



*Integrating Classical Education with A Biblical Worldview*

## **Grammar School Staff & Volunteer Handbook**

**(revised May 2013)**

**Ad maiorem Dei gloriam!**

*(For the greater glory of God!)*

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## **EMPLOYMENT**

All employees and volunteer staff of Haw River Christian Academy (HRCA) must read the Organization Handbook, Parent-Student Handbook, and Staff & Volunteer Handbook prior to beginning employment. It is important that all staff members understand, subscribe to, and uphold all policies and procedures within the desired educational and professional environment of HRCA.

This document contains information regarding many of the policies and procedures of HRCA. These policies provide a framework, which is a condition of employment. Labor relation laws require that all employers maintain a written policy that is applied non-discriminately to all employees. We not only believe this should be true of those who lead HRCA within the confines of the law of labor, but believe it should be true of us as Christian co-laborers as we conduct ourselves in professional employer/employee relationships.

### **Disclaimer**

This manual is intended to outline the employment policies, procedures, and benefits of Haw River Christian Academy. As the school grows, it is hard to anticipate future needs and situations. As a result, the Board and its administration reserves the right to modify, supplement, rescind or revise any policy, benefit, or provision from time to time, as it deems necessary or appropriate. Employees will be notified of any policy changes, additions, or deletions.

### **Equal Opportunity Employment**

Employees are hired solely on the basis of HRCA's personnel requirements and the qualifications of each individual candidate. Employees are required to sign a Statement of Faith and submit to a criminal background check. References provided by employment candidates will also be contacted. These include previous employers, previous academic institutions, and personal references.

### **Criminal Convictions**

Criminal convictions are taken seriously at HRCA. Any applicant who has been convicted of a criminal offense may not qualify for employment. Furthermore, conviction of a crime while employed at HRCA may result in termination of employment.

### **Code of Conduct**

Employees and volunteer staff of HRCA are to conduct themselves in a responsible, professional, ethical, and Christ-like manner. The code of conduct is intended to guide and not inhibit. It is understood that the code does not cover every possible situation.

Generally, no conduct is appropriate which is disruptive, unproductive, immoral, unethical, or illegal. Employees of HRCA shall be expected to abide by the very highest ethical and moral standards within and outside of HRCA, both on and off the school campus. Each employee should give his/her best in conduct, appearance, and professionalism to those who are employed by, enrolled in, or participating in the

activities of HRCA. For the sake of the testimony of the school, report any unethical or dishonest behavior to the respective supervisor immediately.

All employees are to strive to maintain a Christ-like attitude at all times. Constant or repeated complaining in regard to co-worker(s), administration, Board, or other school decisions, will be considered indicative of a critical spirit and will be viewed as unacceptable. No employee should ridicule or mock other individuals who are image bearers of Jesus Christ. If attitudes persist which are detrimental to the school's goals, a period of probation will be established with an improvement plan implemented.

The HRCA administrative team members and Board will investigate reported misconduct and determine appropriate means for proper resolution. Employees found to be conducting themselves in an unethical manner may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

HRCA is a family-friendly organization. Because co-workers and student families may also be friends, the potential to blur personal/professional lines often presents itself. Under no circumstances should any HRCA employee or volunteer staff discuss any school-related confidential information with those who are not directly employed by HRCA, and then only on a "need to know" basis. Appropriate confidentiality will be expected to be observed in regard to pupil, parent, co-worker, and other school matters.

Under no circumstance should any HRCA employee discuss any student's or co-worker's private information with anyone not employed by HRCA or with any HRCA employee in a public setting, and again, only in a "need to know" basis. Personal/confidential information may be overhead, even though there may be a genuine attempt to maintain confidentiality. For the sake of the school's professional reputation, please strive to fulfill these goals.

### **Job Descriptions**

Employees, regardless of position, shall be given a job description upon employment with HRCA to read and sign. The job description summarizes the duties and responsibilities for each employee. HRCA administration reserves the right to revise and update job descriptions, verbally and in writing, as it deems necessary and appropriate.

### **Church Attendance**

The intent is to ensure that all employees are under the care, instruction, and oversight of a pastor and church government and are involved in Christian fellowship. All staff and faculty members are required to belong to and regularly attend any local evangelical Christian fellowship.

### **Alcohol, Drugs, & Illegal Substance Abuse**

Possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or illegal substances is not permitted on HRCA property, or while on duty in employment at HRCA. Furthermore, employees are not permitted to report for duty while under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other illegal substances. Employees failing to adhere strictly to this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Report any suspicious activity related to this policy to your immediate supervisor or Board member.

## **Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment**

While some amount of stress may be expected in any workplace, all employees of HRCA shall be allowed to work in an environment that is free from undue stress and harassment. It is the objective of HRCA to provide a working environment free from discrimination and conduct commonly referred to as sexual harassment. The EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) has provided a broad definition of sexual harassment. It is general in nature and may not always be clear when evaluating everyday situations.

“Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment.
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.”

Sexual harassment refers to behavior that is inappropriate in the workplace because it is offensive, unwelcome, and would not occur but for the sex of the offended person. Both sexual harassment, and accusations of it, are disrupting to the work environment. If an employee or co-worker experience what is believed to be sexual harassment or harassment of a non-sexual nature, it should be promptly reported to the immediate supervisor. The administrative team, with the help of the Board, will investigate any employee, regardless of job position when such allegations are made. Based on available information, HRCA will take appropriate action and will communicate results on a need-to-know basis. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination will be taken against any individual for sexual or other harassment charges determined to be valid.

HRCA adheres to the guidelines outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook regarding any event or allegations of sexual harassment, abuse, or child abuse.

## **Employment Evaluation**

All new employees will be under “evaluation” the first three (3) months of employment. The immediate supervisor will be responsible for evaluating performance, aptitude, and compatibility with co-workers. After the first three (3) months, the employee should expect a minimum of one (1) evaluation per school year. All evaluations will be relative to the employee’s job description.

## **Employee Assessment & Development**

In conjunction with each employee’s job description and annual review, HRCA administration intends to enable staff members to grow in his/her professionalism and work experience. Regular assessments are based not only on the individual job description, but to make sure the focus of the position is aligned with the school’s mission and priorities. This will determine any modifications and enable assistance in the staff member’s development, effectiveness, and achievements.

During the annual assessment, or as otherwise determined, the supervisor and employee should address the following:

1. The role of the position.
2. Key functions of the job.
3. Priorities and objectives.
4. Key concerns, communications, and other expectations.
5. Resources that are available to achieve priorities and objectives.

Employees, during the course of the school year, should demonstrate ownership of their roles by:

1. Updating his/her administrator on a timely basis as to progress, difficulties, need for guidance, etc. in for meeting objectives and expectations.
2. If any changes are made, the supervisor will document them.

### **Wage & Salary Disclosure**

Compensation programs are confidential between the employee and the school. Disclosure of wages and compensation to any third party or other employee is prohibited and could be considered grounds for termination.

