HORIZON CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

2026-27 Parent-Student Handbook

1270 Sawnee Drive, Cumming, GA 30040

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Section 1: Introduction/Overview

Welcome Message

Dear Parents and Students,

We are honored to have you as a part of the HCA family. This handbook is written with care as we view the use of this handbook as a tool to partner together. Our desire to be a God-honoring community requires mutual understandings, a community of grace, and reasonable and viable expectations of all community participants. Though we will never be able to cover every unique challenge and detail, this is our attempt to cover as much as possible.

We look forward to growing HCA together in the coming year as we pursue our common mission of preparing students to be world changers by partnering with families through Christ-centered education and community.

Sincerely,



Tom Shefchunas
Head of School

Mission Statement

Preparing students to be world changers by partnering with families through Christ-centered education and community.

Vision

HCA will be a leading private Christian school in Forsyth County in providing academic and spiritual training to develop lives that glorify Jesus Christ.

Core Values

- **We commit to follow Christ's lead daily.**
  "Then he said to them all, "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23
  "Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:37-38
- **We commit to value unity and the uniqueness of every person.**
  "Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all of its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body - whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free - and were all given the one Spirit to drink." 1 Corinthians 12:12-13
  "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6
- **We commit to continually improve individually and organizationally.**
  "And whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, and not human masters." Colossians 3:23
  "I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Philippians 1:6
- **We commit to pursue integrity individually and as a school.**
  "Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world." 1 Peter 2:12
- **We commit to parents as the primary spiritual leader of their child.**
  "These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." Deuteronomy 6:6-7
- **We commit to foster servant hearts.**
  "For you were called to be free, brothers and sisters; only don't use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement: Love your neighbor as yourself." Galatians 5:13-14
  "... whoever wants to become great among you will be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you will be a slave to all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:43-45

- **We commit to improve our community.**
  "And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone." 1 Thessalonians 5:14
  "And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:39-40
  "A new command I give to you: Love one another. As I have loved you. So you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:34-35

Statement of Faith

WE BELIEVE…

- The Bible, as originally given by God, is divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy, and the supreme authority in all matters of life, faith, and practice.
  1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21
- There is one God, eternally existent in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ was fully God, yet fully man, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life, performing many miracles. We acknowledge His substitutionary death, resurrection, ascension, and individual mediation for us, and eagerly await His personal return in power and glory.
  Matthew 28:19; Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 7:14; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Corinthians 15:3; John 11:25; Mark 16:19; Acts 1:11
- All people are created uniquely in the image of God to have fellowship with him but became alienated in that relationship through sinful disobedience. A reunion, called salvation, is possible only by faith in Jesus Christ, apart from works, through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit.
  Titus 3:5; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Genesis 1:26
- The Holy Spirit indwells the believer and enables us to live a holy life and to witness and work for the Lord Jesus Christ, uniting us as the Church, the Body of Christ.
  Acts 1:8; Ephesians 1:13-14; Galatians 5:16; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13
- Everyone will be resurrected - the believer to eternal life with God, the unbeliever to eternal separation from God.
  John 5:28-29; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:41; Daniel 12:2

Horizon Christian Academy is a private multi-denominational Christian School. Although we honor and respect all Christian denominational perspectives, it is not possible to cover all variations. All students and families can expect our holidays, celebrations, and spiritual life curriculum to follow along a protestant evangelical tradition in doctrine and practice.

Statement of Life and Conduct

HCA is committed to its institutional mission to prepare students to be world changers by partnering with families through Christ-centered education and community. Since the founding of the school in 2000, those core beliefs have formed the foundational truths from which it operates as an educational ministry.

As a Christian community, HCA distinguishes itself by its covenantal commitments guided by our statement of faith and core values with participating families and staff members. In addition, due to the complexities of the operations of a K-12 school that includes multiple denominations, we want to be clear

on some of the beliefs that will guide everyday decisions, policies, and school life. Our faculty, as ministers to our community, have committed to this statement and we ask all participating families to understand and be aware of it.

Our desire to be a God-honoring community requires that we seek to understand each other's perspectives, extend grace often, and hold reasonable and realistic expectations of our community's participants. It is the aim of HCA to promote Christian freedom by encouraging personal responsibility without becoming legalistic.

"In the essentials unity, in nonessentials diversity, and in all things charity." – Meldenius

- **Basic Assumptions** - HCA is dedicated to maintaining its identity as a Christian academic community of administration, Board, staff, and student families who will:
    1. Identify themselves as Christians by virtue of the grace of God and their personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
    2. Recognize the Bible to be God's inspired, infallible, and authoritative source of Christian doctrine and precepts.
    3. Possess a desire to grow in both knowledge and behavior because of a commitment to the work of the Trinity in our lives.
    4. Commit to regular participation in a local church and personal faith disciplines.
    5. Understand they have become part of a non-denominational, orthodox Christian community, in which unity is to be sought while diversity within orthodoxy is to be respected and valued.
    6. Understand that the Board of Directors is HCA's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application as it relates to HCA's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline.
    7. Be concerned and prayerful about the welfare of all individuals within the community.
    8. Assume responsibility for their own behavior as it reflects upon their Lord, the school community, and themselves, particularly in personal freedom where discretion, moderation, and restraint must be practiced.
    9. Carefully consider the images and comments they post to social media and how it reflects on themselves and the families of HCA.
    10. Accept the biblical obligation to submit to governing authorities, whether national, local, or institutional.
    11. Recognize that everyone has sinned and fallen short of the character and design to which God has called them, and that redemption for those sins is found only through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

- **Biblical Principles** – HCA's Board, administration and staff recognizes and affirms the following scriptural principles are foundational to life in our covenantal, school community:
    1. Life within the Christian community must be lived for the glory of God, daily conforming ourselves to the image of Christ, and recognizing the Lordship of Christ in all aspects of our shared work. (Matthew 22:36-38, I Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 3:9, 10, 17)
    2. An abiding love for and accountability to Jesus motivates all our actions in this community of believers. (John 15:12-17, I John 4:7-12)
    3. The words and actions of members in this community are not solely a private matter. They are called to pray for each other, go to each other in love when dissensions or concerns arise, and hold each other accountable for the implications of their attitudes and conduct. (Matthew 18:15-17)
    4. Attaining common goals and ensuring an orderly community life necessitates subordination of individual prerogatives. Christian freedom also includes the option of not doing some things to contribute to the common spiritual and emotional good of the students we serve as well as promote the betterment of Christian community of which we are a part. (I Corinthians 8:9-13, 9:19-23, 10:23-33)
    5. HCA recognizes that certain attitudes are expressly condemned in Scripture. These include, but are not limited to greed, jealousy, pride, lust, needless anger, an unforgiving or rebellious spirit, harmful discrimination, and prejudice. (Galatians 5:19-21, I Corinthians 6:9-10)
    6. God's Word prohibits certain behaviors. These include, but are not limited to: theft, lying, cheating, plagiarism, slander, profanity, vulgarity, any sexual activity outside of a Biblical marriage, pornography, drunkenness, immodesty, occult practices, and heresies. (Galatians 5:19-21, I Corinthians 6:9-10, I Timothy 1:9-10, Romans 1:26-27, Colossians 3: 5-7)
    7. The Bible defines marriage as a sacramental covenant between one man and one woman; God-designed human sexuality is expressed and affirmed within a monogamous, heterosexual marriage. (Genesis 2: 23-24, I Corinthians 6: 9-10)
    8. Christians are compelled by Scripture to believe that God creates life in the womb of a mother and that life, being divinely ordained, is sacred and should be protected and preserved by a Christian community. The Bible also affirms that the sexual nature and identity of a person is determined by God at conception. This God-given gender is recognized and verified by a legal document at the time of birth. (Psalms 139:13-15, Psalms 22:10-11, Galatians 1:15, Genesis 1:27)
    9. Scripture teaches that all of our actions should be God-honoring. We seek, therefore, to be selective in personal choices recognizing the influence of our decisions impacts the HCA community and the broader body of Christ. (Romans 12:2)

Section 2: Admissions

Admission

It is understood that being a student at HCA is a privilege and not a right. HCA seeks students and families that desire to be in a Christ-centered educational environment and students that are willing to put forth effort in their growth and improvement in all areas. We look for evidence supporting these traits in the application and during the interview process. As a covenant school, at least one parent or guardian should have a written statement of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as their Savior and a desire for their child to grow closer in their relationship with Jesus. In addition, families must sign the Acceptance and Agreement Acknowledgement Form in this handbook, recognizing support for the school's Statement of Faith and Statement of Life and Conduct, and operating policies.

Tours are conducted by appointment for prospective families and visitors. HCA encourages prospective families to submit applications and conduct family interviews by mid-March. Additional tours are arranged in April through June based on grade availability.

HCA does not discriminate based on race, color, or national origin in the administration of its educational policies, of its admission policies, or employment policies.

Enrollment Process

Step 1: Attend HCA Admissions Open House/Individualized Tour.

Step 2: Complete an online application at www.hcaga.org.

Step 3: Pay the $125 non-refundable application fee.
This fee is paid online once you have submitted your online application.

Step 4: Submit the following documents prior to the family interview.
Documents can be obtained for you from your current school by signing a transcript release form.

- Transcript Release
- Principal and/or Counselor Evaluation
- Copies of Standardized Test Scores
- Conduct/ Discipline records *Students with a major discipline issue within the last school year may not be considered for admission.
- Teacher evaluations
- Current grades/transcript
- IEP/504 (if applicable)
- Psychological Evaluation (if applicable)

Step 5: Participate in a family interview.
Once an application has been submitted, the Admissions Director will contact you to schedule a family interview. Both parents should attend family interviews as well as the prospective student. Following the interview, prospective students may be asked to take a math, writing and/or reading assessment.

Step 6: HCA Admission Committee meets.
Admissions decisions are determined by the Admissions Committee's evaluation of several factors which include information from the completed application, current school evaluations and documents submitted and the family interview.

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that all required information has been submitted to the Admissions Office. A student's file must be complete before it can be reviewed by the Admissions Committee.

Step 7: Final decisions are communicated to prospective families.

Please note: If applying for financial aid, families must complete all steps of the admissions process before any financial aid may be awarded.

2026-27 Tuition, Fees and Discounts

See Appendix A.

Financial Policies

You may either make a one-time payment in full or choose a tuition payment plan through our automatic tuition management system (FACTS). Automatic payments can be made from a checking or savings account or from select credit cards. A transaction fee will be charged on credit card payments.

Application Fees, Enrollment Fees and International Fees are non-refundable. 412 Program Fees and Senior Fees are non-refundable after commencement of classes.

