



## **PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK**

### **Mission Statement**

*Veritas Christian Academy seeks to train the minds, develop the Christian character, and enrich the spiritual lives of its students through quality academic programs. Its purpose is to glorify God by teaching a Biblical worldview of life in a Christ-centered environment. 2 Corinthians 10:5*

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**NOTE: This Handbook is to be retained from year to year. Changes will be printed and issued as necessary.**

To Students and Parents,

Welcome to Veritas! It is thrilling to be part of God's plan for a Christian High School in Sussex County. You are truly appreciated for taking the "giant" step and joining us. You are making an investment which will provide returns like none other. Thank you for your confidence and support.

We have the responsibility to complement the training and education you are providing at home and through your local church. Worldview integration will take place in every high school environment. The issue boils down to which worldview you want integrated. At Veritas, our goal is to reach transformation through education as we integrate a Biblical worldview.

The challenging program at VCA seeks to complement the four areas of personal development which are addressed in Luke 2:52, "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Wisdom, or the intellect, is of paramount importance as we seek to maximize each student's academic potential through course offerings and a professional, caring faculty. Stature, or the physical, will develop in an environment which encourages students and recognizes we are created in God's image. Favor with God, or the spiritual, is foundational for the student's personal relationship with the Lord and will dictate each step and decision. Favor with man, or the social, is developed in a positive environment where classmates will encourage right choices.

This handbook is designed to inform you of the details of how VCA functions. There is an obvious need for day-to-day regulations which will strengthen our relationship with one another. It is necessary for all students and parents to invest the time to become familiar with the contents of this manual before the school year begins.

"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and you shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."  
Deuteronomy 6:6-9

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# General Information

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## Principles of Education

### Philosophy of Education

Veritas Christian Academy's education philosophy is the centerpiece of its foundation. It governs how and what is taught in the classroom, in the curriculum, in the programs, as well as what seeds are being planted and watered daily within the hearts, souls and minds of the students. Our philosophy is expressed by the following principles:

- Veritas Christian Academy's goal is to encourage and assist students in understanding who they are in Christ and equipping them to stand in a fallen world. We believe that each person has been created in God's image, with a unique identity, purpose, and talent. This academy is committed to helping students discover and develop their God-given talents.
- All instruction at Veritas Christian Academy is based on a Biblical worldview. We believe all truth is God's truth, and the Bible is the source of all truth. No subject can be taught in the totality of its truth if God, the Creator, is ignored or denied.
- Love, service, and obedience are three main virtues that Veritas Christian Academy seeks to instill in its students. A student's love for God will guide his voluntary submission to God's authority. We strive to promote virtue, leadership, and a strong life-long commitment to God, family, the Christian community, and country. Authority, compassion, and mutual respect are important principles we seek to uphold.
- We exist to assist parents and grandparents in their God-given mandate to educate their children as stated in Deuteronomy 6:6-9, and Deuteronomy 4:9.
- We encourage active and responsible citizenship by teaching the true Christian heritage and principles upon which the United States of America was founded.
- Our teachers do not simply pass on knowledge, but mentor and disciple according to the Word of God. Knowledge alone can puff up and build pride until it becomes arrogance (1 Corinthians 8:1), but the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10).

### Statement of Faith

- We believe that the Bible is the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God, without error in the original languages. The Bible is, therefore, profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20,21).
- We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Isaiah 45:22; Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14).
- We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:14); in His virgin birth (Luke 1:27,35); in His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15); in His miracles (John 10:25; John 20:30); in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood (Romans 3:24,26); in His bodily resurrection (Luke 24:6,7; I Corinthians 15:4,5); in His ascension (Acts 1:9) to the right hand of the Father (Psalm 110:1); and in His personal return in power and glory (Matthew 26:64; I Thessalonians 4:16,17; Acts 1:11).
- We believe that regeneration by the Holy Spirit is essential for the salvation of lost people (Romans 7:4-6; II Corinthians 1:21,22), and that this salvation is wholly of grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8,9).
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling, the Christian is enabled to live a godly life (Romans 8:5-11). The Holy Spirit gives gifts (I Corinthians 12:4-7; Ephesians 4:11) so that the body of Christ (the church) is enabled to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19).
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost: The saved unto the resurrection of life and the lost unto the resurrection of damnation (I Corinthians 15; John 5:28,29; Revelation 20:11-15).

