>
<th><strong>Secondary</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honor Roll</td>
<td>High Honors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All A’s and B’s</td>
<td>3.5 cumulative grade point average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal’s List</td>
<td>Principal’s List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All A’s</td>
<td>4.0 cumulative grade point average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Any secondary student receiving an A in the first 3 quarters will receive a Certificate of Excellence at the end of the year awards ceremony. Any student improving at least 2 letter grades from Quarter 1 to Quarter 3 will receive a Certificate of Improvement at the end of the year awards ceremony.

**Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first quarter of the school year. During the conference, the teacher will give the parent an overview of his/her child's accomplishments, and give a brief preview of the next period's goals. Parents may also arrange conferences with teachers throughout the year by scheduling appointments as the teachers are able to accommodate the requests. Multiple teacher conferences are available and can be scheduled through the elementary or secondary offices.

**Academic Probation**

A student may be placed on academic probation as a condition of enrollment, or he/she may be placed on academic probation if he/she has failed an academic course (semester grade) or has a GPA that has dropped below a 2.0. In the event that a student is placed on academic probation, the following conditions must be met:

- The student must earn passing grades each semester that he/she is on probation
- The student must earn a semester GPA of 2.0 while on probation

If the terms of the probation contract are not met, the student may be required to withdraw or be prohibited from enrolling for the subsequent school year.

**Promotion**

**Elementary**

Students will be promoted to the next grade unless they have a yearly average of 59% or below in language arts and/or math. In the event that a student's yearly average falls below this standard, he/she may be required to take a mastery test at the end of the year to determine if minimum core essentials in that subject area have been mastered. If a student fails the mastery test, he/she may be required to receive remedial tutoring and demonstrate mastery of the core essential skills and concepts as a condition for promotion. Students who do not demonstrate mastery after tutoring may then be required to repeat the grade level in order to re-enroll.

**Middle School**

A student must pass all core courses for the year. In the event that a student earns a failing yearly average in a core course, he/she may be required to make up the course in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

**High School**

Revised July 2015
Students who fail a course and do not earn a required credit must make up the course in order to meet their graduation requirements. Additionally, students must earn a required number of credits each year in order to be classified as a member of a particular class as follows:

- 6 credits – sophomore
- 12 credits – junior
- 18 credits – senior
- 24 credits – graduate

**College Counseling at HCA**

Since HCA is a college preparatory school, it is assumed that all of our graduates will have the opportunity to attend college. College admissions are increasingly competitive, so it is very important that students and parents are proactive in obtaining information and pursuing opportunities. Hernando Christian Academy seeks to partner with families in order to help students and parents negotiate the college admissions process and make sense of the sometimes overwhelming information with which students and parents are inundated. The process of finding schools of interest, identifying scholarship or other funding opportunities and ultimately selecting a college or university is a highly personal one. Therefore, students and families must assume the responsibility of engaging in this process and using HCA’s college counseling program as a resource.

**Field & Class Trips**

Students go on field trips several times throughout the year. Trips are planned to correlate with class instruction. Students pay the cost of the trip (cost of admission, food, and transportation). A letter will be sent home explaining the trip. Permission forms must be signed and returned to the teacher by the deadline in order for the student to attend. Students not returning their forms by the deadline will not be allowed to attend the field trip. Parents may be asked to assist in providing transportation. All students must comply with teacher specified dress code on field trip days. Students not attending their class field trip may be required to complete an alternative assignment to be designated by the teacher. Siblings may NOT attend field trips unless administratively approved.

Students in K-3 thru 5th grade must not attend school if they are not going on the field trip. A note is required prior to the field trip if the student is staying home. Their school record will indicate an absence for the day. Students in grades 6 - 12 will be required to attend school and will report to class or study hall as designated or will be counted absent.

Part-time students may not participate in field trips and class trips (including senior trip) unless administratively approved.

**SERVICES OFFERED**

**Tutoring**

Hernando Christian Academy maintains a listing of teachers who are willing to offer their services to students in need of tutoring. It is the parents’ responsibility to select and schedule tutoring services for their students. Elementary students may not receive paid
tutoring services from their primary teacher. Contact Elementary Office for a list of tutors. Tutoring is paid to HCA at a rate of $30 hour/$15 half hour.

**Before & After-School Care**

Child care is provided for families who need additional supervision for their children, either prior to the start of school or after school ends.