### **Termination of Employment**

Termination of employment at HRCA may take place under the following circumstances:

1. **Voluntary suspension:** Employees may choose to voluntarily resign at the culmination of a standard work agreement period.
2. **Unforeseen circumstances:** Due to events such as death, disability, school closure, etc., the employee may not be able to continue his/her work.
3. **Non-renewal of Work Agreement:** At the normally scheduled time for re-signing the annual Work Agreements, the employee may not be offered a new Work Agreement.
4. **Suspension:** The Headmaster/Board may, at any time, immediately suspend an employee for conduct not in keeping with the standards of HRCA.
5. **Dismissal:** The Principal may recommend to the Headmaster/Board the immediate dismissal of an employee.

### **Personnel File**

HRCA maintains a confidential personnel file for each employee. Files are controlled by management. Employees must acquire permission to view his/her personnel file by the immediate supervisor. These files are the property of HRCA, therefore no documents may be altered or removed by the employee. Every reasonable effort is made to keep the information contained in these files confidential. Access is limited to the administrative team members who require access to perform their job functions. Copies will not be distributed to any third party unless mandated to do so by a court of law.

# STAFF POLICIES

These are in addition to the policies outlined in the Organization Handbook and Parent-Student Handbook. All HRCA employees and volunteers should know and uphold these policies.

## Code of Ethics

In order to maintain the testimony of Haw River Christian Academy as a Christian school, all teachers, staff members, and representatives of HRCA are expected to conform to biblical standards of behavior at all times.

## In Loco Parentis

*(Fully defined in the HRCA Organization Handbook)*

The Latin phrase *in loco parentis* means “in place of the parents.” In order to ensure that parental authority over the education of their children is respected at HRCA, all staff members and volunteers are to remember that they do not function above parental authority, but rather with delegated authority from the parents.

## Reverence Policy

To ensure that God's name, character, and truth are honored and respected at HRCA in all areas of instruction, especially Bible classes and related activities, proper respect and consideration of God's character will be given. Specifically, class songs, skits, stories, and discussion that include references to the name and attributes of the Lord must be consistent with biblical principles. Things to avoid, but are not limited to, include:

1. Silly or trite references to Jesus Christ and His work on the cross.
  - a. Implying, directly or indirectly, that all the students are Christians.
  - b. Mockery of angelic powers, whether demonic or heavenly.
  - c. Emphasis on good feelings or works, vs. humble obedience and grace.
2. For the sake of the students' spiritual training and the work of HRCA, joyful encouragement and instruction in reverential knowledge of the Lord is necessary, honored, and respected during the school day and at all school functions.

## Staff & Student Relations

In order to facilitate proper, professional relationships and inhibit potential sinful, destructive behaviors between staff and students, the following guidelines are to be understood as representative of the practices and philosophies of Haw River Christian Academy. More specific guidelines conforming to this policy may be issued by the appropriate administrators, as necessary.



**Guidelines:**

1. Staff members are to remember that they serve as professional, adult role models before the students (Titus 2:7,8). Relationships between staff members and between staff members and students are to be friendly and courteous, not familial or intimate.
2. Staff members are to be careful that any physical contacts and verbal interchanges with each other and with students avoid even the appearance of impropriety (I Peter 2:12). Flirtation, sexual innuendos, casual disrespect toward authority, excessive familiarity, etc. are examples of the kind of unprofessional and inappropriate behavior that will not be tolerated. Necessary and cautionary measures required to limit these kinds of behaviors should be corporately and individually taken.
3. If it is necessary for a staff member to spend time alone with a student or staff member of the opposite gender, it should be arranged that they are easily visible to the public (e.g. an open door, windowed room, etc.)
4. Staff members shall not travel alone in a car with one student.

**Sick/Emergency Leave**

This policy is designed to provide a consistent standard by which administrators can determine and authorize special requests from staff members needing Emergency/Sick Leave and to make any necessary salary decisions.

**Definitions:**

1. Staff -- all teaching, administrative, and secretarial staff members
2. Sick Leave -- unplanned, but necessary time off for typical illnesses (flu, colds, etc.)
2. Emergency Leave -- unplanned, but necessary time off due to serious circumstances such as illness (personal or family), death in the family, injuries, etc.

**Guidelines:**

1. Staff members who need Sick Leave should contact the appropriate administrator and let he/she know the circumstances and potential loss of time related to their problem. Each staff member shall have the equivalent of five (5) days for Sick Leave use per school year. Sick leave does not accumulate or carry over if it is not used.
2. Staff members may be granted up to five (5) consecutive days Emergency Leave without any loss of pay should the circumstances of the emergency be in the nature of the following:
  - Extended recovery from injury or illness, but not requiring hospitalization.
  - Loss of family member and resulting funeral attendance.
  - Illness or injury of immediate family member (necessitating staff member's presence).
  - Circumstances resulting from wife giving birth.

3. The Headmaster is authorized, when it is deemed appropriate, to grant a staff member full pay for an additional, consecutive five (5) days, for a total of ten (10) maximum. Circumstances to consider in such a grant would be similar to the following:

- Loss of pay would greatly aggravate the staff member's current crisis.
- In all probability, the staff member will be able to return to work no later than the end of the consecutive ten (10) days.
- The staff member has demonstrated through time and practice a high degree of reliability and punctuality.
- The unique circumstances of the current emergency make it highly unlikely that another such situation will occur within the foreseeable future (at least the current school year).

4. Though pay may not be issued, a staff member may request and be granted further time off (beyond the five days in #2), if necessary.

5. Allowable Emergency/Sick Leave days, like the Personal Leave days, are not accumulated from year to year.

6. If a staff member's emergency situation requires a prolonged - more than ten (10) days - absence from work, the reasons for the absence and the anticipated events will be presented to the Headmaster for a case-by-case decision as to salary and substitute issues.

7. Haw River Christian Academy follows the Family Medical Leave Act, which stipulates that employees are eligible for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave each year for any of the following reasons:

- for the birth and care of the newborn child of an employee;
- for placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care;
- to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or
- to take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

8. If a female staff member becomes pregnant while under a work agreement with the Academy, under the direction of her husband and doctor, she may work as long as considered wise. If she needs to leave before the final working date stated on the work agreement, a replacement will be obtained to fill the entire remaining period. If the new mother is a teacher and desires to return to work the next year, it should be understood that the Academy recognizes the family's authority to make that decision, but that Haw River Christian Academy does not want to encourage or endorse any form of institutional day care.

### **Personal Leave**

Personal Leave is understood to be any planned, non-emergency time taken by any faculty member away from what would otherwise be his/her normal working hours/days. That is, for whatever daily length of time normally devoted to work at the school, the faculty member may take Personal Leave for up to three (3) increments of their working time, without forfeiture of pay. For example, if a teacher has only two (2) classes per

day, he/she may take Personal Leave equal to missing each of those classes three (3) times.

Faculty is understood to mean all administrative and teaching personnel, i.e. non-hourly employed personnel.