- We believe in the spiritual unity of believers, through and in our Lord Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:3-6) and in the church, which is His body (Ephesians 1:22,23; Matthew 16:17,18).
- We believe in the sacraments of Baptism (Matthew 28:19) and the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 12:23-26).
- We believe in the sanctity of marriage (Matthew 19:4-6) and in the sanctity of life (Genesis 1:27; Exodus 20:13; Psalm 139:13-16).
- We believe that Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and Man (I Timothy 2:5).
- We believe the complete Bible is contained within 66 books, and was closed with the Book of Revelation.

### **Objectives of Education**

For the spiritual and moral growth of the student, the school seeks:

- To teach the Bible and its doctrines, and foster right attitudes toward it as God's inspired Word.
- To lead the pupil into a personal, saving relationship with Christ as Savior and Lord.
- To create and encourage a desire to know and do the will of God.
- To teach the student consistent daily Christian living.
- To teach active involvement in leading others to the Savior.
- To develop a Biblical sense of right and wrong, and to teach victorious Christian living.
- To foster self-discipline based upon respect and reverence to God and all authority.
- To build in the student a God-consciousness and help him or her develop a consistent Christian philosophy of life by integrating all subjects with the Bible.

For the student's personal and social development, the school aims:

- To develop a balanced personality based on a proper understanding and acceptance of himself or herself as God made him or her and on the full development of his or her capabilities in Christ.
- To foster wholesome personal relationships through development of social skills based on the Christian concept of love.
- To prepare for the wholesome and Christian use of leisure time.
- To show a realistic and Biblical view of life and work.
- To promote fitness, maintenance, and skillful use of the body as the temple of God.
- To impart the Biblical attitude toward material things and promote the wise use of them for the glory of God.
- To teach love of country and unashamed patriotism.

Academically, the school endeavors:

- To promote high academic standards and to help the student gain a thorough comprehension and command of the fundamental processes used in communicating with others.
- To teach and to encourage the formation of good study habits and research methods.
- To develop creative and critical thinking and the proper use of Biblical criteria for evaluation.
- To promote good citizenship through developing an understanding and appreciation of our Christian and American heritage of freedom and human dignity.
- To impart knowledge of the world and current affairs and relate them to God's plan for man.
- To foster an appreciation and enjoyment of the fine arts.

Working with the home from which the student comes, the school desires:

- To cooperate closely with the parents in every phase of the student's development, especially as it relates to the school program.
- To help the parents to understand the school's philosophy, purpose, and program.

- To aid families in making their homes God-centered.

### **Accreditation**

VCA is not accredited at this time. VCA is currently in the process of accreditation with The Association of Christian Schools International and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools

### **Changes in Policy**

The VCA Board of Trustees and Administration retain the right to make changes, amendments and corrections as they see fit to the rules and policies of the school, including those in this Parent-Student Handbook, at any time, with or without prior notice.

### **National and Regional Memberships**

VCA holds membership in the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

### **Organization**

Veritas Christian Academy is an incorporated non-profit organization for the purpose of providing Christian education on the high school level for those who qualify. The school was chartered in 2000 and began operation in 2006. A self-perpetuating Board of Trustees guides and directs the school.

## **Academic Information**

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### **Philosophy of the Academic Program**

Our goal at VCA is to provide a first class education that is thoroughly Christian. This is essential to our “higher goal” of preparing our students for effective Christian citizenship in this modern era.

### **Academic Progress Reports**

Parents have access to their student’s grades on a daily basis via RenWeb, our online school management system. Through RenWeb, parents and students can check homework assignments, look over teacher approved resources, see the school calendar, view daily attendance, as well as track student grades.

A student with more than one “F” is presumed to have an overall average below “C” and will therefore be subject to Academic Restriction. (See “Academic Restriction” below.)

### **Academic Restriction**

Any student who has a failing quarter average in any subject at any grade report or progress report evaluation time will be placed on Academic Restriction. Students may also be placed on this list by the administrator for improper attitude or behavior.

A list of students on restriction for the evaluation period will be distributed to the teachers and coaches. Students on restriction may not be excused from class or study hall to be involved in special activities or participate in any during- or after-school game or performance (unless this performance is required of all students in a graded course). Students on restriction are expected to use their class, study hall, and after school time wisely to improve their grades and should seek suggestions for improvement from the teacher involved.



A student on Academic Restriction may request that his or her status be reviewed at the end of each week if his or her grade in the problem subject has improved. If the student is no longer showing a failing average in that subject, he or she may be removed from restriction by the administrator. It is important to note that it is up to the student to initiate the request for re-evaluation.