- **Before school hours** 7:00 – 8:00 a.m. (Preschool & Elementary charged 7:00-7:30)
- **After school hours** 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. for K-3 & K-4
  - 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. for K-5 thru 12th grade
- **Half Days** 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. for K-3 to 12th grade

Any child who is not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will automatically be sent to After School Care. Families are charged for this service. Students staying for tutoring or scheduled class meetings, participating in athletic practices/games, etc. will not be charged during the time they are involved in that specific activity. Students will be sent to After School Care before or after tutoring, meetings, games and/or practice, etc. when not in the care of their parent or assigned caretaker. All elementary students are to go to the gym before school. There is a before school charge for those arriving before 7:30. All secondary students are to remain in the cafeteria or main walkway/locker areas before school.

All children must be picked up from After School Care by 6:00 p.m. If children are not picked up by 6:00 p.m., a $1.00 per minute charge will be assessed. If a parent is late three times during the school year, they will be asked to remove their children from the After School Program, and will be required to pick up their children at 3:00 p.m. **After-school care is available only on days when school is in session.**

**Summer Camp**

Hernando Christian Academy extends its ministry through the summer months for students in grades K4 – 5. Summer camp hours are from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Mondays through Fridays throughout the summer vacation. Registration begins in spring of each year, and parents may obtain information packets from the front office.

**Chapel**

We invite area pastors, youth pastors, music ministers and other qualified individuals to be our guest speakers at weekly chapel. Attendance at chapel is mandatory for students, and parents are always invited to attend as their schedules allow. One week during each school year is set aside as a special Spiritual Emphasis Week where daily chapels and guest speakers are scheduled.

**Lunch Program**

Students may bring their lunches or buy food and beverages from the cafeteria menu. The HCA lunch program is **CASHLESS.** Each family will have a lunch account, menus and prices are listed on the web site. Microwaves are available to warm students’ lunches. All students are required to eat only in designated areas.

Students in K-3 thru 5th grades are not permitted to bring soda from home for lunch. **No food or drink is permitted in the hallways or classrooms except during designated snack time or special class events.**
Juniors and seniors may leave campus for lunch, provided that all required authorization forms have been submitted to the secondary school office. Off-campus lunch privileges may be suspended and/or revoked in the event that a student does not follow the regulations outlined in the authorization forms. **Students who are absent from class following lunch or caught leaving campus unauthorized will receive a suspension.**

Preschool and elementary students will pre-order, and the family account will be charged. Sixth-12th graders will have a picture ID with a bar code. The card will be read, and the items will be charged to the account. For more information, please contact the HCA Business Office. It is the parents’ responsibility to monitor and control their student’s spending.

**School Bookstore**
The school bookstore is operated for the benefit of the students. It is open Monday through Friday, 3:05 – 3:30 p.m. A variety of items are available for purchase including school supplies.

**Parent Communication**
As we partner with families, it is critical to maintain strong communication. Toward this end, HCA strives to provide various methods of disseminating information to parents. Each teacher has an email account that parents may utilize to communicate with him/her. In most cases, the email address is the first initial of the teacher’s first name and their last name followed by “hernandochristian.org.” For example, Jane Smith’s email address would be jsmith@hernandochristian.org. Parents may also contact teachers by calling the school and leaving a voicemail. Teachers will not be able to accept calls during class time but will return calls as quickly as possible. When leaving a voice or email for a teacher, it is always helpful to include your name, the student’s name and a brief description of the question or concern so that the teacher may prepare appropriately for a return phone call or email. We also have several other specific methods of communication for our HCA families:

**Website**
HCA maintains a school web site. School publications, including this handbook, cafeteria charges, athletic schedules and directions to away games, required textbook lists and other pertinent information can all be found by visiting www.hernandochristian.org.

**RenWeb**
Parents may access their student’s grades and class assignments as well as billing information via RenWeb. Teachers are asked to update RenWeb on a weekly basis, no later than 5p.m. each Monday. Families new to HCA will receive an access code during the first weeks of school. Parents need to request an account by emailing info@hernandochristian.org. Returning families should use their existing codes.

**Email Notifications**
Parents are strongly encouraged to notify HCA of their email address and update the information as needed as we send out various notifications via email. In addition to various notifications to the entire school community regarding school news, email notifications are made to parents when a student has an infraction entered into the
discipline database by a classroom teacher, including tardies. Absence notifications will also be sent so that parents will be aware of absences as they accrue.