The following guidelines are to be adhered to by the faculty member desiring Personal Leave and the administration in granting the leave:

1. All faculty members of Haw River Christian Academy may request up to three (3) days (as defined above) of Personal Leave each academic year.
2. Requests for Personal Leave should be submitted in writing (*see appropriate form*) to the appropriate supervisor at least one (1) week prior to the planned leave. Granting leave on shorter notice is at the discretion of the Principal.
3. Teachers should ideally schedule Personal Leave on teacher workdays – when no substitute teacher will be needed.
4. The arrangements for substitutes should be made by the faculty member and approved by the appropriate administrator.
5. It will be the Principal's responsibility to grant and record all Personal Leave days taken by faculty members. Bookkeeping will be notified only when Personal Leave is desired without pay or leave time has exceeded the granted number of paid days.
6. No pay will be received for more than three (3) days of Personal Leave taken during the academic year.
7. Personal Leave days are not to be accumulated from year to year.

### **Substitutes**

When a teacher plans leave time, it is his/her responsibility to secure a substitute teacher for the entire time of absence. Substitutes must be chosen off the HRCA Substitute List or approved by the Lead Teacher and/or Principal. Prior to securing a substitute, the teacher should check with the Lead Teacher about any concerns or thoughts regarding the teaching arrangements. Any changes to the dates should be communicated to the substitute and Lead Teacher. The Principal should be notified accordingly for bookkeeping and pay schedule adjustments.

Teachers should have a substitute folder prepared for unexpected absences. This alleviates stress on administration to pull together lesson plans for the day. For planned absences, all teachers are expected to prepare in advance all plans and materials for the substitute, to include scheduling a time to review them with the substitute and/or Lead Teacher.

### **Holidays**

In addition to the above policies, staff members can expect the following holidays as reflected in the yearly school calendar:

New Year's Day	Good Friday and Easter Break
Memorial Day	Labor Day
Thanksgiving Break	Christmas Break

## **Dress Code**

All employees (teachers, administrators, office personnel, volunteer staff) serve as models of adult Christians to the students. Therefore, the appearance and dress of faculty members is to be always given serious attention.

HRCA encourages employees to dress professionally, with consideration given to maintaining a comfortable, yet professional appearance. Appropriate attire should be worn at all times in keeping with commonly recognized standards. Staff and volunteers should be considerate of the school's image and culture, as well as their image with parents, students, and co-workers. Here are some specific guidelines:

1. No t-shirts, jeans of any color, dirty or torn clothing, shorts, sweat suits or lounge wear, or similar casual apparel are not to be worn unless required for a field trip (or other pre-approved activity) of a nature that would damage good clothing.
2. Women are encouraged to wear dresses as frequently as possible. Make-up and jewelry are to be used sparingly. Men are encouraged to wear sport or dress slacks, ties, and jackets. Hair, including facial, should be neat and clean.
3. Maturity and modesty in dress, appearance, and overall behavior is required.

## **Computer, Internet, and Email Use**

HRCA provides computers (office only), wireless internet, email addresses, and some technical support as resources to increase efficiency and effectiveness for staff members. HRCA prohibits the use of technology in ways that are immoral, disruptive, offensive, or harmful to others. Misuse includes, but is not limited to, communication of ethnic slurs, offensive jokes, or any material that shows disrespect to any individual or group. Employees may receive personal emails as they would personal letters; however, employees may not use the email system to promote commercial ventures, political causes, and organizations not related to the mission of HRCA.

All internet usage is limited to job-related activities (research, communications, etc.) and occasional personal use that does not interfere with employees' duties, responsibilities, and commitment to HRCA. A quick check of weather or news is acceptable. Extended use for personal entertainment (Facebook, computer games, etc.) or financial gain is not acceptable during working hours. The services provided to employees are the property of HRCA, therefore it reserves the right to monitor internet traffic and any access to data composed, transmitted, or received through on-line connections and/or stored in the school's computer systems.

The authorized use, installation, and copying or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material on the internet is expressly prohibited. Abuse of internet policies and/or laws will result in disciplinary action.

## **HRCA Social Media Guidelines**

### **General Provisions**

1. This policy applies to the use of computers and information technology (IT), including: the internet; internet communication tools including social media, email, and other forms of electronic communication; telephone based communication; photocopy/scanning; and

video/audio recording equipment. This policy applies to the use of school-owned equipment or privately owned equipment used by an employee at school or in a manner that identifies the individual with the school. This policy applies to the use of any internet or social media accounts associated with the school or accessed by school-paid access methods.

2. The equipment and IT tools used by HRCA provide vast informational and educational capabilities that can help us all do our jobs better, but not at the expense of the productivity of our staff, the security of our students, or the honor of the name of Christ. HRCA encourages the use of electronic media in order to be effective and efficient in our communication. However, the electronic media and services provided by the school are HRCA property, and their purpose is to facilitate school business.

### **Internet and Electronic Media**

Administration is responsible for protecting the integrity of the school by developing guidelines for the use of social networking by school employees. We believe, as in all areas of daily life, an employee's use of social media can be a reflection of the school, whether or not the school is specifically discussed or referenced.

Therefore, the following guidelines are to be followed by all HRCA employees:

1. Employees are expected to use internet access in a professional manner, primarily for school-related research and communication. Exemplary behavior must be exhibited by all employees as representatives of Christ's church and of HRCA.
2. Employees may conduct non-business research or browsing during breaks, or outside of work hours, provided other usage policies are adhered to. Limited use of IT resources for personal, non-school purposes is understandable and acceptable, as is the case with personal phone calls or the occasional email. As laborers in Christ at a Christian school, we are to model good stewardship of our time and resources to each other and our students.
3. Offensive and/or sexually explicit documents may not be accessed, displayed, printed, archived, stored, distributed, edited, or recorded using school resources.
4. No employee may use HRCA computers (or personal computers), servers, networks, email accounts, or other IT sources to knowingly download or distribute pirated software or data.
5. Intentional use of any school resources, including IT, for any illegal activity is grounds for immediate dismissal, and HRCA will cooperate with any legitimate law enforcement activity in that regard.
6. Any employee attempting to disable, defeat, or circumvent any school security systems (firewalls, proxies, screening programs, etc.) may be subject to immediate dismissal.

### **Non-Discrimination and Monitoring**

1. Electronic media may not be used for knowingly transmitting, retrieving, or storing any communications that are of a harassing nature, or are of a defamatory or threatening nature, or are for "chain letters" or pyramid schemes, or are for any other purpose that is illegal. The use of HRCA electronic media for solicitation or promoting of a commercial interest is forbidden.

2. Use of school equipment, internet access and email accounts will be subject to monitoring for appropriate usage. Electronic information created and/or communicated by an employee using email, word processing, voice mail, telephones, internet, etc. will generally not be monitored by the school. However, the school reserves the right to review any employee electronic files and messages and usage to the extent necessary to ensure that electronic media and services are being used in compliance with the law and with school policies. All existing school policies apply to conduct on the internet, especially those that deal with privacy, school records, student records, sexual harassment, and confidentiality.