Any athlete on restriction for more than three weeks during the season will be permanently suspended from that sport. Students who receive two D's or one F on their grade report will relinquish any student leadership position (Student Council, class officer, extra-curricular, etc.) in the school for the next quarter. If this happens a second time in a school year, the student will permanently relinquish these responsibilities for the remainder of the school year.

**Academic Restriction for Incomplete Grade Report Grades:** Students who have any incomplete grades on their grade report will be listed on a special Restricted Activity List beginning the week after grade reports are issued. If a student has not made up an incomplete grade on a grade report by the first progress report evaluation time of the next marking period, he or she may be placed on the Restricted Activity List until all missing work is completed. These students will be governed by the normal regulations for Academic Restriction until they complete their work for the previous marking period. They may be removed from Academic Restriction by the administrator when their teacher has informed the administrator's office that the work has been completed.

### **Annual Achievement Tests**

The Christian school edition of the Stanford Achievement Test is administered to all 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students annually. A copy of the student's test scores will be sent to his or her parents.

Sophomores are also encouraged to register for and take the PSAT. Juniors are encouraged to register and take the SAT in the spring. Seniors are encouraged to register for and take the SAT in the fall.

### **Bibles**

Your Bible is your main textbook in every course in the sense that every other textbook is interpreted in light of God's truth. As you grow in your understanding of Christian education, you will understand what that statement means. Each student should have a Bible in the first block, in chapel, and in class as required by the teacher.

The New International Version will be used in all classes.

### **Course Selection and Schedule Changes**

***Choosing your courses is part of the enrollment and re-enrollment process. The administration stands ready to advise and help in this process. Some courses have prerequisites, so care must be taken to insure that those prerequisite courses are in place.***

Permission to make schedule changes is normally granted only during the first two weeks of each semester and during the last week of the first semester (for second-semester courses only). After this time students may only change classes if initiated by the administration or if special permission is granted by the administration. Courses dropped after the second week of school will be so indicated on the student's transcript.

At least one of the following criteria is necessary for a change in schedule:

- The student did not receive a schedule or no class was scheduled during a period.
- The student has a schedule conflict: two classes meeting at the same time.
- There is a duplication of a class successfully completed (i.e. in summer school).
- The student is unable to participate in an activity due to physical limitations.
- The student is scheduled for a course without having the correct prerequisites.

- The student has been misplaced academically.
- A senior may need a special class and/or credit for graduation.

**External Studies:** Under certain conditions students may be permitted or encouraged to take courses from outside sources which will count toward graduation requirements. This may include courses in your special areas of interest, make-up courses, etc. See the administration for details.

Credit for courses taken shall be earned with a passing grade by the semester if a course is a one-semester course. If the course is a two-semester course, the average of both semesters' work must be a passing grade for credit to be earned.

Credit for both types of courses may be earned either by repeating the course or by taking remedial work at summer school, if offered, at the discretion of the administration.

### **Computers and Related Resources**

Students of Veritas Christian Academy have access to the school computers, computer-related equipment, software, the RenWeb system and the Internet – hereafter referred to as computers and related resources. Access to these resources will enable students to explore information stored on local storage devices as well as thousands of Internet-based libraries, databases, and bulletin boards around the globe. Teachers will guide students toward appropriate materials. Families should be warned that some material accessible via the computers and related resources may contain items that are illegal, immoral, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. VCA operated computer services are closely monitored to prevent access to these types of material. While our intent is to make access to the computers and related resources available for the purpose of supporting educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other material as well. We believe that the benefits that students can derive from access to our computers and related resources exceed any disadvantages.

However, Veritas Christian Academy supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to exercise the privilege of using VCA's computers and related resources. If a parent does not want the student to have access to VCA computers and related resources, they must submit a letter to that effect to the administrator. **Parents should be advised that this action may place the student at a disadvantage in some classes.**

Students are to use the VCA computers and related resources only for VCA sponsored activities and work that is directly related to classroom learning activities, such as, but not limited to, writing papers, performing calculations, creating/manipulating graphic images, organizing/analyzing data and conducting research. Access to computers and related resources is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner and it is expected that all users will comply with VCA standards and will honor the agreements they signed upon receipt of the Parent Student Handbook.