**Student Insurance**
HCA provides a limited student “excess” insurance coverage for your child at school. “Twenty-four hour” coverage is available for an additional fee and must be ordered directly through the insurance company. Please contact the Business Office for further details.

**Lockers**
All students in grades 6 - 12 will be issued a locker and will be required to purchase a school lock (the fee will be automatically charged to families’ accounts). Students are expected to keep their lockers locked at all times. The administrative team reserves the right to search lockers at any time at its discretion.

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**ACTIVITIES OFFERED**

**Student Government**
HCA has a student government which may include Middle and High School students. A faculty member serves as a sponsor. The purpose of the council is to serve as the students’ voice to Administration, promote school spirit and Christian attitudes in the student body, and to assist in planning the school’s homecoming activities.

**Honor Societies**
The NHS, NJHS and NEHS (all detailed below) are programs of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) designed to honor outstanding students at various grade levels.

- **National Honor Society**
The National Honor Society (NHS) is the nation's premier organization established to recognize outstanding high school students. More than just an honor roll, NHS serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character. These characteristics have been associated with membership in the organization since inception in 1921. Chapter membership not only recognizes students for their accomplishments, but also challenges them to develop further through active involvement in school activities and community service.

  Four main purposes have guided chapters of NHS from its inception: “To create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in the students of secondary schools” (NHS Constitution). These purposes also translate into the criteria used for membership selection in each local chapter.

- **National Junior Honor Society**
The NJHS is an honor society for students in grades 7 – 9. Modeled after the NHS program, the NJHS serves to honor students who have demonstrated excellence in
the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, Character and Citizenship. Members of NJHS are challenged to serve as leaders within the HCA community and work alongside the NHS and NEHS on various school and community service projects.

• National Elementary Honor Society
This program for students in grades 4 - 6 is designed for all elementary schools and includes two primary functions:
  1) Recognizing the accomplishments of students, specifically the full range of a student's academic achievements and the ability to be a responsible student at school, at home, and in the community
  2) Involving students as members participating in the activities of the chapter. Students apply in the fall and are evaluated on their Responsibility, Service, Leadership, Scholarship and Character.

Serve-A-Thon
One day per year, all students will serve in our local communities. Secondary students not attending will be required to perform alternate service hours.

Athletics
HCA offers extracurricular sports for all grades. Karate is offered for all grades. The Little Lion's program may include co-ed intramural basketball, volleyball, soccer and girls cheerleading and is designed to develop the skills of students in grades 2 through 5. Fifth graders may participate in football. The middle school, junior varsity and varsity programs are for students in grades 6 – 12 and include a broad range of sports.

Athletic fees are applicable to most sports. Students must also meet all eligibility requirements as outlined by FCAPPS and/or FHSAA (Florida High School Activities Association) and must meet minimum grade eligibility requirements as set forth by HCA.

The education of our students is something that is taken very seriously at HCA. Participation in sports and cheerleading, while encouraged, should not be allowed to take priority over the appropriate learning of the curriculum and the completion of class work. HCA upholds the FHSAA eligibility policy as follows:

  A student must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 scale, in all courses taken at the conclusion of each semester to be eligible during the following semester. A student whose cumulative grade point average is below a 2.0 on a 4.0 scale in all courses taken at the conclusion of a semester shall not be eligible during the following semester.

In addition to the FHSAA policies, HCA will enforce the following policies:

  1. If a student athlete misses \textit{\frac{1}{2} or more of his or her scheduled classes} on a game or performance day, he/she will not be permitted to participate in that day's scheduled event.
2. All athletes must maintain passing grades in all classes during the season in order to remain eligible.
   a. A team list will be listed in the data base at the beginning of each athletic season.
   b. Each Tuesday morning the Athletic Director will print a report of grades for the week.
   b. At the 3rd and 6th week, and at the end of a quarter, athletes who are failing a class will be ineligible for a minimum of one week and not allowed to participate in any team activities.
   c. Team suspension will start on the Tuesday of the grade report showing ineligibility. Reinstatement will occur on the Tuesday that student has earned a satisfactory grade report.
   d. The Athletic Director will inform any athlete, parent and coach of a suspension ASAP on the Tuesday that the suspension begins and on the Tuesday that the suspension ends.