Parents are required to contact the Business Manager immediately if they are unable to pay the monthly tuition. If a parent is more than 90 days late on a tuition payment, HCA Administration may remove the student(s) from the school.

Tuition Refund Policy

Application Fees, Enrollment Fees and International Fees are non-refundable. 412 Program Fees and Senior Fees are non-refundable after commencement of classes. Refund of any unused tuition will be calculated in accordance with the terms of the student's respective enrollment agreement.

Parents wishing to withdraw a child from school must provide written notice to the Head of School. The notice is to indicate the expected last date of attendance and be signed and dated by the Parent(s).

Records will not be forwarded to any school if tuition, fees, and/or fines are owed to HCA. No report cards or official transcripts will be issued until the account is paid in full.

Financial Aid

The vision of HCA is to be a leading private Christian school in Forsyth County in providing academic and spiritual training to develop lives that glorify Jesus Christ. As a privately funded school, the tuition for this academic and spiritual training is what ultimately allows HCA to thrive and grow. We recognize that future leaders and world changers may be students sitting within the walls and building on this campus. We want to be a driving force in educating and mentoring these students but understand that financial constraints may be present for some families. We are aware of these challenges and have established scholarships to aid those in need.

HCA's Scholarship Committee has been established to review and discuss the information provided by third-party organizations that have assessed the financial needs of families. All data and information shared within this committee is considered confidential. This committee understands the missions and founding principles of the school, and that HCA does not discriminate based on race, color, or national origin in the administration of its educational, admission, or employment policies.

No financial assistance is awarded unless a family has first applied through a financial aid portal. The committee will not award scholarships to applicants with missing information. Students MUST be enrolled to be considered for financial aid. This requires payment of an application fee (new families) and enrollment fee of $500 per student.

In the event the financial aid awarded to a student is not enough to make HCA a financially feasible option for a family, the family may request a refund request of the $500 enrollment fee. Withdrawal requests must be made within 10 days of the date the financial aid award is sent to receive a refund. Application fees are non-refundable.

HCA awards scholarships through various programs across the state of Georgia. The two most common accepted scholarships at HCA are through the Warrior Scholarship and Georgia Student Scholarship Organization (GaSSO). These programs are detailed below along with the specific criteria required of each applicant.

Financial Needs and Qualifications

HCA does not audit or review personal financial information for current or potential families. HCA uses a third-party organization through FACTS, to collect all personal information to perform the analysis requirements for financial needs. FACTS sends all data to HCA in a format that prioritizes the financial need of each applicant. The HCA Financial Aid Committee uses this data, along with external factors including, but not limited to, service to the school, and other factors that may be considered value-added opportunities for the school.

Final decisions are made based on four (4) main areas of focus. This criterion includes, but is not limited to,

1. **Available funding requested by applicants**. While we wish there were unlimited funds for scholarships, our budget only allows for a limited amount. With multiple applicants each year, we are forced to make tough decisions based on the funds we have available. Please be advised, while exceptions are made for extenuating circumstances, as a general rule, the committee does not award scholarships in excess of 40% of a student's tuition.
2. **All required documentation is submitted**. Consideration of financial aid requires multiple forms of financial records. This information is submitted by the applicant to a third-party organization (FACTS). That organization provides our committee with an overall recommendation for scholarships. The HCA Financial Aid Committee never sees the applicant's personal information (tax returns, W2's, etc.). The information provided simply advises how much is recommended based on the financial data submitted by the applicant. The Financial Aid Committee Chair is advised when all personal financial information is submitted and verified. The HCA Financial Aid Committee does not award aid until ALL information is submitted. In the event the committee receives an application without the required documentation, the committee will not award aid until all required information is submitted.
3. **Financial needs of the families**. Once the committee receives the recommendations from FACTS, the committee considers all financial needs and special requests. It is always recommended that families with extenuating circumstances, special requests, or considerations, submit a letter with their application. Please be advised that financial aid is discussed based on family need but is awarded per student.
4. **Outside funding and other discounts families already receive**. Each family's *net* out-of-pocket tuition is what the committee uses to assess financial awards.

It is important to know that scholarships are awarded based on annual reviews. Families must apply every year under the same requirements of submitting personal financial data to be considered for financial aid. Awards are not guaranteed from year to year. Scholarship amounts may vary based on the amount of financial aid available and the number of applicants.

Warrior Scholarship

HCA offers Warrior Scholarships within the school for families that need financial assistance. The school budgets an allotted amount each year that can be used for this scholarship. Families must be in good standing with the school. This is based, primarily, on the financial needs of the family. Scholarships are reviewed based on the information received from FACTS.

Georgia Student Scholarship Organization Inc. ("GaSSO")

GaSSO is a state-registered Student Scholarship Organization ("SSO"), as well as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, whose function is to facilitate the process of distributing tax credits in exchange for redirected tax payments to distribute funds for private school tuition scholarships.

These scholarships are available to specific students as a result of the 2008 passing of the Georgia Qualified Education Expense (QEE) Tax Credit Program. The program, as detailed in Georgia House Bill 1133, which allows Georgia residents to redirect their state income tax to fund scholarships at private schools in Georgia. Under this program, individuals and corporations can make their usual state tax payments directly to an authorized non-profit organization (like GaSSO), who will then fund scholarships at private schools in Georgia, including the school recommended by the taxpayer (i.e. HCA). By law, the taxpayer cannot designate their payment to specific students for scholarship awards. In accordance with this law, HCA does not allow parents to designate their GaSSO funds to specific students. These funds are directed to HCA from the SSO and are used to distribute fairly and confidentially as required by Georgia Law. The HCA Scholarship Committee is responsible for determining which students are selected for these scholarships and how much is awarded to each student. Only families who apply through the school's financial aid program and meet eligibility requirements can qualify to receive SSO funds.

GaSSO Scholarships are processed electronically through the HCA Business Office. Families will receive an email to accept the funds which allow GaSSO to transfer them to HCA. The family is responsible for any balance due after all funding is applied. Individuals interested in redirecting their state tax payments through this program to provide scholarships for HCA are encouraged to visit http://www.georgiasso.us for more information.

Georgia Special Needs ("GSN") Scholarship Program

GSN scholarships are provided through the state of Georgia to students with specialized learning needs. This funding can be used to offset tuition costs at participating private schools in the state of Georgia. An estimated credit for expected GSN Scholarship payments will be credited to the applicant's account based on 90% of the most current Special Needs Scholarship Award Sheet available when the enrollment form is issued. The credit and any subsequent discounts provided by the school will be adjusted based on actual GSN scholarship payments received. The family is responsible for any balance. Additional information is available at https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Special-Needs-Scholarship-Program.aspx. Estimated credits from GSN or other scholarship programs are applied PRIOR to tuition discounts.

Please note that there are no discounts or refunds on application fees, tuition deposits, Senior fees, the 4:12 program, or International fees.

Section 3: General School Procedures

School hours

Elementary (K-5th):	8:00 am – 3:00 pm (2:00 pm on Wednesdays)
Secondary School (6th-12th):	8:00 am – 3:18 pm (2:18 on Wednesdays)
Front Desk/Business Office Hours:	7:30 am – 3:30 pm

Arrival/Dismissal of School

Arrival

Morning carpool drop-off begins at 7:30 am for everyone at the main office entrance. **Supervision does not begin until 7:30 am.** Students should report to their assigned area of the gym until released to go to class at 7:50 am. All students should be in their classroom no later than 8:00 am. Students arriving late must sign in at the front office and receive a pass to be admitted to class. Non-driving students must be signed in by their guardian or authorized student driver.

Dismissal

Elementary

Dismissal of elementary students begins at 3:00 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays (MTTF), and 2:00 pm on Wednesdays, at the main office entrance. Teachers will escort their class to the designated dismissal area. All authorized individuals picking up elementary students must have a carpool-identification card displayed clearly.

Elementary students with secondary siblings will be dismissed with their siblings at 3:18 pm on MTTF, and 2:18 pm on Wednesdays at the main office entrance.

Secondary

Dismissal of secondary students begins at 3:18pm on MTTF (2:18 pm on Wednesdays). Secondary students should proceed to the pick-up line as efficiently as possible.

Any students not picked up by 3:40 pm on MTTF (2:40 pm on Wednesdays) will need to report to the after-school program and will be charged an additional fee. Students should not be loitering in the hallways or parking lot.

Secondary students with elementary siblings will collect their siblings in the main lobby and exit together through the main office entrance.

Car Line Procedures

Handheld cellphones and devices may not be used while driving/moving in the pick-up/drop-off area to protect the safety of everyone on campus. Drivers whose car is parked may use handheld devices. Please be aware of your speed when arriving and departing from the campus. The speed limit is 10 miles per hour. Students in 3rd grade and below must be loaded into the back seat of the vehicle. For the safety of our students, students who are checking out early should check out prior to 2:50 pm on MTTF (1:50 pm on Wednesdays). Secondary students will not be allowed to check out during elementary carline (approximately 2:50-3:10 pm on MTTF and 1:50-2:10 pm on Wednesdays). Please drop off and pick up students in the carpool line. Elementary parents who wish to park and pick up their child should wait until the elementary car line ends. We appreciate your effort in keeping our students, parents, and staff safe.

Transportation

Bus transportation is provided and required for student athletes as they travel to games and practices off campus. Any exceptions to this arrangement must be approved by both the parents and the Athletic Department. It is also provided for class/club activities such as state competitions, Teambuilding, and field trips. For liability purposes, parents and siblings must provide their own transportation.

Student drivers are required to provide a copy of their driver's license and insurance as well as completed student driver forms to the front desk. Students may not transport unrelated students in their vehicles without submitting request forms signed by both driver and passenger families (with the consent of administration). Students may not loiter in their car during the school day. Non-related students of the opposite sex are not allowed to enter another student's vehicle at any time while on the HCA campus. Students may lose driving privileges by violating any safe driving practices on campus (e.g., texting while driving, speeding, or violating policies listed above).

Attendance

Regular attendance at school is very important to the success of students, and the philosophy of HCA is to prioritize full-time on campus learning. It is imperative for the student to be present to learn all that a class has to offer even though the student may make up the work if the absence is excused. Horizon Christian Academy will follow the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law found in Chapter 1003 of the Georgia Statutes. Parents must contact the school if a student is absent and give the reason for the absence. Please do not send your child to school when he/she is ill. According to the Georgia Department of Education and the Compulsory Attendance law, a student is considered truant who has more than five (5) days of unexcused absences during calendar school year.