## **Social Media**

Social networks allow people to broadcast their thoughts, images, and pictures on the Web and collaborate on documents and issues that are interesting and important. It is these elements that create the attention to this media. As wonderful as these tools are for bringing people together and accumulating knowledge, they can quickly develop into unproductive or divisive dialogues. Understand that opinions are not necessarily truth or sources of authority. Please exercise common sense, biblical charity, and professional maturity when using this mode of communication.

1. All school policies must be adhered to when using the social network.
2. On its accounts, HRCA reserves the right to edit, modify, or delete comments that are inappropriate and that violate established standards and protocol. Potential edits include, but are not limited to, removing some or all of the information that may threaten security or privacy of individuals or compromise the testimony and integrity of the school.
3. HRCA faculty and staff must keep in mind that as teachers and administrators at a Christian school, we are always on display to our students and parents and must conduct ourselves accordingly on social media.
4. Social media postings (on personal accounts) should not occur during school hours.
5. All postings on HRCA accounts that include HRCA staff/students in normal school day activities require prior administrative permission for public distribution.
6. When personally posting to social media sites or personal blogs, it must be clear that the views and opinions expressed are the author's own do not necessarily represent the views of HRCA.
7. Overall, employees must consider what impact their post will have on their long-term effectiveness as an HRCA staff member.
8. No student shall be granted internet access for use on personal electronic devices at school.

## **Staff/Student Guidelines**

To maintain a professional relationship with students, HRCA employees should exercise caution when communicating with students using social network sites and private communications such as email and phone calls. Therefore, the following guidelines must be followed by HRCA employees. Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in disciplinary action and may constitute grounds for termination.

1. Social networking accounts must not be tied to the employee's school email

- address.
2. Social media must not be used for official communications with parents or students.
  3. Employees must not initiate friend requests to students.
  4. Employees must not accept friend requests from students below high school (i.e. JK - 8).
  5. Employees must not initiate or facilitate any private communications with students using internet communication tools, including social media, email, or other forms of electronic communication.

Our goal is for all HRCA staff to have their walk with Christ be apparent in all they do and say, particularly in relationships with students and parents.

### **Telephones & Cell Phones**

Staff members should keep personal calls to a minimum. A staff member will be notified in person or via a written phone message if a professional or personal phone call is received during school hours.

Cell phones should be set to silent during school hours to avoid disruption. Teachers may elect to use their personal cell phone for brief calls only when students are not present in the classroom, such as planning sessions.

### **Smoking**

Smoking inside HRCA and its adjoining buildings or anywhere on the school campus is prohibited. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and visitors.

## STAFF GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

All staff members (full and part-time) and volunteers (regularly serving or substituting in the classroom or as staff) are responsible for adhering to the following guidelines and procedures at HRCA. Any changes or updates to these guidelines and procedures shall be communicated from the school's administration with everyone's awareness and understanding.

### Working Hours

**Teachers** - Monday-Friday, 7:45 AM-3:15 PM

**Secretary** - Monday-Friday, 7:45 AM-3:00 PM

**Part-time Staff** - Working hours are specified on personnel contracts. The days and times of employment shall be made known to all involved parties.

**Volunteers** - These arrangements shall be determined and agreed upon between administration and the volunteers. The days and times should be made known to all involved parties.

*Any time that working hours are not kept, the Principal and/or Lead Teacher must be notified via email or phone immediately, so that a leave decision and replacement can be arranged. A Leave Request form must be filled out, too.*

### Attendance

Punctual, regular attendance is mandatory for efficient job performance. Poor attendance, absence without notification or habitual tardiness, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Attendance at weekly, monthly, or other scheduled activities (staff training, for example) is crucial for the proper and professional development of the school as well as the presentation of investment and unity for our school community. All teachers should be present for Parent-Teacher conferences, Open House, Back-to-School Night, Corporation meetings, and other scheduled school-wide social events and programs.

### Compensation Schedule & Benefits

Salaries for all staff members (administration or teaching, full or part-time) are determined by the HRCA Board of Directors and Personnel Committee and specified in the work contracts. A work contract must be signed before employment is considered official. Benefits, in addition to salary compensation, include professional development training (summer training and selected higher learning courses) and tuition discounts.

Paychecks are distributed on the 1st and 15th of the month. Questions may be directed to the Bookkeeper or Principal.



## **Reimbursement of Expenses**

Any person wishing to purchase something with school funds should fill out a purchase order request. Purchase order request forms are available in the school office.

Requests should be turned into the school office. Purchase orders will be reviewed weekly, and notification will be made within one (1) week of submission as to whether the request is approved or denied.

Purchases typically fall into 3 categories: office supply, student supply, curriculum, or classroom budget.

If there is an immediate need, the purchase order form should still be submitted along with a phone call or email to the Lead Teacher and/or Principal to speed up the approval process.

ALL purchases must be pre-approved in writing (email is acceptable) before they are made or no reimbursement will be considered.

## **Faculty Meetings**

### **Monday Morning Prayer**

Staff members are encouraged to gather in the hallway for a morning prayer to begin the new school week before the doors are unlocked at 8:00 AM.

### **Weekly Meetings**

Full-time staff members are required to attend the weekly after-school faculty meeting. The purpose of this meeting is for announcements, reminders, or other information about the coming week. This time is also reserved to discuss more in-depth topics, provide procedural updates, evaluate and establish plans, aid in helping one another, communicate any concerns, build a team atmosphere, etc. Part-time staff members are also welcome to attend.

### **Curriculum Meetings**

Full-time and part-time teaching staff members are required to attend a monthly curriculum meeting after school has been dismissed. This meeting is designed to examine curriculum needs and teaching support.

### **Early Dismissal Days**

Full-time and part-time teaching staff members are required to attend special enrichment and training opportunities that are planned on Early Dismissal Days.

### **Staff Communication**

In addition to scheduled meetings, email and the school's management site will be regularly used to communicate vital information. Sometimes, photocopied notices may be placed in the designated staff mailboxes. It is the responsibility of each employee to regularly check email and mailboxes on a daily basis.

## **Medical Attention**

In the unfortunate case of a medical emergency, accident or illness, HRCA staff members will call 911 and notify immediate family members. Emergency transportation and medical costs will be the responsibility of the employee.

## **Housekeeping**

Each staff member is responsible for maintaining a clean, organized working area. This is crucial to our teaching and professional environment not only for health and functionality, but primarily to convey our stewardship, gratitude, and respect for God's provisions. It also communicates an attitude of care and order to visiting families and vendors.

Regular housekeeping is required, daily or weekly, as determined by administration. This includes, but is not limited to, vacuuming, sweeping, mopping, emptying trash, wiping down common germ conductors (e.g. door handles, desktops, bathroom faucets, etc.). Additional, less frequent needs may include carpet stain removal, touch-up paint, etc.

## **Staff Children**

For the sake of safety and security, and to minimize distraction to other staff members, the children of a staff member are expected to remain within their parent's classroom or office before school begins and after school ends. Staff members may want to coordinate an activity or routine for their children to do (homework, helping clean the classroom, etc.). Arrangements can also be developed amongst the staff to group their children together to do an activity (example: quietly studying or playing a game) with oversight from one or more staff members. In all matters, the goal is to enable administration and teachers to efficiently handle the tasks they need to do to start or end their school day with minimal interruption.