Home School Athletes
HCA allows home school students to participate in its athletic program. Home school students have a limited amount of contact with the school therefore we want to ensure that they understand our philosophy and abide by the standards set for all of our students. It is also important that home school students help offset the financial costs involved in the athletic program. All students are required to interview with a member of administration. Part-time students who wish to play on an HCA athletic team must discuss their Christian testimony during the interview with the administrator. Students that actually attend a class must fill out an application and pay the Enrollment Fee, interview with the Superintendent, meet eligibility standards and be accepted. The FHSAA requires that all athletes have a physical before participation in any interscholastic athletic activity. This physical is good for one calendar year and the EL2 form provided by the FHSAA must be completed and kept on file along with other required forms.
Home school students must register with the FHSAA using the EL7 form supplied by Hernando Christian Academy. Home school students must at the conclusion of each semester certify to the principal of the school on the EL9 form provided by Hernando Christian Academy that the student meets the minimum grade point average standards which are required of all students. Forms are available on the school website.

Puppetry
The HCA puppetry club is also a ministry to our community. The students perform at various times throughout the school year, including evenings and weekends, at area churches, nursing homes, etc.

ACSI Competitions
Students have the opportunity to be selected to participate in a wide variety of educational competitions sponsored by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI – our accrediting organization).

Safety Patrol
The Safety Patrol is comprised of fifth grade students who serve in the morning, assisting with the safety of our students as they arrive at school and also raise our flags. Patrols
must maintain both academic and citizenship standards in order to serve as effective leaders within the HCA community.

**DRESS CODE**

Christians are expected to be modest in appearance. The dress code of HCA is based on both Biblical standards and the need for children to learn to dress modestly and tastefully (I Timothy 2:9-10, 4:12). HCA reserves the right to inform parents that certain attire or hairstyles are not appropriate for our school.

HCA (teachers, staff & Administration), reserves the right to approach any student about his or her attire or appearance if any part of the dress code has been violated, or if any portion of their dress or appearance is questionable. The decision of the Administrator or designee is final. All attire should be properly fitting, neat in appearance, and meet school criteria.

Dress code violations may result in, but are not limited to the following disciplinary measures which will be progressive in nature (measures are examples only and not intended to be exhaustive or sequential):

- Warning
- Detentions of varying length
- In-school suspension
- Parent being called to bring in appropriate attire or school providing appropriate item if available.

Repetitive violations may result in additional disciplinary action.

**GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO BOYS**

**PANTS/SLEAKS/SHORTS:**

1. Pants or walking shorts in solid colors gray, navy blue, black or khaki, brown or dark green. **NO BLUE COLORED JEANS.** Pants should not be low riding, baggy or form fitting.
2. All pants must have belt loops; all students in grades 3 – 12 must wear belts.
3. Pants and shorts may not be ripped, frayed or have holes or faded sections
4. Gray or navy blue sweat pants are permitted in K3-K4.

**SHIRTS:**

1. Standard cut (not newer style of short-length shirt), 2 to 4 button **golf or polo style** shirts in any normal solid color are acceptable. Boys in high school only may wear patterned golf or polo style shirt. **This is the only style shirt that may be worn. HCA desires to train young men to dress professionally; therefore boys’ shirts must be tucked in at all times** and must be buttoned appropriately.
2. Outerwear (sweaters, sweatshirts and jackets only) must not have inappropriate graphics, text or logos. Students must be in dress code beneath their outerwear. Long-sleeved button-down shirts are not outerwear and therefore are not allowed.
SHOES:
1. Elementary students should wear shoes appropriate for physical education and recess; tennis shoes are recommended. Due to safety, a student wearing shoes other than a tennis shoe may be asked to sit out during recess and/or P.E.
2. Close-toed only
3. Socks must be worn

HAIR:
1. Must be clean cut and styled in a modest, non-radical cut or color (no unnaturally colored or multi-colored hair; no pigtails). Hair must not fall below the eyebrows or touch the collar when combed down.
2. All facial hair must be neatly groomed.
3. No emblems, words, lines or designs may be shaved into the hair.
4. Head should not be shaved to the scalp.

MISCELLANEOUS:
1. No earrings or visible body piercing jewelry including any type of earring
2. No visible tattoos – temporary or permanent
3. No sunglasses, bandanas, scarves, any type of hats, including hoods on sweatshirts/jackets may be worn on campus during school hours unless the hat is part of an athletic uniform and is being worn during a practice or game, or directed to do so during physical education.
4. No objects (keys, wallets, chains, etc.) hanging from belt loops
5. No clothing tied or wrapped around waist
6. No symbols that could be divisive in nature
7. No wheeled shoes (Heelys) may be worn to school or school functions
8. No slippers or other “house” or “bedroom” shoes
9. No “Crocs” or clog style shoes
10. Boys may not wear makeup.

GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO GIRLS:

PANTS/WALKING SHORTS/SKORTS/SKIRTS/JUMPERS:
1. All pants, shorts, skorts, skirts and jumpers must be solid gray, navy blue, black or khaki, brown or dark green. No blue colored jean (denim) shorts or pants.
2. Pants must not be low-riding.
3. Shorts may be no higher than 4 inches from the crease in back of the knee and should not be form fitting; this includes shorts worn for physical education classes. To test for length - ensure that the width of your hand, when placed at the crease of the knee touches the hem of the garment.
4. No sweat pants, pajama bottoms or other leisure type pants are permissible.
5. Elementary girls must wear shorts underneath skirts or jumpers
6. Skirt and jumper hemlines must not be higher than 4 inches above the crease of the back of the knee. To test for length - ensure that the width of your hand, when placed at the crease of the knee touches the hem of the garment.
7. Pants and shorts may not be ripped, frayed or have holes or faded sections.
8. Gray or navy blue sweat pants are permitted in K3-K4.
SHIRTS/BLOUSES:
1. Must be 2 – 4 button standard cut golf or polo style shirts in a solid color. Girls in high school may wear patterned golf or polo style shirt. No snap or “mini” button shirts are permitted. Shirts may have only 1 or 2 buttons unbuttoned.
2. Shirts should be loose-fitting; no tight or form-fitting shirts are permitted.
3. Shirts must completely cover the midriff area and overlap the top of the pants when arms are raised or the student leans over.
4. If the polo shirt is worn untucked, an undershirt must be worn tucked-in underneath.
5. Outerwear (sweaters, sweatshirts and jackets only) must not have inappropriate graphics, text or logos. Students must be in dress code beneath their outerwear. Long-sleeved button-down shirts are not outerwear and therefore are not allowed.

SHOES:
1. Elementary students should wear shoes appropriate for physical education and recess, tennis shoes are recommended. Due to safety, a student wearing shoes other than a tennis shoe may be asked to sit out during recess and/or P.E.
2. Close-toed only

HAIR:
1. Must be clean-cut and styled in a modest, non-radical style.
2. Must not be dyed an unnatural or distracting color.

MISCELLANEOUS:
1. Female students in grades 6 – 12 may wear modest cosmetics. Students in grades 3 – 5 may wear sheer lip gloss only.
2. No visible body piercing jewelry except earrings of reasonable size may be worn.
3. No visible tattoos – temporary or permanent
4. No sunglasses, bandanas, scarves, any type of hats, including hoods on sweatshirts/jackets may be worn on campus during school hours unless the hat is part of an athletic uniform and is being worn during a practice or game, or directed to do so during physical education.
5. No objects (keys, wallets, chains, etc.) hanging from belt loops
6. No clothing tied or wrapped around waist
7. No symbols that could be divisive in nature
8. No wheeled shoes (Heelys) may be worn to school or school functions
9. No slippers or other “house” or “bedroom” shoes
10. All shoes must have a back or strap in the back.

DRESS CODE at HCA FUNCTIONS

Certain HCA functions will have specific dress code requirements (field trips, etc.) Students must comply with any and all specified dress codes for HCA functions, or if on campus after school. At HCA events where no particular dress code is specified, students are expected to be in appropriate and modest attire. (Clothing should not be baggy, tight,
HCA faculty and administrators reserve the right to approach any HCA student at an HCA function who is not dressed appropriately and request that they either change their clothing or leave the event.

**Homecoming Week Dress Code**

Homecoming week is a time for the students to have a good time and to be drawn closer together as a school. There are themes and activities planned for the week by our SGA groups. We encourage all students to participate and have a great time! Each day points will be awarded to classes for their participation as a group in dressing up in the theme of the day. It is important that students stay within the stated guidelines. If a student is not within the guidelines, there will be consequences and that student may be asked to change clothes to something more appropriate.

Each day the dress is to be in the theme for the day. Students have the option of wearing the regular school dress code items if they don’t want to dress in the theme. Students may also wear the homecoming t-shirt with the dress code bottoms without being in the theme for the day.