The following actions are NOT permitted when using VCA computers and related resources:

- Modifications of system or system files
- Non-teacher directed chat rooms
- Distribution or display of offensive messages or pictures
- Use of obscene language
- Harassment, insult, or attack of others
- Damage of any computers and related resources
- Violation of copyright laws
- Giving a password to another individual or using another individual's password
- Trespass of folders, work, or files
- Intentional waste of limited resources

- Employment of any of the VCA computers and related resources for commercial purposes
- Accessing anything illegal, immoral or inappropriate

**Violations will result in a loss of access as well as the possibility of other disciplinary or legal action.**

VCA's computer related data storage areas (i.e. floppy disks, CDs, DVDs, hard drives, Internet servers, etc.) are not private. VCA administration may review files and communications at any time and without prior notification to maintain system integrity and ensure that students are using the computers and related resources responsibly and appropriately.

**Remember that access is a privilege, not a right.**

### **Diploma Eligibility**

Students wishing to receive a diploma from Veritas Christian Academy must have been enrolled full time at VCA for his/her entire senior year.

Prior to admission, the student will be required to provide a transcript that shows that the state core standards have been met and may be required to complete a battery of tests to indicate his/her proficiency in the core subjects.

To receive a diploma or an official final transcript, all tuition/fees must be paid in full.

### **Students Requesting Early College Entrance**

VCA recommends that all students meet graduation requirements in a minimum of four (4) years. Any exceptions must be addressed in writing to the Education Committee of the Board of Trustees for consideration.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips give opportunity for learning away from the school campus, "in the field." Please remember that they are primarily designed for learning. Parental permission slips will be issued for all field trips. They must be returned in advance of the trip. Students and parents will be asked to help cover the costs of field trips. Parents are urged to volunteer assistance as needed. Generally, at least one chaperone is required for every eight students going on the trip.

### **Grade Point Average**

The Guidance Office/Administration computes and keeps a running record of the grade point average (GPA) for every student. Factored into the GPA are all courses from freshman year through senior year. The final GPA determines a student's rank in class. ***All students should understand the importance of their grade point average for their post-high school planning and take this matter seriously throughout their high school years.***

### **Grade Reports**

Grade reports are issued every 5 weeks. The grading scale used is described below.

Teachers will inform students on how the grade is determined. A common formula is: 50 percent of the grade is the average of tests; 25 percent is the student's daily work and quiz average; and 25 percent of the grade is the score for the five-week exam or project. Other factors (participation, effort, etc.) may affect the grade.

## Grading Scale

Academic excellence is the standard for each individual in every subject every day. As servants of God we are expected to develop the abilities God has given us to their highest potential.

Each teacher will distribute his or her specific grading policies at the beginning of the course. Letter grades are used and have the following meanings:

A+	4.0	100-99	Outstanding	C+	2.4	84-83	Average
A	3.7	98-95		C	2.0	82-79	
A-	3.5	94-93		C-	1.6	78-77	
B+	3.3	92-91	Above average	D+	1.4	76-75	Below average
B	3.0	90-87		D	1.0	74-72	
B-	2.6	86-85		D-	0.6	71-70	
				F	0.0	69-0	Failure
				I			Incomplete

**Incomplete Grades:** Work for the marking period that is not finished must be completed before the grade can be computed. This work must be completed within two weeks of the date the grade report is issued unless special arrangements have been made. After that time an F will be averaged in for each assignment that was not completed.

## Graduation Honors

In order to be recognized as Valedictorian or Salutatorian of a graduating class, the student must have been enrolled as a full time student at VCA in both their Junior and Senior years.

## Homework

Since education is an active process requiring independent practice and study, homework is a necessary part of a student's education. *Coming to class with your homework not completed is unacceptable and will be dealt with appropriately.*

Work assigned to be done outside of school should be done on time, neatly, and completely. Unexcused late work will be penalized at the discretion of the teacher.

If work is assigned before an absence, it should be handed in as soon as possible when the student returns. If tests are missed during the student's absence, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher to promptly make up missed work according to a mutually acceptable timetable.

Parents are urged to provide for and insist on a regular time to be set aside for study at home. This should be in a quiet place, free from distractions. Parental interest and enforcement of quality homework are a must if the best results are to be obtained. Penmanship, neatness, completion, and general high quality are expected. Our goal is above average work by every student.

## Honor Rolls

"High Honors" will be granted to all students with an "A" average (93 percent or higher) with no F's for the marking period. "Honors" status will be granted to all students with an overall "B" average (85-92 percent) with no F's.