# GENERAL SCHOOL GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

## Student Transportation & Health

### Drop-off and Pick-up Time Frames

Grades	Drop-off	Start Time	Dismissal
Jr. Kindergarten	8:15-8:30 AM	8:30 AM	12:30 PM
Kindergarten	8:00-8:15 AM	8:15 AM	12:30 PM
Grades 1 and up	8:00-8:15 AM	8:15 AM	2:45 PM
Afterschool (K only)	not applicable	12:30 PM	2:45 PM

**Drop-off:** Junior Kindergarten parents are required to escort their children in and out of the building each day. Kindergarten parents are expected to accompany their children into the class each morning for the first 2 weeks of school. Thereafter they may use the transportation line. Parents of older students have the choice to walk with their child or watch their child(ren) enter the building from the parking lot.

The parents of younger students should use a “kiss-and-go” policy. The morning drop-off is a hectic time. Any parent who enters the building should not use this as a time to confer with the classroom teacher. The teacher may suggest setting up an appointment, or better time to talk, or even elect to converse via email or phone as determined by the topic.

**Pick-up:** At dismissal time, the students should be assembled in a quiet and orderly manner into the transportation line, grouping siblings. There should be at least three teachers on duty to help dismiss the children to the parents’ cars as they arrive.

### Transportation Plan

Most staff members will carry an assigned role in the rotation of drop-off and pick-up duties. The Principal shall coordinate this system and the assignments for each given day that will work for the entire school year. Scheduling conflicts should be brought to the attention of the Lead Teacher or Principal.

### Non-Parent/Carpool Student Pickup

A child should not be released to anyone other than the normal arrangement of a parent or legal guardian, unless there is a record of other approved drivers in the school office. A copy of the Non-Parent/Carpool Student Pickup form will be given to the teacher.

It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the teacher(s) and administration of any changes to the pick-up plan on a temporary or permanent basis. Permanent changes need to be recorded in the office. Temporary arrangements (grandparent, friend, etc.) should be done via a written note or phone call to the teacher or school office prior to the pickup. The teacher must ask for photo identification before releasing the student in these circumstances.

## **Student Attendance**

Teachers must keep record of student tardies and absences. These numbers should be recorded in the electronic school management site.

When a student arrives late, he/she must be directed to the office to receive a tardy slip before joining the class.

## **Student Illness**

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the teacher should involve the school office to assist in any immediate care and to help coordinate arrangements with the child's parents.

## **Recess**

Kindergarten students have one recess period per day. Students in Grades 1 and up shall have two (2) recess periods except on PE days when it is reduced to one recess after lunch. There must be 2 teachers at all times with the students. If the staff would like to coordinate a recess rotation, this can be discussed with the Lead Teacher. Weather permitting (*refer to Recess Weather Policy in Parent-Student Handbook*), recess should be outdoors as much as possible. An assortment of play equipment (jump ropes, balls, chalk, hula hoops, etc.) can be added to the mix for variety of activity besides the school playground.

## **School Culture**

School culture is an important aspect of student life. As a school, it's either allowed to develop on its own (in a good or bad way) or its guided in the way it is desired. The philosophy of HRCA, and many classical Christian schools before it, is that learning is most effective when order and discipline are in place. This environment is equally important for those who lead the school so that a professional, God-honoring atmosphere makes everyone's job enjoyable and productive.

All employees, not just teachers, should be familiar with the list of general school rules and the school's discipline policy. Beyond that, everyone at HRCA, staff and student alike, should demonstrate common courtesies and etiquette in their speech, actions, and attitude. This is in an integral part of setting the standard, tone, and culture of the school.

## **School Rules & Discipline**

All staff should know and be familiar with the rules and discipline policy as outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook. Staff members are expected to hold all students accountable to general school rules at all times. In addition, teachers should have their own list of classroom rules. The "Obey right away, all the way, in a Godly way" obedience motto applies at all times. Teachers must use the school-wide 1-2-3 obedience system within the classroom, including accountability charts and office visits.

## **Student Conduct & Classroom Management**

All students should be trained and held accountable to a school-wide set of conduct guidelines that are consistent from class to class and from year to year. These guidelines enable all teaching staff to use a common language and cues that all students will know, understand, and immediately follow. Example: Positions 1, 2, and 3

## **Etiquette (& Protocol)**

While often perceived as an old-fashioned way to interact with others, etiquette is biblically justifiable. Essentially, it is a way to equip students to walk in a manner worthy of the gospel. Practicing “love in the details,” which may seem mundane or of little importance to the academic setting, has a great impact in the community and society. Providing good, practical training in children demonstrates how a working knowledge of the Christian worldview applies to social actions, relationships, and culture.

In the Grammar school years, students like to learn facts. The best approach for incorporating basic etiquette is simply applying straightforward “do this, don’t do that” instruction. These common courtesies will develop a sense of respect, brotherly love, gratefulness, humility, and so much more. Ultimately, they lead to establishing behavioral habits by which others are treated with honor, deference, consideration, and kindness.

Contrary to society’s current tide of social norms, the Bible distinctly shows that there is a difference in the genders. The goal, as with every aspect of HRCA’s education program, is to prepare students to think and act biblically about all that they will face. Scripture and its principles are neither inappropriate nor outdated. Grooming gentlemen and ladies early on is a key way to demonstrate that. And it certainly goes a long way in the world!

All employees should apply and encourage HRCA’s Grammar School Etiquette guidelines in the classroom, in the hallway, during lunch, on the playground, during school assemblies, etc. Eventually, HRCA may consider teaching (optional/elective) Protocol classes in the Logic and Rhetoric years, in which students learn how to set the table and dine, conversation guidelines, grooming and dress, etc.

## **Uniform Checks**

Each classroom teacher is expected to perform a brief, daily uniform check. This should take place at the beginning of the day. If a student is not in compliance, then a Violation Notice should go home. (A copy of this notice should be given to the office.) The teacher and office should track the number of violations. After 5 have been accumulated, an office visit is required.

## **Parent-Teacher Fellowship (PTF)**

The Parent-Teacher Fellowship is designed to support the administrative and teaching staff. At the same time, it is designed to welcome and involve parents in the school. Not only do we want the students to love learning, we want the parents to love what their children are getting at HRCA! Involving them in wise and structured ways allows them to appreciate classical Christian education and better understand how to aid their children in academic success.

The Board, Headmaster, and the Principal will communicate pertinent information and needs to the PTF chairperson. Each classroom will have a Room Parent, who is trained to serve the teacher and other class parents. Teachers should meet regularly with their classroom parent, utilizing him/her to aid in the planning and tasks that could otherwise take away from teaching. The teacher shall maintain a line of professionalism, honoring confidentiality and keeping the best interests of the students and school in mind.

## **School Tours**

There will be a designated weekly time and day for regular school tours advertised to the public. It is very common that an individual family tour may occur, which may be scheduled to best accommodate the family and/or staff member. Staff will be notified as early as possible of the time frame and goals of a prospective family's visit. Most tours will include a classroom visit during instruction in a specific grade. Teachers should expect their students to acknowledge and properly greet these guests. They should also strive to dialogue with the parents about their class or answer any questions.