Excused Absences are described as absences due to:

1. Personal illness of the student or when attendance in school would endanger the health of the student or the health of others. Upon the student's return to school, appropriate medical documentation may be required within three days of the absence.
2. Serious illness or death in student's immediate family necessitating the absence. In the case of serious illness, students are required to present medical documentation to validate the absences as an excused absence within three (3) days of the student's return to school.
3. Court order by a governmental agency mandating the student's absence from school.
4. Special or recognized religious holidays observed by the faith of the student.
5. Weather or environmental conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to the student's health or safety.
6. An absence not to exceed one (1) day for registering to vote.
7. Other absences to be determined by, and at the discretion of, school administration. HCA allows for an anticipated absence to be counted as an excused absence if the proper documentation is filled out and turned into the school at least one week prior to the absence.

A family trip or other unexcused absence may be considered excused if an HCA Anticipated Absence Form is obtained by the student at the front desk or from the website, completed by all the teachers, signed by the parent, given to the front desk 3 days before the absence, and approved by the building level principal. All work/quizzes/tests should be completed prior to the absence for 100% of the grade earned. Grades on work completed after the absence will be graded at 70% of the grade earned unless other arrangements are agreed to in advance by the teacher.

Unexcused absences are described as failure to attend school, with or without the knowledge of the parent/legal guardian, for reasons other than those specifically outlined above as excused absences. School days missed as a result of an out-of-school suspension shall not be counted as unexcused for the purpose of determining truancy.

Grades and Absences

Work that is missed from excused absences can be made up with no penalty. One extra day per day absent is allowed to turn in the work. For secondary students, any work due on the day of absence is due one day after the student returns. Secondary students are expected to contact their teacher and/or refer to the FACTS family portal for work missed. Consistent sick days each week will lead to a doctor's note being required for all absences.

Final student course grades shall not be penalized because of absences if the following conditions are met:

1. Absences are justified and validated for excusable reasons.
2. Make-up work for excused absences is completed satisfactorily.

In instances where the above conditions are not met, penalties and consequences are to be determined and imposed by the administration.

Penalties may include:

- A grade of no more than 70% given on missed work due to unexcused absences.
- Failure of the class and/or grade.
- Mandatory reports to DFCS or compulsory truancy reporting.
- Student may be placed on an attendance contract for a probationary period.
- Student's re-enrollment forms may be held if attendance does not improve.

Administration of attendance policy

- After 5 total absences a letter will be sent home.
- At 10 total absences a mandatory meeting with both student and parent is required to form an attendance plan.
- An excess of ten absences per semester, excused or not, jeopardizes the student receiving credit for the course or semester at the secondary level, and may lead to failure of subject content for the elementary level.
- In the event of serious illness-related absences, a determination will be made on a case-by-case basis by Administration.

Written excuses must be turned into the office upon the student returning to school. An email describing the reason for absence (FrontDesk@HCAGA.org) serves as "written" documentation that the parent is aware the student is absent; however, it does not necessarily constitute an excused absence. Absences over three days require a doctor's note. Students must be at school by 11:15 am and stay through the end of the school day (unless there is a doctor's note from a scheduled appointment) to participate in any extracurricular activities that day. If a student leaves school due to illness may not participate in extracurricular activities that day. Seniors must be present for all on-campus classes to participate in extracurricular activities.

HCA student participation is required at annual events that define our school environment. Events and activities such as Christmas and Spring concerts (grades K-5, and 6-12 band members), Teambuilding (6th-12th), and UP Week are required events for students in the respective grades.

Tardy Policy

The following policy has been instituted to encourage timeliness and discourage classroom interruptions. An email describing the reason for tardiness (FrontDesk@HCAGA.org) serves as "written" documentation that the parent is aware the student is tardy, however does not necessarily constitute as an excused tardy.

1. A student is considered tardy when he/she arrives to school after the beginning of the official school day (8:00 am) or is not in the assigned class at the official beginning of the class period. All students are expected to arrive and be seated in their classrooms, ready to learn, when the bell rings.
2. Arriving at school safely is of upmost importance. Parents and students are encouraged to leave earlier than needed to arrive on time to school in case there is unexpected traffic. Nonetheless, there are consequences for repeated tardiness. If a student driver is tardy, the parents will be contacted. Excessive tardiness for a student driver could result in loss of driving privileges for a period of time determined by HCA administration.
3. Due to their age, students in grades K-5 arriving after 8:00 am will need to be accompanied by an adult (or their authorized student driver) to the front desk to sign in.
4. Excused or unexcused tardy slips will be issued when a student arrives late to school. A tardy is considered excused when a student is late due to medical/dental appointments (and brings in a note from the medical professional) or extenuating conditional circumstances. Illness will generally not be excused if late to school less than 15 minutes. Please make every effort to schedule appointments around school hours. If you are going to be late due to traffic or other unforeseen events, please notify the front office. Administration reserves the right to excuse tardy arrivals when events are delaying several families. The Georgia Department of Education defines tardies as follows:
    - Excused tardy: Late arrival to school or class as a result of reasons defined herein as excused absences or as a result of events physically out of one's control such as inclement weather, documented transportation delays, health related emergencies, power outage, compliance with the court order, etc.
    - Unexcused tardy: Arriving late to school or class with or without the knowledge of parent/guardian, as a result of oversleeping, parent errands, etc., unless it is an excused tardy.
5. Multiple unexcused tardies per semester will result in the following consequences for students:
    - "Tardy to school" only applies to arriving in the first 15 minutes of the start of the school day. An unexcused arrival to school more than 15 minutes after the start of school is an unexcused absence with grade penalty for the period(s) missed result in further consequences. Tardy slips after 9:00 am are administered by the teacher.
    - For elementary students, missing more than 2 hours of the school day is considered a half-day absence. For every 5 tardies, Elementary students will be issued a one-day absence. Excessive absences may be handled as a disciplinary situation depending on the circumstance.

For Secondary Students:

First Period Tardies

- Each student will receive three (3) first-period tardies per semester without disciplinary consequences.
- 4th tardy (unless excused by a parent): Early Morning Detention
- 5th tardy (unless excused by a parent), and every first-period tardy thereafter during the semester: One clock hour of Saturday School

Second–Eighth Period Tardies

- Students who are tardy to any class during periods 2–8 will receive an **Early Morning Detention**.

Health and Safety Procedures

Students should be kept at home when they are ill. HCA is not equipped to provide care for children who are sick for long periods of time during the day. If your child becomes ill while at school, the office will contact a parent to pick up your child. A parent, family member, or emergency contact will need to make arrangements to pick up your child as quickly as possible. We will have your child resting at the front desk area until your arrival. Please arrange a system with family members who can be notified in case an emergency or sickness arises.

Children need to be symptom and fever-free for at least 24 hours (48 hours if flu) before returning to school, without the use of Ibuprofen or other over-the-counter medications. Any student that is checked out with an illness will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities for that day. If your child is prescribed medication, such as an antibiotic for infection, he/she must have been on the medication for at least 24 hours prior to returning to school. Please apply the Golden Rule in considering other families upon your child's return. Whenever necessary, the office may request a written doctor's note verifying that the child is healthy and able to return to school.

Lice Policy

Consult with your child's healthcare provider, health department, or pharmacist for treatment instructions for following an effective head-lice treatment. Students with lice will be sent home and will be asked to provide a "letter of clearance" from a professional before being allowed back in the classroom.

Lunch Program

You may choose to purchase lunch through our lunch program monthly. The lunch menu is available to view and place orders online through FACTS and is due by the 20th of the preceding month. Refunds are not issued if the student is absent. Students may also purchase items from our daily concession stand at an additional cost. Students may create a concession account and keep money on hand with the Lunch Coordinator. Lunch concession balances can be checked on your FACTS account, under Family Billing. Funds can be replenished via FACTS or check. If paying by check, a locked box is located at the front desk for lunch concessions payment. Please put "lunch concession" in the memo line.

Elementary note: Students will have one day a week that they may purchase ice cream from concessions. Classroom teachers will communicate concession information for each grade level. Kindergarten students should bring a lunch that does not require a microwave.

Please do not send carbonated or caffeinated beverages for lunch. Parents may eat with students after first checking in at the main office for a visitor's pass. To help establish lunch procedures, we ask that Kindergarten parents do not attend lunch for the first two weeks of school.

Medication

Children needing any kind of medication while at school must check into the office with their parents on the morning of their return. The office must have the medicine contained in the original container to dispense any prescribed medication per Georgia law. A medication form needs to be filled out in the office, and both the medication and form will remain in the office for proper disbursement at the time indicated by the physician. Parents are required to update medical information in FACTS prior to the start of school. Students may not carry their own medication at school, including over-the-counter medications, the exception being prescription inhalers.

Newsletter and School Announcements

Major school announcements are communicated by email, FACTS, the HCA App, and HCA social media outlets. A newsletter is regularly distributed throughout the year summarizing upcoming events, announcements, and school developments.

Families are encouraged to download the HCA App to access announcements, calendars, resources links, and all school related information. HCA has also integrated an emergency text alert system that will ensure important announcements relating to weather, lockdown, and emergency events are sent immediately to families. Parents must have an active mobile number on file through the FACTS system to ensure they receive the notifications.

HCA Brand Use

HCA has a committee that approves all merchandise and marketing-related material that displays the school's name, logo, colors, mission, and/or messaging. This ensures that our school messaging is consistent across all physical and digital platforms. Spirit wear, athletic uniforms, and the usage of messaging relating to the school for staff, students, clubs, or extracurricular use must be approved by the branding committee. Requests can be emailed to marketingteam@hcaga.org.

Lost & Found

We encourage families to label all clothing and valuable items with their child's name. Unlabeled items that are found will be placed in the Lost & Found area. Lost & Found items will be donated if not claimed within a timely manner.

School Counselors

School counselors at Horizon partner with teachers, administrators, and parents to support students' academic, emotional, and spiritual growth. Counselors provide Christ-centered guidance to assist students as they navigate challenges related to academics, friendships, conflict, grief, and emotion regulation.

School counseling services are brief in nature and biblically based. Students may be referred to the counselor by teachers, administrators, parents, or through self-referral. Counselors do not provide therapy at school; rather, they support students by teaching coping skills, problem-solving strategies, conflict resolution, and academic advising. Counselors communicate with parents as appropriate when working with their child. If a student requires additional support or a formal evaluation, the school counselor will provide referrals to community-based services and assist families in accessing those resources.