**Incomplete Grades – See above under "Grading Scale" and under "Academic Restrictions."**

## **Make-Up Work**

When a student is necessarily absent from school, all missed work is to be completed promptly. (Usually a maximum of one day is allowed for each day missed.) As much as possible, students should try to keep up with classroom work and even complete work ahead of time for anticipated absences such as approved illegal absences. This means that any long-term projects or term papers that have a due date previously announced must be completed by that due date. Late penalties will result when the project or term paper is turned in after the due date. Unexcused late work will be penalized at the discretion of the teacher based on the teacher's classroom policy which the teacher will communicate to the students.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

We encourage parents to make appointments with the teachers regarding the academic program and any problems their children incur. Conferences should be scheduled through the office. Conferences are held before and/or after school unless scheduled differently by the teacher.

Parent-Teacher Conference Days will be scheduled during November and April. At that time parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with teachers, and teachers may request conferences with parents.

## **School Hours and Bell Schedule**

The school day will begin at 7:45 am in first period. Dismissal will be at 2:15 pm. Our day will consist of 4 (four) blocks. Bell schedules are as follows:

BLOCK 1	7:45 am - 9:18 am
BLOCK 2	9:22 am - 10:49 am
BLOCK 3	10:53 am - 12:20 pm
LUNCH	12:20 pm - 12:45 pm
BLOCK 4	12:48 pm - 2:15 pm

## **Study Habits**

Like any other worthwhile habit, good study habits are not automatic. They are learned. Teachers try to teach good study habits, and students of all ages should try to put them into practice. Some of them may require a bit more time but will yield greater results in the end.

We encourage and expect every student to be an active participant in the learning process. If a student has an attitude of wanting to learn, he will learn. If he passively sits in class with an attitude of "daring" the teacher to teach him anything, you can be sure that he will not, because those who don't want to learn don't. (See Proverbs 2:1-6 and note the number of strong action verbs applied to the learner.) Good study habits also extend to the way you prepare your work, and for this reason teachers will set and uphold high standards for written work.

## **Textbooks and Learning Materials**

The school takes great care in selecting the materials that are formally presented to students in its classes by means of films, tapes, textbooks, or other media. Students and parents should understand that Christian learning materials that are well written and academically sound are not available for all academic disciplines. We need and appreciate your understanding and cooperation in the area of trying to bring to the student many rich and valuable educational experiences while ensuring that each student is properly trained to recognize the absolute standards of life.

Virtually all textbooks used at VCA are loaned to the student. They must be covered and used with great care. Hard-backed texts must be covered by the end of the first week of school and are to be kept covered to prevent wear and damage. Book covers should not be taped to the book. At the end of the

year, students will be charged up to the cost of the book for extent of any damage beyond usual wear and tear. Special care must be exercised with paperback texts.

Book covers or notebooks with un-Christian content such as television or movie stars or rock personalities will not be permitted. Students must keep notebook and book covers in neat condition. If a student does not follow these directions, he or she will be required to replace the covers.

The student's name should appear in all of his or her books. Writing in them is to be done only at the direction of a teacher.

Any student, parent, or pastor who has cause to question a book or reading assignment should request an interview with the student's teacher.

## Attendance Information

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### Classification of Absences

#### Legal Absences

- Illness: If a student is ill, he or she needs to bring an excuse signed by a parent or guardian. A doctor's excuse must be presented if the student is absent five or more consecutive days or if the student is absent with a communicable disease such as pink eye or chicken pox.
- Dental / doctor appointments: Please try to schedule dental and doctor appointments either before or after school as much as possible. A note from a parent or a notice signed by the physician must verify tardiness resulting from necessary doctor or dental appointments. Requests to leave school for a dental or doctor appointment should be submitted to the office the day before the appointment when possible or at the very latest by 7:45 the day of the appointment.
- Death in the family
- Weather-related absences: Absences due to the school district in which you reside closing or delaying opening due to weather conditions will be counted as legal absences.

#### Approved Illegal Absences (AIAs)

- Any absence or tardy for reasons other than those defined as legal absences in the section above are classified as illegal absences. A student may be granted up to three approved illegal absences per school year for church retreats, seminars, college visitations, hunting trips, etc. Juniors and seniors who use all of their three days for college visitation may request additional days if needed for that purpose.
- To receive approval for an "AIA", a parent must submit a written request to the Administrator stating the date and nature of the absence. These requests must be submitted in advance for consideration. If approved, the student will be permitted to make up missed work for full credit.
- **It is very important that students get their assignments in advance of their AIA and that the work be completed by the time they return to school.** The advance notice requirement exists to allow teachers to prepare these assignments for the student.
- Illegal absences will not be approved during the final two weeks of each semester, or during achievement testing.
- If a parent wishes to request more than three days illegal absences for distinctly educational purposes, a request explaining the educational value of the trip must be submitted to the Administrator to be considered for approval. Normally, a maximum of five approved illegal absences will be allowed during a school year.