## **Safety Procedures & Emergency Drills**

### **Locked Doors**

For everyone's safety, all staff should ensure that doors are always locked during school hours. Doors should only be unlocked during the drop-off and pick-up time frames. The school secretary will be primarily accountable for this important safety task, however all staff members should help monitor the doors as many people are entering and exiting throughout the school day.

### **Visitors**

Visitors may ring the bell at the main entrance (double doors) and they will be greeted by a staff member. They must check-in at the office before proceeding anywhere else in the school. These guests will wear a "Visitor" badge, which indicates to all staff and students that there is a guest in the building. This assists in creating a safe and welcoming environment. Staff members and students should recognize and greet guests and provide assistance as needed.

### **Student Injuries & Emergencies**

If a student is injured during the school day, the teacher should involve the school office to assist in any immediate care, including first aid treatment. The office can contact the child's parents if their attention or attendance is needed.

Emergency situations that require professional medical attention should be immediately addressed by the teacher by calling 911 or quickly gathering an administrator to help.

### **Inclement Weather - School Delays or Closings**

The Principal will monitor weather forecasts to determine if any necessary precautions or decisions should be made contrary to the normal operating schedule. In conjunction with the Lead Teacher, all staff will be notified of any delays or closing decisions as soon as possible.

### **Fire Drills**

Refer to the emergency exit plan posted in each room. Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis, announced or unannounced, and should occur in the following manner:

When the alarm sounds for a fire drill (or actual fire), all persons are to go quickly and quietly to the exit determined in advance for each class. Students proceed as a group to the designated outdoor area. The last person exiting a classroom should turn off the lights and close the door. Students gather silently with their classmates while the teacher takes attendance. When the return signal is given, everyone should return

quietly and in a line to the classroom. (Primary and secondary exit paths are posted just inside the doors of each classroom.)

### **Tornado Drills**

Refer to the emergency exit plan posted in each room. Tornado drills will occur at least once per semester, announced or unannounced, and should occur in the the following order and manner:

When the announcement is made for a tornado drill (or actual tornado), all persons are to go quickly and quietly as a group to the place designated by the classroom teacher. When they get to their safety area, students should sit with their backs against the wall, knees pulled up, heads bent down resting on the knees and arms hugging the legs. (Safety areas are the interior hallways just outside the classrooms.) Parents should not pick up their child(ren) from school during a tornado warning. Please wait until the warning has passed.

### **Lock In/Lock Down Drills**

Lock in/lock down drills are conducted on an as needed basis. These drills prepare the students for all other emergencies. Playground/field procedures are in place to clear the playgrounds/fields immediately should there be a need to do so. A lock in is when there is a general or specific localized threat and for the safety of the students the administration locks all entry doors and posts a notice on the main entrances and exits. The notices state that a lock in is in effect. Parents who come across these signs may be unaware of the potential danger and may call the school for admittance to the building. Lock downs are more rare and are handled similarly. This is an unannounced and imminent danger that may present itself. Procedures are in place for handling such emergencies.

### **Sexual Harassment/Abuse/Child Abuse Guidelines**

HRCA upholds a strict policy regarding any incidence of harassment or abuse, as outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook. A staff member should immediately report any concern to the Principal and/or Headmaster.

### **Telephones**

Students must have permission from their teachers to come to the school office and must obtain permission from the secretary to use school telephones. Cell phone use by students is prohibited in the classroom. Exceptions are made only by permission of the teacher or administration under special circumstances. Students may not use the password protected school internet at any time.

# TEACHING STAFF GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

## Grammar School (JK-6) Teacher Tasks

*(Refer to Job Description for specific, individual responsibilities.)*

### **Spiritual Leadership**

The teacher is expected to consistently exhibit love, joy, peace, and spiritual maturity before his/her students and the rest of the school. The teacher is expected to be a student and lover of the Bible, God's only written Word. He/She is to use the school's curriculum guide and the Bible in constructing daily Bible classes. Active, joyful participation in staff prayer, faculty meetings, assemblies, events and other school-related programs should be evident.

### **Classroom Management/Environment**

The teacher is expected to maintain a neat, organized, clean, and stimulating classroom environment for his/her students. This implies that the students will take an active part in cleaning and maintaining their room's appearance. The teacher should set up a simple, manageable class routine to accomplish basic tasks, e.g. taking attendance, homework collection, daily cleaning schedules, materials storage and distribution, etc. The teacher is expected to operate under a "No mess, less stress!" motto when departing at the end of the school day. The classroom's appearance should be tidy and productive, with morning work ready for the students' arrival the next day.

### **Classroom Decorum and Discipline**

The teacher should be very familiar with and able to apply the spirit, as well as the letter, of the school rules. An orderly (not necessarily silent) working atmosphere is to be the norm. Students should be aware of the class and school rules and be encouraged to exercise self-discipline. When administrative discipline is necessary, the teacher is expected to accompany the student to the office and give the Principal an accurate accounting of the student's offense. The teacher is expected to diffuse and deal with the vast majority of corrective discipline situations within the classroom.

### **Lesson Plan Preparation and Presentation**

The teacher should be familiar with and take into account the Seven Laws of Teaching. He/she should have a thorough knowledge of and interest in the subjects he/she is assigned to teach. These will normally include: Bible, reading, mathematics, science, grammar, composition, spelling, handwriting, history and/or geography. Also, in most grammar grades a working knowledge and interest in Latin, art, music, and physical education is necessary, though these are normally taught by other specially trained teachers. All subjects should be taught utilizing the objectives, materials, priorities, and methods prescribed in the curriculum guide. The teacher is expected to encourage the students to see how all subjects are interrelated, as parts of God's integrated universe. Clear language and appropriate vocabulary is also expected. A variety of teaching methods are to be used, as outlined in the curriculum guide. Teachers should work together and be familiar with the rest of the school's curriculum and teaching in order to better integrate and build upon learning. For example: The continued use of songs,



chants, and other tools from prior teaching is a good way to bridge prior learning with new information to students. (See HRCA Song & Chant handbook)

### **Student Learning**

The teacher should seek to stimulate and maintain the students' interest in the material. Recognition and reasonable compensation for individual needs is also necessary. A variety of techniques (in addition to testing) should be used to measure the students' progress (see the Lost Tools Chart). The grammar school curriculum guide is to be used as the basis for measuring the overall progress of the class and individual students.

A classroom portfolio should be developed to display examples of great teaching, learning, tools, and special memories within the class. This is a wonderful visual to share with new and prospective families.

### **Planning and Communications**

The curriculum guide must be used to establish long-range plans and develop unit plans. The teacher's lesson plans should reflect creativity and a good use of class time. All feedback from the Principal and Lead Teacher should be accepted as constructive for professional development and serve in the best interests of the school.