School Safety/Security

The safety of our students and staff is a priority at HCA. Our leadership team continually trains and is updated on school safety and security working with our local sheriff and fire departments. We follow the number one safety protocol that classroom doors will remain locked during the school day. All people should enter and exit using only the main door unless instructed otherwise by a staff member. A parent or their emergency contact must sign out a non-driving student at the front office. Parent approval will be obtained before allowing a student driver to check out. Food deliveries from third-party vendors (for example: Door Dash, Uber Eats, etc.) are not permitted. Seniors are the only students permitted to check out during lunch.

Visitors

HCA is happy to welcome school visitors and volunteers. Volunteers and grade level visitors should call ahead of time to schedule visits and receive approval from the grade-level principal (frontdesk@hcaga.org). All visitors, including parents, must sign in at the front desk and submit their driver's license to obtain a visitor's badge. Visitors must also sign out upon leaving. Parents needing to meet with teachers are encouraged to schedule meetings in advance whenever possible. Parents needing to visit with students during the school day are asked to do so in a manner that minimizes disruptions. All visitors/volunteers should be modestly and appropriately dressed during the duration of their visit.

Please keep children under your supervision when visiting campus for any reason. Children are only allowed on the playground if a staff member is present and approves. While on the playground the children must listen to the teacher on duty even if a parent is present. Pets are not allowed on campus without administrative consent.

Regular volunteers will be required to complete the volunteer application and subsequent background check.

Recording of Meetings and Conversations

Audio or video recording of meetings, conversations, calls/virtual meetings, or interactions on school premises or during off-campus school activities by parents, students, visitors, or staff is not permitted without prior notice to and consent of all participants.

Security Cameras

As an added level of security for staff and students, HCA has installed video/audio cameras in areas where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy (e.g., common areas). These cameras are installed, monitored, and used solely by the school administration for safety, security, and operational purposes. Access to specific camera footage is restricted to authorized school officials and law enforcement to ensure compliance with student privacy laws.

Emergency/Evacuation Drills

Fire/tornado drills and lock-down/evacuation drills are held regularly according to state and local regulations to prepare students for an emergency. Students are to be quiet and efficiently follow all evacuation or drill procedures and to quickly follow all instructions by persons in authority. Monthly fire drills are required by law and are registered online. Tornado drills are performed at least twice per year. Lock down and evacuation drills will be performed as needed. In the event of a real fire, tornado, lockdown or evacuation, parents will be contacted based on our crisis management plan. Crisis management plan details are reviewed at the "Back-to-School" Orientation. In the event of an emergency, please refrain from contacting the school so that HCA personnel may designate all attention to any issue at hand.

Parents are encouraged to include a valid mobile number on file through FACTS system to ensure they receive the notifications through the FACTS Emergency Alert Text System.

School Closings/Severe Weather

All school closings will be posted to social media and announced via a global e-mail and text message alert as soon as any decision is made to close school, delay the start of the school, or end the day early. Drivers are cautioned to always maintain safety first as conditions for some of our families may be significantly different than other families. Please email FrontDesk@HCAGA.org or call the front desk if you are going to be late or absent due to severe weather or traffic prior to the start of the school day unless school has been officially delayed or cancelled.

Support Animals

Trained service animals may be permitted on campus during school hours on a limited basis with prior approval from the appropriate principal and the Head of School.

For events held outside of school hours, trained service animals are permitted on campus when accompanied by their adult handler.

Except for approved service animals or pre-approved educational activities, animals are not permitted in classrooms, school buildings, or on athletic fields. Any special circumstances involving animals must be arranged in advance with the school principal.

Section 4: Academics

Drop/Add

High School students with permission from the Principal and Academic Dean may petition to drop a class and add a suitable replacement class within **7 days** of the start of the course. Any changes are dependent upon schedule availability and class openings.

Homework

Students and parents/guardians in kindergarten through 12th grade have access to a FACTS account. FACTS is an online portal where assignments, homework, and grades are posted and may be accessed by an issued password for parents/guardians and a separate password for the student. Elementary students in 3rd – 5th grades are required to write all homework assignments in their agenda. In Kindergarten – 2nd grade, homework is communicated by the teacher in a daily folder. Secondary students may access homework and grades through the FACTS portal.

Late Homework

- Homework must be turned in on time to receive maximum credit. Homework that is late may receive reduced credit in accordance with course syllabi/policies. Failure to turn in homework in a timely manner may also preclude the student from attending extracurricular activities.
- Students who have an approved anticipated absence from school are required to turn in any homework assignments before they leave unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher. Homework for any unplanned absences due to a family situation or illness should be turned in within one day for every approved absence plus an extra day.
- Students missing class are required to follow up with the instructor as soon as possible to ensure that class work and homework assignments are made up appropriately.

Homework Over Breaks

HCA generally does not assign homework over the following school breaks: Fall, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, and Spring Break. AP courses may assign homework with approval from the principal. Dual Enrollment courses will have homework over breaks since those courses are based on the college academic calendar.

Two-Test Rule

Secondary students are only required to take two scheduled tests in a day. If a third test is assigned for the same day, the test that was scheduled latest may be postponed one day at the student's option. Quizzes, homework, labs, papers, and projects do not count as a "test" for this rule. If a student is absent during a scheduled test, that absence negates the rule.

Secondary Exam Exemption Policy

Secondary students may **earn** exam exemptions per semester in a non-AP or Dual Enrollment course (with teacher approval) by fulfilling the following each semester:

- Attendance: Cannot have more than FIVE unexcused absences, or TEN total absences. Upon the sixth unexcused or eleventh total absence exemption may not be earned.
- Conduct: No demerit issued by administration.
- Grades: 90% or above in class.
- Service Hours: Complete FIVE hours with form by the Fall Deadline and complete TEN hours for the year with form by the Spring Deadline. Deadlines will be announced in advance. Forms are available from the HCA Website or front office.
- High School students that meet the above criteria are eligible to exempt multiple midterms and final exams based on the following:
    - 9th Grade Students: 1 Exam
    - 10th Grade Students: 2 Exams
    - 11th Grade Students: 3 Exams
    - 12th Grade: All Exams

Grading Scales

Kindergarten and 1st Grade will receive a 1, 2, 3 or 4.

- 1 means the student shows limited progress.
- 2 means the student shows ongoing progress.
- 3 means the student shows consistent achievement.
- 4 means the student shows mastery.

"Specials" Classes for Kindergarten through 5th grade will be graded as follows:

- E means the student's participation is excellent.
- S means the student's participation is satisfactory.
- N means the student needs improvement.

The grading scale for **Grades 2-12** is as follows:

Letter Grade	Explanation	Percentage	Grade Point Average	
			College Prep/Honor/ Placement/ Tech Prep Enrollment	Advanced Dual
A	Excellent	90-100	4.0	4.5
B	Above Average	80-89	3.0	3.5
C	Average	70-79	2.0	2.5
F	Failing	Below 70	0	0

26-27 Introduction of Senior Seminar

For the past few years at Horizon, we have worked to elevate instruction and prepare students for the next phase of their educational career. Senior Seminar will be held on Monday and Tuesdays during Flex Time as advisement for Senior Capstones. Each Senior will seek to understand a real-world problem through a Biblical Worldview. Students will research the problem, and craft a research paper as well as a presentation to be delivered to our community.

Grading for Secondary (Middle – High)

6th grade Categories & Weighting:

- Tests, projects, papers = 45 %,
- Quizzes and daily work = 35%,
- Homework = 20%
- Final semester grade: Achievement = 90%, Exam = 10%

7th grade Categories & Weighting:

- Tests, projects, papers = 55 %,
- Quizzes and daily work = 30%,
- Homework = 15%
- Final semester grade: Achievement = 85%, Exam = 15%

8th grade – 12th grades Categories & Weighting:

- Tests, projects, papers = 60 %,
- Quizzes and daily work = 25%,
- Homework = 15%
- Final semester grade: Achievement = 80%, Exam = 20%

Late work deductions by grade levels:

6th grade = -10 points/day
7th grade = -15 points/day
8th – 12th grades = 20 points/day

Progress Reports and Conferences

While parents can sign in to FACTS at any time to view grades, progress reports will be sent electronically every 4-5 weeks for elementary students, secondary student's grades are always available in FACTS. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice per year and are required for kindergarten – 5th grade. A conference may be requested whenever the parent or teacher deems it necessary.

Student Recognitions

Students at HCA are recognized for their achievements in the areas of academics, leadership, service, athletics, and citizenship. These events include merit awards, celebration chapel and end of the year awards assemblies.

Academic Letters

Each spring beginning when a student is in the 10th grade, academic letters will be awarded for the previous year based on the following:

- **9th grade**: Must maintain a 4.0 GPA for the year and be enrolled in geometry or a higher math and must also be enrolled in AP Human Geography. This will be awarded in spring of 10th grade.
- **10th grade:** Must maintain a 4.0 GPA for the year and enrolled in 2 "Rigors." This will be awarded in spring of the 11th grade.
- **11th grade:** Must maintain a 4.0 GPA for the year and enrolled in 3 "Rigors." This will be awarded in spring of the 12th grade.
- **12th grade**: Awarded for 11th grade full academic year.

Athletic Letters

Athletic letters are awarded as provided in HCA's Athletic Handbook.

Celebration Chapel

On the last chapel of the month, elementary students are recognized for Christian character awards. Parents and visitors are always welcome to attend this event

Honor Roll

Students are recognized for their academic achievements by earning Honor Roll. This accomplishment is recognized for students in grades 6 – 12 with all As and Bs following the end of each quarter. Students in grades 2-5 will be honored at the end of the school year.

Graduation Credit Requirements

Graduation Credits required for 2026-27 are outlined in the High School Course Sequence (Appendix B).

Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher to graduate with Honors.

All HCA Graduates must achieve a minimum of 28 credits. College preparatory diplomas will normally be awarded and will follow the state requirements for graduation by Georgia Code Section 160-4-2-.48. Our diplomas are college preparatory since students are required to take the minimum amount of rigorous coursework necessary to obtain the HOPE/Zell Scholarship, and students are advised to take the minimum amount of coursework for entrance into Georgia's state universities. The High School Principal, upon recommendation from the Academic Dean, may waive or modify these requirements in exceptional circumstances if the student meets the minimum state requirements for graduation.