- **Pants:** Pants and shorts may be worn that are not ripped, torn or frayed. All must be of modest fit and length. Pajamas are NOT to be worn.

- **Shirts:** Shirts are to be modest not low cut and not show any skin at the bottom at any time. Tank tops are NOT allowed.

- **Shoes:** Close-toed only (no slides or flip flops.) Daily homecoming activities are best enjoyed when proper footwear is worn to minimize injury.

- **Hats:** May be worn but not in the classroom.

- **Temporary hair coloring and face painting** for the weeks events are acceptable.

- **NO words or symbols of an inappropriate nature are to be worn.**

School administration reserves the right to make judgment on all clothes and take whatever action deemed appropriate to correct any situation.

**Dance Expectations**

**Attire**

This evening will be a special event. Our emphasis is on modesty. Please do not try to push the envelope in this area. Administration will make all judgment calls on clothing and their decision is final.

- **Gentlemen**
  - Neckties/bowties are required at Homecoming and Prom.
  - Jackets are optional.

- **Ladies**
• Modest dresses near knee length or longer.
• Tops of dresses should be of modest fit.
• Open back dresses must have ties from side to side and must not dip below the waistline.
• All appropriate undergarments must be worn.
• Slits should be no higher than the fingertip.
• No form-fitting dresses.
• Strapless dresses are allowed; however, please use good judgment in terms of the fit of your dress.

**Dance Style**  We will allow traditional couples dancing, line dancing, etc. We will not, however, allow any form of dancing that is deemed overly sexual. No “grinding” is allowed. Couples must be “parallel” without pressing against each other. We realize that this is subjective and the chaperones will make the final call on whether or not a student is dancing inappropriately. Students may be asked to sit out the dance. If students refuse to modify their dancing after being warned, they will be asked to leave the dance.

**Conduct**  As a Christian school we choose to hold ourselves to higher standards than those around us. Students are not to sit on each other’s lap, kiss or have their hands in inappropriate places. If administration feels that a student’s conduct is inappropriate they will be warned, and then if that conduct is not changed they will be asked to leave the dance.

**Guests**  Each high school student may bring a date of the opposite gender to the dance. The date does not have to attend HCA. Guests must have Parent/Student Accords and approved guest registration forms on file. Guests will not be approved at the door, so this form needs to be approved by administration in advance. All parties attending the dance must agree to abide by the rules or they will be asked to leave if they are unable or unwilling to abide by the rules. Middle school students may only attend the dance if they come as the date of one of our high school students.

**Dress Down Days**

Dress down days will be held on Friday, contingent upon administrative approval. Students will earn their dress down days each week by keeping the grounds free of litter, adhering to the dress code and following other school rules.

On dress down days, students may wear blue denim jeans or shorts (Shorts may be no higher than 4 inches from the crease in back of the knee and should not be form fitting. Jeans and shorts must not have holes or be ripped, torn or frayed in any way or have faded sections. Elementary students may wear HCA or other specifically Christian t-shirts. Middle and high school students may wear HCA t-shirts only. All shirts may be untucked.

*Revised July 2015*
BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS & AREAS OF CONCERN

"Train a child in the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn from it."
Proverbs 22:6

Student Code of Conduct
Hernando Christian Academy expects its students to live above reproach, showing respect to God, family, country, faculty, and fellow students. As a student of HCA, you are a representative of our school. Therefore, your conduct and behavior should honor Jesus Christ at all times. During training, discipline is quite often necessary to develop self-discipline. The discipline system at HCA is distinctively Christian and is designed to promote student responsibility. Its purpose is to “disciple students in the Lord’s way” (Classroom Discipline, Haddock & Gibbs, 1984, p. 2). Haddock and Gibbs go on to say, “Discipline is instruction that molds, shapes, corrects, and inspires appropriate behavior.”

Quality education goes hand-in-hand with consistent and fair discipline helping our students learn respect and obedience in an environment of love. The atmosphere in which most students learn, and learn the most, is one that is ordered, structured and disciplined. Students should understand that discipline is an act of love, and at HCA, the teachers and administration love students enough to discipline them.

Each student is expected to become familiar with the rules of the school and the classroom, and adhere to them. Correction will result if the rules are not followed. Students are under the jurisdiction of the school’s rules when they are on campus, when they are participating in or attending any school-sponsored activity, and when they are en route to and from events on school-owned or school-approved vehicles.