## Daily Attendance

Good academic performance in school requires that a student be in attendance as often as possible.

### Doctor's Excuses and Maximum Allowable Absences

Any student who has a yearly cumulative total of fifteen days' absence must have verification from a physician for each additional absence. If a student is absent more than twenty days in a school year, tutoring or summer school may be required before the student is promoted to the next grade.

## Excuses

Each absence or tardiness must be explained in a single note or phone call to the Administrator from the parent. The excuse is to be given to the office upon return from the absence. Excuses for absence or tardiness must be specific. "My child was absent (or late)" is insufficient. Written excuses for absence or tardiness MUST be in the office within three days of the absence or tardiness.

Acceptable reasons for absence or tardiness include: late school bus, a specified illness, medical appointment, death in the family, and special family and church activities (see above under *Approved Illegal Absences*). Unacceptable reasons include getting up late, traffic problems (if cited too frequently) and trips with friends.

## Tardiness

A student who is not in his or her assigned first block room (not just in the building) by 7:45 is tardy to school. In cases where a parent assumes responsibility for the student's tardiness, a note should be presented on the same day.

## Tardiness Detention

The school reserves the right to assign a before school detention of 20 minutes or the amount of the tardiness, whichever is greater, to students who are chronically late. The detention will be served on days specified by the Administrator and arranged with the student and family.

# Discipline Information

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## Philosophy of Discipline

Veritas Christian Academy, as a Christian academic community, strives to uphold a unity based on the lordship of Jesus Christ, guided by Biblical principles and certain prudent rules which we believe are beneficial in establishing an atmosphere conducive to Christian growth and order. Members of this community are expected to live according to the Word of God, responding to one another in love. Those who join this community are asked to accept the responsibilities of membership by respecting and supporting its Christian distinctive and its standards of conduct.

## Discipline Policy

The purpose of discipline in a Christian school is two-fold: first, to bring the student to maturity in Christ, and, second, to develop qualities of good citizenship. To help attain these goals, certain standards of conduct are established. Students are asked to discipline themselves in relation to this code because the best form of discipline is self-discipline under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the goal of all outward discipline is self-discipline. The teacher seeks to help the student achieve this self-discipline within the framework of positive relationships between them.

Positively, the school seeks to cooperate with the home in forming good habits in the student such as cheerful obedience to authority, courtesy and respect for others, responsibility, cleanliness and orderliness, truthfulness and honesty, morally correct conduct, and wise use of time, talents and material possessions. VCA seeks, in other words, to build Godly character traits into the lives of its students and pursues an active program in doing so, both through instruction and example. A rebellious spirit or negative attitude, which is unchanged after much effort by the faculty, can be a poor influence on other students. Continued deliberate disobedience to a teacher or to school rules has an adverse effect upon the school's testimony.

Actions which evidence disrespect, lack of courtesy, general disturbance, abuse of permission, incomplete homework, lateness and other offenses shall be handled by the teacher. Situations that the teacher evaluates as chronic, flagrant, or otherwise worthy of special handling will be referred to the Administrator. These situations will be dealt with as seems most helpful to the individual and the student body.

#### Discipline Code

*My son (daughter), preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight; they will be life for you. - Proverbs 3:21, 22*

Disciplinary action will be taken for infractions of school policy and rules. These may include **before school detention, extra assignments, suspension, probation**, or as a final resort, **expulsion**.

#### Drug Testing Policy

As stated in the Discipline Policy and Procedure Manual, VCA follows a strict zero-tolerance policy on drugs and other illegal substances. VCA takes the accusation of the use of Controlled Dangerous Substances (CDS) very seriously. All suspicion of the use of CDS will be investigated by the Administration. Attempts will be made to notify the parents of the suspicion and to inform them of the course of action that will be taken. If the VCA Administration suspects that a student **is** under the influence of a controlled dangerous substance, the student will immediately be taken to the Emergency Department to be tested.

Prior to the start of the school year, all parents/students must sign the Controlled Dangerous Substance Agreement allowing Veritas to have this testing performed if the need should arise. If the parents or student refuse to sign the agreement, the student will not be allowed to enter VCA. Per federal HIPAA laws, the student must sign a release form at the hospital to allow VCA to receive a copy of the results. If the student refuses to sign this release, the student will be suspended. This suspension will remain in effect until the results have been viewed by VCA, at which time, any further discipline will be determined. If the student continues to withhold the results of the testing, expulsion of the student from VCA will be considered.