- All 6th – 11th grade students must take all courses on HCA campus, including online Dual Enrollment classes.
- 12th grade students generally must take 6 courses per semester, including dual enrollment classes. Students who have accumulated more credits than traditionally achieved by the beginning of their senior year (through additional dual enrollment and/or summer classes) may be approved to take 5 courses per semester their senior year (with permission from HCA's Academic Dean and High School Principal).
- All dual enrollment classes require prior permission from HCA's Academic Dean.
- **All 11th graders should take the SAT or ACT by the end of June in their junior year.**
- **All seniors are required to take the SAT or ACT before their diplomas are issued and will take it a second time during their senior year if the minimum score for their prospective college has not been achieved.**
- Valedictorians and salutatorians will be selected from students that have been attending HCA for a minimum of two years. The following criteria will be emphasized:
    - Primary consideration: Highest GPA and rigor of courses through senior year.
    - No in-school suspensions or honor code violations during junior and senior years.
    - Secondary consideration:
        - Extra-curricular participation during junior and senior years
        - School leadership
        - Additional factors such as attitude, leadership, and Christian character will be considered by the committee determining the selections.

High School Transcripts

All high school level classes taken in middle school will be included on the high school transcript. This means the grade earned for the course WILL accompany the high school credit on the transcript. HCA does not award credit without a grade.

Media Center

The Media Center is available for elementary students. Any book that is borrowed from the school library is the responsibility of the student. Overdue books may prevent students from borrowing other books until returned. Parents may check the status of their child's library account by accessing the HCA Library Link, located under the Resources on the HCA webpage.

Service

HCA prioritizes service to the community. We look to partner with local organizations and consistently provide a "pulse" of service to meet the needs of our neighbors. Our service program encourages students to seek opportunities to serve others as "hands and feet" of God.

Service projects may be organized for students in all grade levels throughout the year. Elementary students participate in at least two service activities over the course of the year. TEN service hours are required for our middle school and high school students to be served outside of school hours within the school community. Other service opportunities are also publicized through Bible classes or your church throughout the year. Secondary students should turn in their completed service hours online. Students serving on mission trips can generally be credited with up to 8 service hours/day on mission.

Extracurricular Activities

There are many different extracurricular activities offered for our students in athletics, fine arts, and academic competitions. Information on how and when to sign up for these activities will be provided on Orientation Day, Curriculum Night, and through email notices from the pertinent department. Physicals for athletes must be completed prior to participation in a sport. Other athletic policies and procedures are outlined in both general sports meetings prior to season play and the HCA Athletic Handbook. School policies also govern student behavior during extra-curricular events such as athletic competitions (whether students are participating as athletes or attending as fans) and building level activities (such as dances, lock-ins, and field trips). Biblically appropriate behavior is expected at all HCA events. The privilege of representing HCA and participating in extra-curricular activities may be limited due to concerns with a student's academic performance, behavior, or misconduct.

Elementary class activities, parties, and field trips are for the students; permission for siblings to attend may only be granted at the teacher's discretion, depending on the nature of the activity. Please do not leave any siblings unattended in the classroom. On field trips, parents and chaperones may follow the HCA bus and are expected to follow all field-trip guidelines. All HCA students are expected to depart and return to any off-site event on the provided HCA transportation. Any exception to this policy must be approved by Administration.

Clubs

HCA loves to allow students to lead within the school and in the community. Multiple opportunities are available for students to be involved in clubs throughout the year. These clubs may or may not have leadership opportunities for students to serve as officers or in other leadership outlets. While each club has its own bylaws and rules, as a general policy for HCA, students in leadership or holding office in a club may not have any Honor Code Violations and must be free of any level two or higher demerit from the prior semester. Should either of the above violations occur during their term, the student officer will forfeit their position for the remainder of the year.

National Honor Society

Selection Process:

To be eligible for the Horizon Christian Academy chapter of the National Honor Society, a student must first meet the scholarship level of attaining a 3.70 GPA or higher at the end of the first semester of 10th grade year OR 11th grade year. If that student has a qualifying GPA, he/she will receive an application and an essay for completion. There are three additional pillars required for membership selection in the Horizon Christian Academy National Honor Society. The application asks the student to list activities both in school and in the community that demonstrate their character and integrity and to list ways the student has demonstrated both leadership and service. The purpose of this application is for the student to communicate how he/she meets the additional service, leadership, and the character criteria that the National Honor Society wants students to demonstrate. The student's application is then evaluated by the Faculty Council of the Horizon Christian Academy chapter of NHS, and if they are indeed qualified, the student is then invited to membership. This application must be returned by the deadline, as applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed for membership. Incomplete or partial submissions will also not be reviewed.

If students are accepted by a majority of the Faculty Council, they will be invited to join the membership. This "tapping" process will take place on high school awards day in the spring of each year.

New Member Steps for the 2026-2027 School Year:

1. In the spring, students with 3.70 or higher cumulative GPA will receive an email with the application notifying them of their potential NHS candidacy.
2. Students complete the application and submit it no later than the deadline provided.
3. Submitted applications will be read and voted on by the five-member Faculty Council. Three YES votes are required for acceptance into the National Honor Society. Votes are based upon the student demonstrating their leadership, character and integrity, and service to school and community with their responses in the application.
4. Newly selected members will be "Tapped" on approximately the scheduled HCA awards day.
5. Appeals by non-selected students must be submitted in writing to the Advisor no later than 30 days following the awards ceremony.

NHS Meetings:

NHS meeting will be held throughout the year. Attendance at meetings is considered a mandatory part of membership responsibilities.

Discipline and Dismissal Policies:

- **Step 1**. Members who fall below the standards that were the basis for their selection shall be promptly warned in writing by the chapter adviser and given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency. In the case of flagrant violation of school rules or the law, a member does not have to be warned.
- **Step 2**. The faculty council shall determine when an individual has exceeded a reasonable number of warnings.
- **Step 3**. In all cases of pending dismissal, a member shall have a right to a hearing before the faculty council. (Note: This hearing is required and is considered "due process" for all members.)
- **Step 4.** For purposes of dismissal, a majority vote of the faculty council is required.
- **Step 5**. A member who has been dismissed may appeal the decision of the faculty council to the principal. (According to Article X of the National Honor Society Constitution, NASSP shall hear no appeals in dismissal cases.)

Testing

Achievement Tests

Each year, HCA will administer a nationally normed and recognized standardized achievement test. HCA will administer the Iowa Test of Basics Skills to students in K – 8th grades. All students are expected to participate in achievement testing, as they provide the Administration with important data used in several ways. Individual achievement is tracked to monitor progress and highlight achievement and possible areas of concern. Group data is used to help Administration make informed decisions regarding curriculum choice and alignment. The ITBS tests are usually administered in April. The CogAT is given to students in 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th grades. All students in 9th, 10th, and 11th grades (and invited 8th graders) take the PSAT in the fall at HCA, and 11th graders should take the SAT or ACT in January or February and again by May or June of their junior year.

Retests and Academic Probation

Secondary students can only take one retest per semester per subject. The teacher decides on the date and time of the retest, usually within a week of receiving notice of a failing grade. A student completing a retest with a passing grade will only earn a maximum score of 70.

Students who fail to maintain a 70% average in all classes are subject to academic probation and may be kept on academic probation until grades rise above 70%. Placement on academic probation may result in suspension or limitation of HCA extracurricular participation at the discretion of the principal and/or Academic Dean.

Testing Accommodations

Students with learning accommodations should submit a copy of their most recent test results and/or evaluations to HCA as a part of the application process or be kept on file if an evaluation is conducted while a student is enrolled at HCA. Students with recommendations for testing accommodation will need to file the appropriate paperwork for determination by the College Board on the PSAT, SAT, and with ACT.

Section 5: Student Responsibilities

Dress Code

HCA's uniform and dress code has been adopted to foster the learning environment (minimize distraction) and school pride. We also hope it will develop habits of modesty, respect, accountability, and reduce peer pressure. Students in grades K-12 are required to wear uniform shirts or polos except for Spirit Wear or Casual Days. Students in grades 1-5 must always wear belts and tuck in shirts, except on Spirit Wear or Casual dress days. Students in grades 6-12 are not required to tuck in shirts but must maintain a neat and clean appearance. Clothing must be neat, clean, and in good repair with no holes, patches, rips, tears, or frays. Form-fitting or skin-tight clothes, leggings, stretch pants, yoga pants or compression shorts are not acceptable as outerwear during the academic day, to include any special dress days. We understand there are different body types. Please ensure whatever style of shorts or skirt you purchase adheres to the 4" rule. Students may be denied attendance (an unexcused absence) at school and/or HCA events for immodest clothing and/or appearance that is deemed inappropriate by HCA faculty.

Personal Appearance

As Warrior leaders in the community, several guidelines are established for our students' personal appearance. Hair should be neat, clean, well-groomed, and not distracting in the opinion of the administration. Bangs should not extend past the eyebrows. If dyed, hair must be a natural human hair color. Boys must be clean shaven, and sideburns may not extend past the ears. All students should avoid extreme hairstyles that may cause a distraction. No student is permitted to have any tattoos or piercings, except earrings for girls. Boys may not wear earrings. No hats, hoods, or head coverings of any kind are allowed inside the school during the academic day, except in accordance with special dress days and as allowed by the classroom teacher and HCA administration. Girls' jewelry and make-up must be worn in modest taste. Elementary girls should not wear artificial nails of excessive length.

Uniform Requirements

LOGO REQUIREMENTS ***All uniform merchandise offered on the HCA preferred page of the Lands' End website is considered approved for school use. Preferred School # is 9000-9487-1.**	▪ Monogrammed uniform items to be worn Monday through Thursday must be purchased from the Lands' End Uniform catalog. ▪ Uniforms must be worn from the time the student arrives on campus until the student leaves campus after school or begins another after school activity. ▪ On Spirit Days, all tops and outerwear must be HCA spirit wear but do not have to necessarily feature the HCA logo.
APPROVED VENDORS	▪ The Lands' End Uniform catalog is the approved vendor for uniform items unless otherwise noted. Preferred School #9000-9487-1. ▪ Uniform items may also be purchased during a school uniform resale. ▪ Friday Spirit Wear will be available for purchase through the HCA Booster Club. (All Spirit Wear attire designs are approved in advance by administration.)