Discipline Policies
Discipline is training in righteousness. At HCA, students are disciplined using affirmative discipline; that is, they are encouraged in a positive manner to give of their best in every area and to abide by school regulations (Proverbs 22:6). It is the intent of the school that students become self-governing over time, requiring less and less external training and correction.

An Assertive Discipline Plan is posted in each classroom. Teachers are encouraged to manage student behavior in the classroom by publishing and reinforcing classroom rules and responsibilities along with corresponding rewards and consequences. Teachers are encouraged to maintain close communication with parents. It is expected that mutual cooperation between home and school will satisfactorily resolve most disciplinary challenges.

Typical Assertive Discipline Plan for Elementary Classes:
- Classroom Rules - follow directions, be honest, be kind, keep hands and feet to yourself, and raise your hand to speak or ask for help.
- Supportive Feedback - stickers/treasure box, positive notes or phone calls, eat lunch with the teacher, Happy Visit with the Principal.
- Corrective Actions - warning, 5-minute conference with teacher during recess.
or special, 10-minute conference with teacher during recess or special, parent contact, referral to the principal, after school detention, ISS, or OSS.
• Students with persistent negative classroom behavior may be given an alternate discipline plan by administration.

Typical Assertive Discipline Plan for Secondary classes:
• Classroom Rules: begin assignment when you enter the room, be prepared and follow directions.
• Supportive Feedback: give verbal recognition, make a positive parent contact, give a privilege.
• Corrective Actions: warning, 5-minute after school conference (3:05-3:10), 10-minute after school conference (3:05-3:15), lunch detention, 1 hour after-school detention (3:05-4:05), Discipline Referral to Administration, ISS, OSS.
• Students with persistent negative classroom behavior may be given an alternate discipline plan by administration.

If a student persists in consistent negative behavior, the student will be referred to the secondary office for further discipline. The Dean will determine the extent and severity of discipline necessary to produce the change of behavior needed. The discipline administered at this level may include but is not limited to such things as: additional counseling, longer-term detention, parental conference, disciplinary probation, in-school suspension (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS) or referral to the Superintendent for consideration of other discipline.

A student who commits serious infractions such as fighting, swearing, flagrant disrespect or defiance, or defacing school property will be sent immediately to the appropriate principal for discipline. Students who continue to exhibit negative behavior will be asked to leave HCA.

The HCA administration reserves the right to search students’ belongings, lockers, cars and electronic devices brought on campus, at its discretion.

AREAS OF CONCERN

Dress Code: Students are expected to comply with the standards of dress that have been outlined in this student handbook. Parents are strongly encouraged to check compliance with dress code before a student leaves home. Failure to comply with dress code will result in disciplinary action. If, in the opinion of Administration, modesty is compromised, students will be asked to change or parents will be required to bring other clothing before the student is allowed to return to the classroom. Repeated violations of dress code may require parental conference, suspension, or other discipline up to and including the possibility of expulsion from school.

Communication: Student emergencies requiring a call home may be requested through the appropriate principal’s office. The respective office representative will determine, in its opinion, if the call is warranted.
Messages to staff and teachers may be left on their voice mail. School office staff will deliver emergency messages for students. Electronic devices are now being incorporated in the curriculum of many classrooms. Students will be permitted to use their personal electronic devices in a manner that is outlined as acceptable by the instructor and under that instructor’s direct supervision. Unless being used under a teacher’s direct supervision and instructions, students will incur a warning (per quarter), lunch detention, after school detention, ISS or OSS for repeated offenses. The use of electronic devices is a privilege and can be revoked.

**Cell phones:** *Student cell phones must be completely turned off between the hours of 8:00a.m. and 3:00p.m.* They may not be used during school hours, unless otherwise specifically instructed and directly supervised by a faculty member. HCA does not accept responsibility for loss or damage to phones or electronic devices.

**Usage of Student-owned Electronic devices** Ear buds/headphones may not be worn on campus during school hours. International students may be allowed to use a standard translator at the teacher’s discretion.

**Dishonesty:** Cheating on tests, quizzes, or homework is a very serious offense. First offenses will result in a “zero” and will be referred to the Dean. Additional offenses will result in further discipline up to and including the possibility of expulsion. This policy also applies to plagiarism.

**Weapons on Campus:** HCA is strongly committed to providing a safe campus for its students. Any student bringing a weapon to school will be subject to immediate suspension and may be expelled.