The teacher is expected to regularly communicate with parents via email, the school's management web site, communication journal/folder (JK-K) or homework binder (grades 1-6), and a weekly newsletter that is distributed on Fridays for the upcoming week. The newsletter should have a general message from the teacher (classroom story, special reminders, classroom needs, etc.), curriculum highlights chart (including dates for tests, project deadlines, etc.), spelling list, memory verse, calendar dates, etc.

Emphasis should be placed on getting to know the families well, plus letting them know what is happening in the class. The parents should feel welcome to visit or get involved with classroom events, needs, and tasks via the Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF). A classroom calendar (for the academic year) listing opportunities or signups for parents to participate or volunteer is encouraged. All planning should take into consideration the school-wide calendar to avoid overlap or any potential scheduling conflicts.

### **Professionalism**

The teacher should consistently and joyfully demonstrate dedication to HRCA by his/her work, punctuality, speech, attitude, dress and attention to duties.

## **The Seven Laws & Rules of Teaching**

**Law 1** – A teacher must be one who knows the lesson or truth or art to be taught.

**Rule 1** – Know thoroughly and familiarly the lesson you wish to teach -- teach from a full mind and clear understanding.

**Law 2** – A learner is one who attends with interest to the lesson.

**Rule 1** – Gain and keep the attention and interest of the pupils upon the lesson. Do not try to teach without attention.

**Law 3** – The language used as a medium between the teacher and the learner must be common to both.

**Rule 3** – Use words understood in the same way by the pupils and yourself -- language clear and vivid to both.

**Law 4** – The lesson to be mastered must be explicable in the terms of truth already known by the learner -- the unknown must be explained by means of the known.

**Rule 4** – Begin with what is already well known to the pupil upon the subject, and with what he/she has experienced, and proceed to the new material by single, easy, and natural steps to allow letting the known explain the unknown.

**Law 5** – Teaching is arousing and using the pupil's mind to grasp the desired thought or to master the desired art.

**Rule 5** – Stimulate the pupil's own mind to action. Keep his/her thought as much as possible ahead of your expression, placing him/her in the attitude of discoverer and anticipator.

**Law 6** – Learning is thinking into one's own understanding a new idea to truth or working into a habit a new art or skill.

**Rule 6** – Require the pupil to reproduce in his/her own thought the lesson he/she is learning -- thinking it out in its various phases and applications until he/she can express it in his/her own language.

**Law 7** – The test and proof of teaching done -- the finishing and fastening process -- must be a reviewing, rethinking, reknowing, reproducing, and applying of the material that has been taught, the knowledge and ideals and arts that have been communicated.

**Rule 7** – Review, review, review, reproducing the old, deepening its impression with new thought, linking it with added meanings, finding new applications, correcting any false views, and completely the true.

### **Teacher Assessments**

Classroom observations of teachers are mandatory for any educational institution that purports to be accountable to its patrons. Teaching performance must be evaluated to determine effectiveness and ways of improving. It is, therefore, in the best interest of all connected with HRCA, but especially the teachers and students, that regular, formal, positive evaluations be conducted. Simply put, evaluations are done to help our teachers teach better.

#### **Guidelines:**

1. All teachers, full or part time, should be observed once each semester, as a minimum.
2. New teachers should be formally observed at least once each quarter.
3. Job description and the curriculum guide are to be reviewed by both the administrator and the teacher as part of the evaluation process.

4. All evaluations are confidential, between the Principal and the teacher. At appropriate times, the Lead Teacher and/or Headmaster may be privy to evaluations.

### **Procedures:**

1. Prior to visiting a teacher's class for a formal evaluation, the Principal (or other approved curriculum and teaching representative) should:
  - a. Set a mutually agreed upon time for the observation.
  - b. Determine the lesson to be observed and what particulars, if any, the Principal will focus on. The teacher should be encouraged to ask the Principal for specific assistance related to those particulars.
  - c. Address any questions regarding how the teacher is to be evaluated.
2. The evaluation form and any comments should be filled out and given to the teacher within one day of the evaluation.
3. A post-evaluation conference should be arranged within three (3) days of the evaluation. Questions and comments regarding the evaluation should be addressed at this time and objectives for the next evaluation set. If the teacher has a concern regarding the evaluation and desires another evaluation be done before it becomes part of his/her personnel file, the Principal should comply with this request. This second evaluation should be arranged with adequate time allowed before the next, regularly scheduled evaluation. If after this follow-up evaluation there is still a disagreement about the teacher's performance, the teacher may appeal via the Grievance Policy to the HRCA Headmaster and then the Board.
4. Both the Principal and the teacher should sign the final evaluation form. The original form is to go into the teacher's personnel file and a copy made for the Principal and the teacher.

### **Board Visits**

Members of the HRCA Board will schedule visits during the school day at least twice per school year. These visits will enable them to observe and assess the teaching, administration, climate, and flow of the day to ensure that the vision and philosophy of HRCA is being carried out. Concerns and praises will be relayed to the Headmaster and Principal.

### **Teacher Development and Enrichment**

It is the goal of HRCA to create life-long learners in its students, therefore it is imperative that their mentors model and demonstrate a desire and active part in continuing their education. The following training and enrichment opportunities that are provided by HRCA include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ACCS sponsored teacher training
- ACCS annual national conference (June)
- ACCS newsletter articles
- ACCS conference audio and video tapes
- ACCS Certification and Accreditation - refer to HRCA's guidelines
- Classical Christian education books

- Classroom Portfolio
- CPR Training
- Observing other schools
- Observing peers
- On-site training (coordinated by Curriculum Committee)
- HRCA recommended reading list
- HRCA Book Club (faculty)

## **Curriculum**

### **Curriculum Guide**

Soon before HRCA opened its doors as a K-2 startup school in 2008, the small group of founding parents (serving as board members, staff, and school volunteers) agreed to subscribe to Rockbridge Academy's curriculum guide for the first 3-5 years. This is an ACCS accredited school located in Maryland. In July 2008, staff and teachers attended Rockbridge Academy's teacher training.

A curriculum guide serves as a road map. It is intentionally undeveloped into lesson plans. As educators, our job is to do the work by learning the material and creating plans from this. For some curriculum objectives, such as Math and Grammar, HRCA has purchased the nationally published and time-tested Saxon Math and Shurley English curriculum.

As HRCA has grown in size and years, we are dedicated to the beautiful and brilliant curriculum guide that Rockbridge Academy developed. Some adjustments are gradually being made to better fit HRCA's needs and philosophy. The goal is to eventually develop our own curriculum guide, but there is no intent to stray from the foundation and framework that Rockbridge Academy designed.

### **Lesson Plan Review**

Prior to the start of the school year, a Long Range Plan is due to the Principal. The current Unit Plans should also be provided to the Principal as they are completed or soon before they begin in class.

The Principal and oftentimes Lead Teacher will regularly review these plans. This review process will ensure accountability of each teacher's organization, planning, and applicability to the general curriculum guidelines and adherence to the philosophy of education as outlined in the Organizational Handbook. Additionally, the feedback provided by the Lead Teacher and Principal is designed to help the teacher better teach.