UNIFORM TOPS	▪ Lands' End Brand Only (Preferred School #9000-9487-1) with logo. ▪ Shirts must be tucked for grades 1-5. ▪ High School students may wear appropriately fitted shirts untucked but must maintain a clean and neat appearance. ▪ Short or Long Sleeve Polo – Navy, White ▪ Short, Long, or Three-quarter Sleeve Oxford – White, Light Blue ▪ Peter Pan Knit Top – White
UNIFORM BOTTOMS **Three dress code violations of the 4" skirt/short rule will result in detention and may also result in loss of privilege to wear shorts and skirts.**	▪ The following colors will be allowed: Khaki (TAN only, not brown) and Navy Blue. ▪ Jumpers may also be purchased in Khaki, Navy or Hunter/Classic Navy Plaid. Plaid items must be purchased from Land's End Uniform Catalog. An approved collared shirt with the HCA logo is required under all jumpers. ▪ Tan or Navy classic fit Pants, Capris for girls, Shorts or Skirts (both 4" or less above kneecap). Bottoms must be modest and fit appropriately. Form-fitting pants/leggings and elastic ankle "jogger pants" are not permitted. No rips or holes. ▪ All students in grades 1-5 wearing pants, capris, or shorts must wear a belt with uniform. ▪ Skirts, Skorts, Shorts and Jumpers – MUST fit appropriately and can be no shorter than 4" above the kneecap at any time. If girls wear tights or leggings under shorts/skirts, the 4" rule remains the same. Tights or leggings must be solid white, navy, or black. ▪ Girls in Elementary must wear shorts under skirts and jumpers.
OUTERWEAR – INCLUDING SWEATERS, CARDIGANS, SWEATSHIRTS & VESTS	▪ During school hours, only official HCA monogrammed outerwear from Lands' End may be worn in school buildings. The only approved exception is Letterman Jackets. Jackets worn for recess may be purchased through local retailers and are not required to include the HCA logo. ▪ Approved Cardigans, Sweaters, and Quarter-zip pullovers– Navy ▪ Approved Sweatshirt – Navy only with HCA Academic logo may be worn Monday – Thursday. ▪ Long sleeve shirts (for warmth) under a short sleeve polo must be solid Navy Blue or White and tucked in. ▪ Fleece Vest, Jacket, or Pullover – Navy only.
BELTS	Required for grades 1-5: Leather or canvas, in solid color or conservative pattern. Girls may wear decorative leather or canvas belts that are not a distraction.
FOOTWEAR	▪ No high heels. Secondary students ONLY may wear platforms and/or wedges no more than 2" high. ▪ Closed toes shoes must be worn. Athletic shoes are permitted. All students must wear athletic shoes for PE. ▪ Light up, wheelies or other distracting shoes are not permitted. ▪ Students are expected to wear socks with the appropriate footwear (athletic shoes, dress shoes, etc.) Socks may not be a distraction.
FRIDAY SPIRIT WEAR	▪ Tops: All tops, hoodies, and outerwear must be HCA-branded spirit wear but do not have to necessarily feature the HCA Academic logo. ▪ Bottoms: o Students may wear jeans (no holes or rips/tears), navy or gold athletic shorts or skirts (no more than 4" above the knee), or navy or gray loose-fitting athletic pants. o Form-fitting pants or tights/leggings are never authorized as outerwear during school unless otherwise approved by the Administration. o Uniform bottoms are always permitted. ▪ Belts are not required, and shirts may remain untucked.

CASUAL DAY PASSES	▪ A casual day pass may only be used on a Monday unless specific permission is granted by the principal. These allow the student to wear modest and appropriate casual clothes, in the spirit of the HCA dress code. Passes must be turned into the teacher/Principal the day they are used. ▪ Casual Day Passes may not be used on Field Trips or Service Projects unless approved by the Administration. ▪ Clothing must be neat and fit appropriately with no rips and tears. ▪ Any wording on tops should be uplifting and Christian appropriate. ▪ Bottoms: o Students may wear jeans (no holes or rips/tears), navy or gold athletic shorts or skirts (no more than 4" above the knee), or navy or gray loose-fitting athletic pants. o Form-fitting pants or tights/leggings are never authorized as outerwear during school unless otherwise approved by the Administration. o No wording may appear on the "seat" of the pants. o Uniform bottoms are always permitted. ▪ Belts are not required, and shirts may remain untucked.
P.E./PHYSICAL CONDITIONING UNIFORMS	Navy blue, gold, or HCA Spirit Wear t-shirt and only solid, navy blue Lands' End gym shorts that are no more than 4" above the knee. Navy blue sweatshirts/sweatpants with HCA wording are optional and may be purchased through Lands' End or the Booster Club. No other shorts will be allowed outside of the Lands' End mesh gym shorts. Athletic shoes are required.

Student Responsibilities

Responsibilities are things we do for ourselves and things we do for the good of others. The following are important responsibilities:

- **Come to School:** Attendance is expected unless emergency situations arise. Students must be in their classroom by 8:00 am.
- MS/HS students are responsible for requesting any work missed from the teachers.
- Students must be at school by 11:15 am and stay through the end of the school day (unless there is a doctor's note from a scheduled appointment) in order to participate in any extracurricular activities that day. If a student leaves school due to illness they may not participate in extracurricular activities that day. Seniors must be present for all campus classes to participate in any extracurricular activities.
- **Complete All Classwork and Homework.**
- **Take Care of School Property:** All students should respect the rights and property of others.
- **Engage in Activities and Serve in Ways That Help Our School Foster a Christian Environment:** Embrace opportunities to be "salt and light" (Matthew 5) within the student body.
- **Adhere to the School Discipline Policy:** As noted in the admissions process: "It is understood that being a student at HCA is a privilege and not a right. HCA seeks students and families that desire to be in a Christ-centered educational environment and students that are willing to put forth effort in their growth and improvement in all areas." Guidelines detailed in our discipline policy are established to assist students in pursuing growth. Students are expected to adhere to HCA's discipline policy in and outside of school as we seek to partner with parents to build and reflect Christian character in our students.

- **Treat Others the Way You Want to be Treated:** The great commandment given by Jesus (Matthew 22: 37-40) tells us to love God and our neighbors. In other words, we are to obey God and we are to respect and care for those with whom we have contact each day. This charge lays the foundation for acceptable and appropriate conduct at HCA.

Student Rules

Honor Code Philosophy

HCA believes students are capable of academic excellence without ethical compromise. Academic honesty and integrity is a manifestation of a desire to glorify God at school. Self-control and discipline are necessary to keep this pledge. HCA believes that academic honesty strengthens its learning community while academic dishonesty weakens it.

The purpose of the Honor Code at HCA is to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. It specifically aims to accomplish the following:

- Ensure that students, faculty, and administrators understand that the responsibility for upholding academic honesty at HCA relies on them.
- Prevent any students from gaining an unfair advantage over other students through academic misconduct.
- Clarify what constitutes academic misconduct among students at HCA.
- Cultivate an environment where academic dishonesty is not tolerated by or among the students.

Student Responsibilities:

- Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards.
- Some examples of unethical academic behavior are: cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration with other students, and unauthorized access to information for an academic assignment, including AI.
- To not tolerate cheating in others.

Faculty Responsibilities:

- Faculty members are expected to create an environment where honesty flourishes. In creating this environment, Faculty are expected to do the following:
- Clarity in assignments and assessments as to what constitutes academic dishonesty.
- Include a paragraph of the Honor Code pledge and philosophy on the syllabus for each class they teach.
- Report instances of academic dishonesty to the HS Administration.

Horizon Christian Honor Code:

On my honor, I will protect my integrity by keeping the trust given to me by choosing what is right as a student at Horizon Christian Academy.

My work is completely my own, and is neither the work of someone else, nor an unacknowledged, outside source. I will not share my work, or the contents of any assessment, with others.

Having read the School Honor Code, I understand and accept my responsibility to uphold this code at all times.

General School Rules

- Students must have permission and a hall pass from the teacher to leave the classroom.
- Verbal abuse, taunting, teasing, verbal degrading, written harassment, or any other show of disrespect toward another, whether playful or hostile, will not be tolerated.
- Cellphones, tablets, and electronic devices:
    - Students are not permitted to use electronic devices during the school day, unless granted permission by the faculty, including cellphones or other devices used to send or receive texts, calls, or emails.
    - Secondary students: Phones, laptops, and other devices must be turned off and out-of-sight throughout the entire duration of the school day, except when needed for classroom instruction. All cellphones must be checked in at the start of every class and remain in the classroom when a student leaves the class during the class period.
    - Elementary students: Phones must be turned off and in their backpack throughout the entire duration of the school day.
    - Smart watches are not permitted for any grade during school hours.
    - Students may make calls home with the teacher's permission or at the front desk with the use of a hall pass. Parents should not expect a text to be read or responded to until the end of the school day.
    - For a 1st or 2nd violation, a student is permitted to retrieve their phone from the front desk at the end of the day. Third and subsequent violations require a parent to retrieve the phone from the front desk. The student will be required to check their phone in at the front desk when coming to school and retrieve it at the end of the day for a designated time. Further discipline will also result as outlined in the discipline section below.
    - Faculty are not expected to make decisions whether unauthorized use of a cellphone/device was acceptable or not, including communication with parents. Cellphones/devices used without permission will be confiscated and turned over to an administrator or front desk. In accordance with HCA policy, some teachers will allow or ask students to use their electronic devices during an academic endeavor.
    - No earbuds or listening devices, whether in use or not, should be worn during the school day (except for approved educational purposes).
    - Cell phones are not permitted in bathrooms or locker rooms.

- Students are not to lie, cheat (including, but not limited to, unpermitted use of AI), steal, nor tolerate those who do.
- All students are to be respectful of the campus and guests.
- In part because the campus is private property for K-12 education, a student does not have a 'right to privacy' from the faculty for personal items brought on campus. The school maintains the right to inspect or search any student's book bag, locker, laptop, cell phone, electronic device, automobile, or any item brought on the school premises.
- Students will only be allowed to go out to the parking lot or his/her car during the school day with permission from a staff member.
- Inspections or searches of a student or their belongings will be conducted to protect a student's dignity and with prior administrative approval whenever possible. Staff members of the opposite sex should never inspect or search a student unless an immediate danger to people at school is reasonably expected.
- Students that violate the rules off-campus may be subject to the same disciplinary measures as those that are committed on-campus. No student shall be admitted (or remain enrolled) if married, divorced, conceives a child, pregnant, or has had a child (including abortion). Conduct, to include conduct on social media, that causes harm to the reputation of Horizon Christian Academy or others in the community may be grounds for discipline, including expulsion.
- Food deliveries from third party vendors (for example Door Dash, Uber Eats, etc.) are not permitted. Only Seniors with privileges are permitted to check themselves out during lunch.

Bus Rules

- Behavior and decorum should be Christ-centered and respectful.
- Everyone is expected to be a good steward of the bus. All trash must be picked up around your area and on the walkway free of obstruction. All windows are to be completely shut when leaving the bus.
- Follow the instructions of the chaperone and bus driver.

Classroom Rules

Secondary students receive a syllabus outlining individual class rules and course expectations during the first week of classes. Computer/technology lab rules are outlined in a separate technology usage policy.