**Fighting:** Students who engage in fights at school may be subject to immediate suspension and may be expelled.

**Drugs, Alcohol, Use of Tobacco:** Students who engage in the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco on or off campus will be subject to immediate suspension and may be expelled. Students may be asked to submit to drug and/or alcohol testing at the discretion of HCA administration. Refusal to comply with a request for drug and/or alcohol testing may result in immediate expulsion. In the event that a student is found to be in possession of any illegal substance, HCA administration will call the appropriate law enforcement agents.

**Public Displays of Affection:** Students must refrain from public displays of affection. Boyfriends/girlfriends must observe a 6” rule and must not engage in hugging and/or kissing. All incidents will be referred to the Dean.

**Immorality:** Students must avoid all immorality and be committed to lives of purity. Students must not bring anything inappropriate to school by way of pictures, books, magazines or electronic devices. Any inappropriate Internet usage by students may result in the loss of privilege to access the Internet and may result in further disciplinary measures. All immorality will be considered serious and will result in disciplinary measures up to and including the possibility of expulsion.
**Skipping Class/School/Leaving Campus without Proper Authorization:** Skipping class/school or leaving without appropriate permission will result in an ISS. Recurring offenses in this area will result in a discipline up to and including the possibility of expulsion. (Note: Students arriving 20 minutes or later from lunch are classified as skipping class.)

**Driving/Car Problems:** Students must obey the speed limit as posted (not to exceed 7mph) in the parking lot and should drive with the utmost caution and safety. Failure to do so may result in discipline measures and/or the loss of driving privilege. Students must not leave campus without authorization and must not go to their vehicles during the day.

**Profanity:** Use of profanity is never appropriate. Students will be disciplined accordingly.

**Bullying:** Every student at HCA has the right to feel comfortable and safe at school. Bullying will not be tolerated. Students who intimidate harass or otherwise victimize fellow students verbally or physically, especially regularly or routinely, will be disciplined accordingly.

**Lunch Detention**
If lunch detentions are assigned by teachers or Administration, the student is to serve the detention at the next lunch period. Students will report to the designated teacher and eat their lunch in isolation. Lunch detention not served will result in an after-school detention. If a student is issued a fourth lunch detention in one quarter, it will be converted into an after-school detention. Parents will be notified of all detentions by e-mail.

**One Hour After-School Detentions**
If after-school detentions are assigned by teachers or Administration, the student is to serve the detention the Wednesday following the infraction from 3:05-4:05pm. (Students absent on the day of the detention will serve the detention the following Wednesday). Parents are notified by e-mail and followed up by a phone call from the teacher issuing the detention to the parent who must make arrangements to pick up their child after detention has been served or the child will be placed in the After School Care program and charged accordingly. Detentions not served, or if a student is issued a fourth after-school detention in one quarter, will be converted into a one day In-School Suspension (ISS).

**In-School Suspension (ISS)**
When a student needs to be removed immediately from class due to disruptive, disrespectful behavior or other such violation of discipline, he or she will be placed in ISS. Students will receive a 2-point per day grade reduction from the quarter average of every class that is missed due to a full day ISS. If a student is issued a fourth day of ISS in one quarter, it will be converted into a one day of Out-of-School Suspension (OSS).

**Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)**
A student may be suspended from school if the usual procedures of in-class correction by the teacher and after-school detention or ISS prove ineffective or if the nature of the infraction is serious enough to require such action. Prior to suspension, the student, parents and Administration will discuss the conditions of suspension and criteria for readmission to school.

Very specific changes in attitudes and actions will be expected prior to readmission. A readmission parent-administrator conference may be necessary for the student to return to school. All work (class work, tests, quizzes, and homework) missed during the suspension must be made up. Students will receive a 4-point per day grade reduction from the quarter average of every class that is missed during an OSS. During OSS, the student is not permitted on campus and is restricted from participating in or attending any school activities.

**Expulsion**

Expulsion will be recommended if it becomes apparent that the school will not be able to meet the needs of a student, or if the student repeatedly violates school policies. Expulsion may also be recommended for unresolved academic or disciplinary probation, or failure to correct the deficiencies specified in probationary admissions. When expulsion is recommended, the child will be placed on OSS until the expulsion recommendation is reviewed and approved by the school administration. Readmission the following school year is possible only after an administrative evaluation/interview is held and upon approval of the school administration.