In the event that a student is sent for testing for CDS, the hospital bill will be paid by Veritas Christian Academy. If the test results are positive, the student's parents will be liable to reimburse VCA for the total amount of the bill.

If the test results are positive, VCA Administration will follow the disciplinary actions outlined in the Discipline Policy and Procedure Manual.

#### Drug Testing Agreement

We give Veritas Christian Academy our permission to have the student named below tested for the use of a Controlled Dangerous Substance (CDS). This permission is given only in the event that there is a suspicion that the student may be under the influence of a CDS, and not for routine testing. Any testing may be administered without further consent or notification to the student and/or parent.



In the event that a student is sent for testing for CDS, the hospital bill will be paid by Veritas Christian Academy. If the test results are positive, the student's parents will be liable to reimburse VCA for the total amount of the bill.

_____	_____	_____
<i>Parent's Name (Please Print)</i>	<i>Parent's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
_____	_____	_____
<i>Student's Name (Please Print)</i>	<i>Student's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

**Candy and Gum: See Prohibited Items and Activities.**

**Cheating**

Cheating includes receiving quiz or test answers dishonestly, including using copies of tests not authorized by the teacher, copying or cooperating on homework assignments in a way that results in the finished product not being the student's own work, and plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as "stealing and passing off the idea or words of another as one's own work without crediting the source." This form of cheating is often widely misunderstood. For this reason teachers will seek to help students form an accurate concept of this offense in their thinking. Please understand that plagiarism *is* a form of cheating and will be dealt with as such. Working together when directed or permitted by your teacher (cooperative learning) is not cheating, but passing someone else's work as your own work is.

**Detention**

Like other means of discipline, before school detention is designed primarily as a deterrent. If a student fails to do an assignment on time, or in an acceptable manner, the teacher may require the assignment be completed during that detention period. Also, detention may be assigned for serious attitude or behavior problems, unexcused illegal absences from school and/or class(es). Detention is a serious matter and is to be considered as such.

**NOTE:** Failure to report for detention on the assigned date will result in a rescheduled detention *plus an additional detention*

**Disciplinary Probation**

Disciplinary probation is designed to alert the student and his or her parents to areas of his or her life that need special attention. Students may be placed on disciplinary probation by the recommendation of the faculty and the approval of the administration, or by the administrative staff, for a specified period of time for continued deliberate disobedience, continued and persistent rebellious attitude, negative influence on other students, academic progress that is unacceptable because the student is not working up to his or her ability, committing a serious breach of conduct inside or outside the school, failure by students and parents to comply with school policies, or failure by the parents to get recommended professional help for students when needed.

A conference with the student and his or her parents is held at the beginning of the probation to discuss the reasons for the probation. Teachers who wish to participate in the conference may do so, or they may be requested by the Administrator to attend. A letter stating the results of the conference and the reasons for the probation will follow this conference.

During the probation period the student may be restricted from participating in extracurricular activities.

- In cases where the probation follows a serious breach of conduct, a second major incident of misconduct during the disciplinary probation period will result in the administration seeking an

order from the school board expelling the student. If the offense occurs during the second semester, the student may be admitted the following year only under disciplinary probation.

- During the restriction the teachers will periodically review the progress of the student. The administrative staff will then decide whether the student shall be returned to the status of a regular student or will recommend expulsion from the school to the Board of Trustees.

*Disciplinary probation is sincerely intended as an intermediate step for the student to "get his or her act together." If there is no progress in attitude, behavior, or general academic achievement, the student will be asked to withdraw from the school or he or she will be expelled by action of the school board.*

## **Position and Authority of Teachers**

The faculty and staff of VCA are to be given the respect due their position. God's Word admonishes us, "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you." (Hebrews 13:17).

The administrative staff and teachers have authority over any and all students whether or not they have the student in class. In the classroom, the teacher will determine appropriate conduct. Teachers have been given professional responsibility to correct unacceptable behavior of any student in the school building or any area of the school grounds. Understanding that this responsibility has been given to them, students are urged to respond in a positive manner by stopping or avoiding those actions that are unacceptable at VCA or dishonoring to God. Students who choose to be insubordinate after being corrected will be referred to the Administrator (or in the case of an after-school activity, to the person in charge). The student must identify himself or herself to any staff member when asked.

It is never correct for a student to refer to a teacher or staff member other than by "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Miss," or "Dr." and then their last name.