Social Media Rules

Students are not permitted to post messages during the school day unless they receive permission from a staff member. All social media and group text/messaging app communication by students and parents/guardians referencing HCA and its community should be uplifting and positive – gossip and negative online postings cause tremendous difficulties for any school system. Parent/guardian concerns should be addressed in the more effective manner listed in the "Parent Concerns" protocol section (detailed at the end of this handbook). Harassing others or taking unwarranted photos/videos of faculty members or peers is strictly prohibited. Continued violation of these rules may result in disciplinary action.

Students are not permitted to film videos on HCA campus, at HCA events, and/or that include employees/students in HCA attire to be distributed to others through social media or otherwise (particularly "TikTok"-type videos) without prior approval from the respective Principal and all students included on the video. When in doubt it is a better choice not to post.

Staff members should not friend/follow students and vice versa on social media.

Discipline

The discipline philosophy is based on several key values. As a Christian school, HCA will not be defined by the discipline issues our students experience, but how we respond. All students will make mistakes. In the end, we are all individuals responsible for our own actions and the way we treat each other. We believe that behavior is primarily the responsibility of each student. HCA administration has created a discipline policy that gives each student opportunity for correction at each level. While attending HCA is a privilege, we also believe that every student has the right to a safe environment. Students who do not take responsibility for their own actions cannot and will not be allowed to remain enrolled at HCA. It is our sincere hope that this policy gives us all the structure to handle issues while they are still minor.

Discipline begins in the classroom with the teacher implementing several strategies to minimize classroom disruptions, including verbal and nonverbal cues, and clear and well-defined behavior expectations. If the behavior in the classroom continues despite these strategies, a teacher may fill out a discipline slip, ask the student to sit outside the classroom, or send the student to administration. Under this system, the student has responsibility to correct the behavior, and honesty and integrity are stressed.

Consequences – Elementary (K – 5th)

Elementary discipline is determined by the classroom teacher under the supervision of the elementary principal.

At the secondary level, classroom disruptions and other incidents may result in Early Morning Detention or Saturday School.

Any discipline issue may result in a consequence. Possible consequences include, but are not limited to, loss of extra-curricular activities, work detail, Parent/Student conference, Early Morning Detention, In-School Suspension (ISS), and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) or the required creation of an Individual Discipline Plan (IDP).

Terms

Early Morning Detention (EMD): **Early Morning Detention (EMD)**

Early Morning Detention may be assigned for:

- Unexcused tardies
- Skipping class
- Other inappropriate behaviors
- Other Level 1 or 2 offenses

Schedule

- Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
- Standard EM Detention: 7:25–7:50 a.m. $25
- Double EM Detention: 7:00–7:50 a.m. on the assigned date $50

Accumulated EMD

- Beginning with the 9th EMD in a semester, each additional EM Detention will be served as one clock hour **of Saturday School**.

Saturday School

Saturday School may be assigned for:

- Accumulating **9 EMD** during a semester
- Being **late to school five (5) or more times** during a semester
- Skipping Chapel
- Other level 2 or 3 offenses
- Other disciplinary violations deemed appropriate by administration

Saturday School Fee: $100

Saturday School, suspension, and Early Morning Detention will be assigned by the **Dean of Students or the Principal**.

Parent/Student Conference with Administration: Parents and the student will be asked to meet with the principal and any other necessary staff members.

In-School Suspension (ISS): ISS may be issued for level 2 or 3 offenses. ISS is entered into FACTS and WILL become a matter of permanent record.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS): OSS may be issued for level 3 offenses. OSS is entered into FACTS SIS and WILL become a matter of permanent academic/behavioral record. Students may be required to create an IDP with his/her parents and the school prior to returning to school from OSS. Students are 100% responsible for communicating with teachers to ensure all missed assignments are completed on time. Students in OSS are not allowed on campus and may not participate in any school events or activities during the school suspension.

Individual Discipline Plan (IDP): A student may be required to create an IDP at any point during the discipline process at the discretion of the school principal or Head of School. The IDP will be created uniquely for each student based on needs. In general, an IDP is stricter and supersedes the discipline policy outlined above. IDPs may require students to undergo psychological/alcohol/drug testing as part of the agreement to return and remain enrolled.

Level 1 Offenses (May result in EMD)

- Dress code violations (school or PE)
- Cumulative tardies to school (or class for Secondary students)
- Chewing gum/eating/drinking in class
- Disrespect (low level) to others
- Class disruptions / lack of cooperation
- No hall pass; Late to class
- Public display of affection
- Unsafe conduct or horseplay
- Accidental cell phone / electronic device violation
- Inappropriate language or gestures
- Other misconduct as determined at the discretion of the administration.

Level 2 Offenses (May result in EMD and/or Saturday School)

- Multiple, accumulated level 1 warnings
- Belittling, hurtful language

- Destructive act
- Willful cell phone / electronic device / violation
- Social media violation
- Dishonesty (lying, cheating, unpermitted use of AI, turning in other's work as the student's own. If flagrant or repeated, will be considered an honor violation)
- Harassment (sexual, physical, cyber, other)
- Leaving class without permission
- Obscene language or pictures (including sexting), profanity, or gestures
- Unintentional injury to another student
- Conduct resulting in being sent to the principal
- Other misconduct as determined at the discretion of the administration

Level 3 Offenses (May result in EMD, Saturday School, ISS or OSS)

- Multiple, accumulated level 1 or 2 offenses
- Willful disobedience
- Bullying
- Leaving school campus without permission
- Threatening bodily injury to or endangering another student
- Intentional harm to another student
- Fighting or provoking a fight on campus
- Sexual activity
- Major cyber violation (sexting, online bullying, social media violation or harassment)
- Possession or use of tobacco, vape, alcohol or drugs
- Possession of inappropriate objects that can be harmful to self or others brought to campus
- Other serious misconduct as determined at the discretion of the administration

Level 4 Offenses – May result in immediate expulsion

- Multiple, accumulated level 3 offenses
- Distribution of tobacco, vape, alcohol or drugs, including prescription medicine
- Bringing a weapon to campus
- Intentional harm to another student or staff member
- Threat or violence directed toward any staff member, volunteer, student, parent or other; harassment toward another person
- Other acts deemed by the administration and HCA Board to be so out of accord with the standards of the school and Christian principles as to require immediate dismissal

Administration reserves the right to reclassify any level based on the severity of the offense.

Tardy Policy

First Period Tardies

Each student will receive **three (3) first-period tardies per semester** without disciplinary consequences.

- **4th tardy** (unless excused by a parent): Early Morning Detention
- **5th tardy** (unless excused by a parent), and every first-period tardy thereafter during the semester: **One clock hour of Saturday School**

Second–Eighth Period Tardies

Students who are tardy to any class during periods 2–8 will receive an **Early Morning Detention**.

Cell Phone & Smartwatch Policy

Phones and smartwatches must remain in a student's assigned locker during the school day unless otherwise permitted.

- **1st Offense:** Device placed in the Phone Hotel for one full school day
- **2nd Offense:** Early Morning Detention
- **5th Offense:** Saturday School

Academic Integrity (Cheating)

If a teacher suspects cheating, he or she will immediately report the incident to the Dean of Students.

First Offense

- Retake the test or assignment
- One (1) hour of Saturday School
- Parent/guardian contacted

Second Offense

- Retake the test or assignment
- Three (3) hours of Saturday School
- Parent/guardian contacted

Third Offense

- Suspension from school
- Subject to additional disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from Horizon.

Staff, parents, students and school board members of HCA are required to report any infractions of school rules to administration in order to maintain appropriateness, safety, and a good reputation for HCA. Any concerns regarding student behavior outside of school activities or school property should be reported to the parents first and then to the school. HCA believes that the disciplinary process should involve the students, their parents, and the school.

Students or their parents are required to report any student arrest to the respective Principal no later than 24 hours after the arrest.

Bullying (NCAB.org)

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behavior that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more people who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium, and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflicts or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

What bullying is not:

- single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- single episode acts of nastiness or spite
- random acts of aggression or intimidation
- mutual arguments, disagreements, or fights

These actions can cause great distress. However, they do not fit the definition of bullying, and they are not examples of bullying unless someone is deliberately and repeatedly doing them.

Self-reporting: Students who take responsibility for their actions and self-report to their appropriate administrator will be commended. Where possible, administration may reduce the consequence for the offense.

Playground Rules

We ask that students please observe the following rules to protect their safety:

- Students are to be monitored at all times by at least one faculty member.
- No pushing, shoving, or horseplay.
- Slide only feet first.

Front Desk Policy

For the safety of your child, please notify the office **in writing** should someone other than the primary parent and/or guardian pick up your child. It would be most helpful if you would include the person's name and contact phone number. A photo ID will be required.

For early dismissal requests, notification of absence or late arrival, please contact the front desk via phone message or email (FrontDesk@HCAGA.org) prior to the start of the day. For the safety of our students, students who are checking out early should check out prior to 2:50 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays (1:50 pm on Wednesdays). Secondary students will not be allowed to check out during elementary carline (approximately 2:50-3:10 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday and 1:50-2:10 pm on Wednesdays). Please drop them off and pick up students in the carpool line. Elementary parents who wish to park and pick up their child should wait until the elementary car line ends. Please note that text messages from parents/guardians will not serve as adequate permission for student dismissal.

- If you are sending money as payment for lunch or tuition, please place it in a sealed envelope which is clearly labeled with the student's name and "Front Desk."
- Students are encouraged to be responsible for bringing necessary items to school. If you must bring forgotten items/backpacks/etc. to school, please drop them off at the front desk. Students

will be called to the front desk between periods to pick up belongings. Parents should not deliver items into the classroom without administrative approval.

- Should you need to contact your student in the event of an emergency, please contact the front desk, and we can locate your child to communicate any necessary messages or have your child call home.
- Please avoid distracting conversation in the front desk/main entrance area, especially during class changes or elementary dismissal.

In the event of a change of mailing address, phone number, or email address, please provide the changes to HCA as soon as possible.

Section 6: Parent-School Communication

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are an element of our school's communication policy. HCA expects families to participate in conferences that establish and assess goals in the following areas: academic, spiritual, social, emotional, and extra-curricular. Teachers and parents are encouraged to communicate frequently via e-mail, office phone, and face-to-face, as needed.

Staff will attempt to respond to all emails within 1 business day. Business days do not include weekends or holidays. Staff members are encouraged to use office phones when contacting parents. As such, they are not required to provide their cell phone numbers to parents.