### **Lesson Plan Back-up**

Lesson plans are the nuts and bolts of HRCA. In the event of something as tragic as a fire, teachers must have a backup of their lessons and anything that may be difficult to replace. These lessons should be in the school's designated electronic storage system. Teachers who handwrite lessons (or parts of) should arrange to scan these for safe storage and reference if ever damaged or lost. Significant changes or updates to the lesson plans should also be made in the backup system.

## **Curriculum Inventory**

As HRCA grows, curriculum needs will expand and overlap. To ensure wise planning and spending, it is imperative that teachers mark all books (teacher or student) with the “Haw River Christian Academy” stamp located in the office. All books should be recorded in the Curriculum Inventory electronic document, managed by the office. This includes title, author, ISBN, and quantity.

Teachers should report any loss or damage to current materials so replacement and purchases can be arranged.

## **Secondary Doctrine**

Secondary doctrinal issues are those which are not addressed in the HRCA Statement of Faith (Article III of HRCA By-laws). In order to establish the limits of doctrinal teaching at HRCA, the following guidelines will be adhered to:

1. Classroom discussion of secondary doctrine should be on an informative, non-partisan level.
2. Teachers must be careful not to speak to the students in a manner that would cause offense to the parents.
3. Presentation of all sides of an issue is encouraged. (Acts 17:11)
4. The teacher should encourage the students to follow up any questions they have with their parents and pastor.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are encouraged to support curriculum objectives, but they must be approved by the Principal prior to advertising or planning in relation to budget, calendar, dress code, and other administrative considerations.

Teachers must distribute the appropriate permission slips and liability forms. No student or volunteer driver may participate without these signed forms. Ideally, staff members should not plan to drive any students unless for their own child(ren). This removes any potential liability off the school.

The room parent should be involved in the planning of a field trip to help reduce the amount of attention and communication required. The details that encompass a field trip need to be thoroughly planned and clearly communicated prior to the scheduled day, which includes the following:

- Departure and return times
- Location (*address or directions and phone numbers for location and HRCA contact numbers for drivers*)
- Lunch plans, if applicable (*bagged or parents send money*)
- Dress code (*comfortable shoes, jackets, sunscreen, etc.*)
- Car seats (*Parents must provide these for students who are legally required to ride in them.*)
- Carpool plan (*Calculate number of students and staff, plus any parent and sibling participants then assign carpool seats.*)
- Parent groups (*These should be pre-arranged for the sake of safety and better learning in smaller numbers.*)

The day of departure, teachers should:

- Pray as a group
- Review rules of field trip conduct (*representing school and God, use manners, stay together*)
- Travel with all documentation (*student permission and driver forms*)
- Make sure carpool and parent groups are together
- Communicate academic goals or any assignments related to the field trip

## **Academics**

### **Grading**

- Each teacher should devise his/her individual classroom grading system in terms of percentages for each component (classwork, homework, tests, projects, participation, etc.) to complete the final grade as determined by the HRCA grading scale.
- Teachers should aim for 10 grades per subject per quarter to get a well-rounded grade for the students.
- Rubrics are encouraged so that grading criteria is fully defined and clearly communicated.

### **Report Cards & Assessments**

Throughout each quarter, grades may be regularly recorded in the school management site. At the end of each quarter, a printout of the electronic report card must be presented to each student's parents at the Parent-Teacher conference. This printout should also include the ratings for specific areas of academic and conduct. Teachers must also generate an insightful Observational Profile for each student. This is a written paragraph or more that conveys details beyond the report card's grades - academic, social, and spiritual. It address praises and improvements, how the school and parents can work on certain areas with the student, etc.

### **Parent Teacher Conferences**

Conferences are scheduled at the end of each quarter during one of the two teacher workdays that occur during this time. Though these are highly encouraged, it is not mandatory that the parents attend. However, in any situation where there is concern about a student's performance or behavior, the parents must be called to determine if a better time could work. With proper communication throughout the school year, there should be no surprises with the parents during the conference! The conference should be tailored to serve as a dedicated time to review, assess, plan, etc. according to the circumstances.

During the conference, the teacher should present the student's report card and a written summary ("Observational Profile") of the student's performance, behavior, praises, concerns, etc. The report card and summary can be taken home after the conference, with the report card being signed by a parent and returned a few days later.

Grades are electronically stored in the student's file through the school year, with quarterly printouts presented during the conference along with the Observational Profile. the original being sent home at the end of the school year and a copy of it stored in the

student's folder. A copy of each quarter's written summary should also be stored with the report card.

The following guidelines can be applied to almost any scheduled conference with a family, but are specifically intended for the quarterly meetings:

1. Schedule each conference for about 15-20 minutes. Remind the parent(s) of this time frame at the beginning so everyone is mindful and maximizing of the time. If it looks like more time will be needed, schedule another conference to allow more time.
2. If at all possible, have both parents at the conference. Fathers and mothers view things differently and frequently serve as a good balance for each other.
3. Be prepared for the conference: know what you intend to cover, but allow time for some questions. Prepare a folder of the student's materials (assessments, classwork, etc.) to provide for illustration. Prior to the conference, prepare a brief written summary of the student's performance, praises, concerns, etc. that will accompany the written report card. Parents not only love to see their child's grades, but also hear about character development and any special stories and examples involving their child.
4. Be positive, especially in the case of a "problem" student. Enlist the parents' help and ideas on ways to improve the situation. For example: what do they do at home? is a good question. Seek more ways for the home and school to complement each other.
5. Be direct! Don't beat around the bush. If you have a concern or question, state it plainly and lovingly. Too much time can be wasted on vague references and many times the point is lost or misunderstood. The best way to accomplish this is to have the student's applicable class work, or similar examples available to show to the parents. The more concrete your reference, the better. (Keep records/work of each student. Don't rely on your memory.)
6. Sit with the parents, as opposed to behind your desk. It helps open up with communication if you are "equally" sharing. You take the lead and talk to both parents. The tendency is to talk to just the mom or let her do all the talking. Ask the dads specific questions, especially about discipline.
7. Stay on the point; don't go off on tangents. Also, without being rude, cut the time used on pleasantries. If you don't have much to discuss related to the school, say so, thank them, and prepare for the next conference. If it ends early, so be it.
8. Listen carefully to the parents! They may say a lot without saying much and it can help you better understand their child. Ask open-ended questions, when appropriate.
9. Write down any action or objectives for the coming quarter. At the end of the conference, remind the parents of any specific goals and plans that have been discussed. (You'll really impress them by referencing those specifics at the next conference and describing any actions taken.)

10. Be sure to write down and follow-up on any concerns or questions that will take some research on your part. Check with the Principal on any policy-related or confusing issue raised during the conference.
11. Never enter into a discussion regarding another student, even if the comments are positive. Parents talk to each other, and it's very easy to cause unintentional offense through second-hand conversations.
12. Be cordial, polite, and thank them for coming. Pray with parents only when you believe it would be appropriate.

A parent's signature is required before the report card printout is returned to school. All quarterly Observational Profiles and the signed copies of each report card printout will be filed in the student's folder at the end of the school year.