Appropriate, Christ-centered moral and ethical relationships should be always maintained between employees, students and parents. Students and parents should never be isolated in a one-on-one situation with a non-family member HCA employee of the opposite gender. Accordingly, parents/visitors should never be isolated in a one-on-one situation with a non-family member student of the opposite gender. It is important that our staff, students, and parents do not engage in any interaction or communication that might reflect even the appearance of impropriety or make others feel uncomfortable in your presence.

Parent Concerns

For parent concerns, our school encourages an "open-door" policy. "Coffee with Administration" and other events provide opportunities for parents to share praises and concerns regarding HCA. Conflict resolution at HCA is shaped by Christ's words in Matthew 18:15-17. When concerns or issues arise, the parent or student should attempt to resolve them directly with the teacher, staff member, coach, or other parent. Should parents' concerns not be appropriately addressed or resolved, parents should consult the principal. Further concerns are to be directed to the Head of School; it is the school's desire to resolve all matters using this process.

In the rare occasion that the completion of the Matthew 18:15-17 process does not result in satisfactory resolution of the matter at hand, a family's concerns may be brought to the attention of the school's Board of Directors ("Board"). Families that desire to appeal to the Board at this stage of the process are required

to request an opportunity to appeal through a written request, submitted to the Board Chairman at boardchair@hcaga.org. HCA's Board and Administration discourage using communication where they are unable to verify the source of the information.

All communication, including posts on social media by students and parents/guardians referencing HCA and its students, should be uplifting and positive. HCA expects parent volunteer leaders to be positive voices promoting the school both within and outside the school community.

Adoption of the Handbook

The Horizon Christian Academy Board of Directors has adopted this handbook and reserves the right to amend or change the handbook at any time. Because the handbook cannot address every situation that may arise, the Head of School and Board of Directors reserves the right to make decisions that will best benefit the school community.

2026-2027 Tuition & Fee Schedule

Tuition

Elementary (K-5th)	**$14,300**
Secondary (6th-12th)	**$15,800**

Tuition costs include textbooks, yearbook, and a student photo package. There are additional costs for uniforms, optional athletics/activities, Language Arts novels, and optional lunch/concessions program. We also ask that families prayerfully consider participating in our Annual Fund.

Non-Refundable Fees

Enrollment Fee

An Enrollment Fee of **$1000** is due upon acceptance for each student. The Enrollment Fee cannot be prorated and is non-refundable. Student Enrollment Fees and signed enrollment forms for returning students are due by January 31, 2026. A **$250** enrollment fee credit will be provided for any student that enrolls by January 31, 2026. We cannot guarantee a place for returning students after January 31st without payment and the signed enrollment forms.

Other Fees

- New Student Application Fee $125
- Senior Fee $350
- International Student Fee $2,000
- Academic Screening (Level 2) $75
- Technology Fee (High School Only) TBD
- FACTS Annual Tuition Monthly Paymen Plan Fee $50(per family, if a payment plan is selected)

412 Fees

Elementary

- SMART $2,550
- Reading Support $3,000
- Math Support $3,000
- Resource (both Reading and Math) $5,500
- Read 180 Program (Not enrolled in 412) $150
- Elementary Monitoring (3rd-5th grade) $350

**Elementary Monitoring includes creating a 412 plan from existing documentation (504, IEP, Ed Psych), accommodations, and frequent check-ins.*

Secondary

Level 1 - $850

Basic Secondary 412 Monitoring includes a 412 Plan with classroom supports and /or testing accommodations created from professional evaluations*, communication with parents, monitoring student performance (grades, homework, missing assignments), consulting with students and parents, conferences as needed and an Academic Planning Conference, coordination of outside therapies, and Standardized Testing Accommodations (with appropriate documentation).

*Valid, recent documentation is required (IEP with Educational/Psychological testing from public school or private Ed/Psych testing) documenting an identified disability. Based upon collected data and date of testing, additional testing may be required, especially when in transition years. Ed Psych testing will need to be updated during the student's Junior year in order to continue receiving accommodation in college.

Level 2 - $2000

Thrive 412 Program includes the Basic Secondary Monitoring listed above, plus Study Hall class where the student is assisted by a teacher with homework, planning, study skills, projects, and student check-in several times a week to discuss agenda, planning, maintaining assignments, grades, etc. Academic Progress Monitoring will be administered in Fall and Spring in student's area of concern and communicated with families.

Secondary 412 add-ons:

- **Standard Testing Lab - $1,000**
  Includes small group testing in a quiet space. Students must have this recommendation from a valid, up-to-date Ed Psych report as described in the above requirements. Students utilizing the Testing Lab must first be enrolled in a 412 Monitoring Program.

- **Additional Individual Testing Support - $1,000+**
  Based on the level of support requested.

- **Read 180 Program – (Middle School Only) - $250**
  Read 180 is an evidence-based blended learning solution designed for students in Grades 6-8. Students receive systematic, explicit instruction and practice of foundational literacy skills to develop their fluency, expand vocabulary and strengthen comprehension skills to become proficient, skillful readers.

Tuition Discounts

All discounts are netted against tuition only (excludes Fees).
Total combined discounts are limited to 50% of a student's tuition.

All tuition discounts are applied to the net amount due by the family AFTER any financial aid or scholarships (including Georgia Special Needs "GSN" scholarship credits) are applied.

Discounts are listed in the order they will be applied. Each discount is applied on the net tuition due after the previous discount has been applied.

Multi-Child Discount

Child 1: Pays full tuition
Child 2: 12% tuition discount
Child 3+: 25% tuition discount

Employees should refer to the Employee Manual for increased Multi-Child Discount percentages.

Ministry Leaders Discount

There is a 25% discount on tuition for all full-time church and parachurch ministry leaders, including pastors and early childhood education directors. Eligibility is detailed in the Ministry Discount Leaders Discount application, which should be requested and submitted at the time of acceptance.

Pre-payment Discount

A 5% tuition discount is offered for those wishing to prepay the full year's tuition in advance by March 31, 2026.

A 3% tuition discount is offered to any new families who enroll for the first time after March 31, 2026, and pre-pay the full year's tuition within two (2) weeks of enrollment.

Financial Considerations

Additional information and guidelines are provided in the Parent-Student Handbook

Financial Aid

Through GaSSO and other outlets of receiving financial resources, Horizon Christian Academy is able to provide financial aid to those in need. The HCA Scholarship Committee gives preferences to families in need of financial aid and decides additional awards based on merit and other considerations. The Financial Aid season runs January-March prior to the upcoming school year. A link to apply for financial aid will be available in reenrollment agreements. No financial assistance is awarded unless a family has first applied through the financial aid portal. Phase One of scholarships will be awarded in March/April. Families will be required to have 2023 filed tax returns AND 2024 W2/1099s when applying for financial aid. Students MUST be enrolled prior to applying for financial aid.

Horizon Christian Academy Payment Policies

Tuition payments must use our automatic tuition management system (FACTS) and will be drafted based on the payment plan chosen by the family in FACTS. Automatic payments can be made from a checking or savings account or from select credit cards. A transaction fee will be charged on credit card payments. All family balances must remain current (with a paid balance or enrolled/current in a payment plan) in order for students to participate in athletics, fine arts, Teambuilding, and other school related activities. All payment arrangements must be made through the HCA Business Office.

Georgia Special Needs (GSN) Recipients (and similar programs)

An estimated credit for expected GSN funds will be credited to your account based on the 24-25 GSN Scholarship Award. The GSN credit and subsequent discounts received will be adjusted based on actual GSN scholarship payments received and any balance due is the responsibility of the family. The family is responsible for any balance.

Estimated credits from GSN or other scholarship programs are applied PRIOR to tuition discounts.

Appendix B: High School Course Sequence

Grade	English	Social Science	Mathematics	Science	World Language	Bible	Elective- 8th
8	-Language Arts 8	-American History 8	-Pre-Algebra **-Algebra I****	- MS Physical Scienced Advanced Physical Science	Spanish I	-MS Bible	All 8th graders take 9 weeks of various electives.
	4 Credits (9th grade, American Lit required)	**4 Credits (US Hist, World Hist, Gov't/Econ required)**	**4 Credits (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II required)**	**4 Credits (Bio, Chem OR Envi Sci, Physics OR Phy Science required)**	**2 Credits (2 consecutive years 9-12 of the same language required)**	**4 Credits**	Electives- 9th-12th PE/Health : 1 credit Fine Art/WL* : 1 credit Elective : 0-1 credit
9	-9 English Lit & Composition	-World Geography -Ancient World History -AP Human Geography	-Algebra I -Geometry	-Biology	-Spanish I -American Sign Language I	-Bible 9	-PE (1 semester) -Health (1 semester) Both are <u>required and can be taken anytime during H.S.</u>
10	-World Lit & Comp	- Modern World - AP World History	-Geometry -Algebra II -Algebra II/Trig -AP Pre-Calculus	- Envi Sci (w/ Geometry) - Chemistry (w/ Algebra II)	-Spanish I, II, -American Sign Language I, II	-Bible 10	*<u>Electives</u> Art, Band, Theatre, Media Arts, Communication Skills, Physical Conditioning, Study Hall*** Another core, AP, or DE course

11	-American Lit -AP Lang - Brit Lit	-US History -AP US History -DE Psychology (in-person)	-Algebra II -Pre-Calculus -AP Pre-Calculus -AP Calculus AB/BC	- Physical Science or Physics - AP Chemistry '27-'28: AP Biology Forensics	-Spanish I, II, III -American Sign Language I, II -DE Spanish	-Bible 11	Dual Enrollment classes can begin in 11th grade. Students must have a 3.25 and permission from the Academic Dean to enroll. Students need 28 credits to graduate.
12	-Advanced Comp -Brit Lit -DE English 101-102 (online)	-Gov't/Econ -DE Govt/Econ (online) -DE Psychology (in-person)	-Adv. Mathematical Decision Making -Pre-Calculus -AP Calculus AB/BC - DE College Algebra (online)		-Spanish III -DE Spanish	-Bible 12	Senior Seminar

-NOTE: 9th- 11th grade students must take a minimum of 8 academic classes every semester, which includes Bible. See *** regarding Study Hall.

* All students must have one Fine Art credit (2 semesters) OR a 3rd year of World Language (2 semesters) taken in grades 9-12 to satisfy a graduation requirement.

** This course will count towards an 8th grade student's high school GPA at HCA, but not towards HOPE. Math teacher recommendation required.

*** Study Hall is not an academic class and is not listed on a transcript.

Updated 06/11/2025

HORIZON CHRISTIAN ACADEMY