**Any student who addresses a teacher or other staff person using inappropriate or insulting language will be subject to immediate suspension.** Any action taken by a student that disturbs the privacy or invades the private property of a teacher or Administrator at his or her home, or that affects his or her private property at school, will be viewed as a serious form of misbehavior and will be subject to disciplinary action by the school.

## **Prohibited Items and Activities**

- **Drugs/alcohol/tobacco**: VCA follows a strict zero-tolerance policy on drugs and other illegal substances. The possession or use of any illicit drugs, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, etc. at school or any school function will be considered grounds for suspension and possible expulsion. Because of the harmful nature of these activities, the continuance in our school of any student involved in such activities in or out of school is in serious question. Students involved in the use, possession, or selling of drugs, alcohol or tobacco may also be turned over to the proper authorities.
- **Knives and other weapons/explosives**: A zero-tolerance policy is in place on bringing any type of weapon/explosive to school, including pocket knives.
- **Posters/stickers**: Any advertisements of items in whatever form that are in conflict with the values of the school as stated in our objectives are not to be displayed on books, in lockers or on any personal possessions brought into the school.
- **Gum chewing** is not allowed in school.
- **Eating food or candy** during class is not permitted other than when approved by teacher.
- **Language** that is vulgar, obscene, derogatory or disrespectful will result in disciplinary action. The believer's talk should build others up, not put them down.

- **Other items:** Any item that disrupts a class (such as a wristwatch alarm or cell phone) will be taken to the office. Usually for the first offense, the student may be allowed to pick up the object at the office at the end of the school day. If parents are required to pick up a confiscated item, they must pick it up within one month or the item will be discarded.
- **Class attendance:** Students may not cut classes or skip school.

The following is a continuation of the prohibited in-school activities (including time spent on buses) for which disciplinary penalties will be assessed. Items marked with an asterisk (\*) relate to out-of-school situations as well.

- Littering
- Dress or appearance code infraction
- Unauthorized possession of electronic equipment
- Running in the halls or in the classroom
- Purposely holding door to classroom closed, or slamming doors
- Being in halls during class time without a pass
- Being in locations where students are not normally allowed
- Arriving late for class
- Excessive time out of class
- Misbehaving in class (including talking out of turn) or disturbing the class
- Not being prepared for class
- Failure to meet classroom responsibilities
- Failure to employ good study habits after repeated warning (not keeping a notebook, not taking notes, not keeping an assignment notebook, etc.)
- Failure to return documents by date due
- Horseplay
- Failure to sign out when leaving early
- Throwing or shooting objects in the building
- Snowball throwing
- Disturbance or rude behavior in Chapel
- Circumventing school procedure, *including short-circuiting the school-home communication process*
- Improper behavior on the bus - \*
- Cheating by copying another's work or giving work (Zeros will be given on all work.)
- Defacing of any kind of school, student, or faculty property
- Postering, rallies, sit-ins, sit-outs and other similar forms of protest
- Serious disruption of class
- Forging signatures or altering documents
- Possession of impure or suggestive literature, writing, symbols, drawings, CDs or tapes. Distribution of such will result in more severe penalty. (This infraction is subject to administrative judgment.)
- Sexually harassing another individual (See Antiharassment Policy)
- Unexcused absences and tardiness
- Non-compliance with regulations pertaining to driving to school-\*
- Cheating on tests. The student's grade on the test will be a zero, and he or she will be suspended.
- Skipping class; skipping detention; skipping school all day; intentional unacceptable tardiness
- Direct disobedience to any teacher or Administrator.
- Fighting
- Deliberate destruction or damage to school, church, student, and/or faculty property
- Altering grade reports
- Reckless driving at any school event-\*
- Leaving the school campus without permission

- Disrespect by word or action toward any faculty, staff member, or student
- Lying
- Immoral conduct (including, but not limited to, homosexual activity) - \*
- Stealing-\*

There will be an automatic disciplinary consequence if a student is referred to the Administrator by a teacher for a disciplinary problem since students are normally sent to the office only after the teacher has unsuccessfully tried to get the student's cooperation.

The administration reserves the right to amend or add discipline procedures at any time it is deemed necessary to gain student cooperation.

### **School Property**

Students are expected to care for the facilities that God has provided for us. Any student found damaging buildings, desks, or other school property is responsible for the repair or replacement of the defaced or damaged item. The school will not assume responsibility for the carelessness of a student. No student is to add or delete or change anything on the bulletin board or chalkboard without teacher approval. Students are to keep their feet off the walls and furniture.

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

**Suspension** is the responsibility of the Administrator and may be used for repeated or serious violations of school rules. Examples of such conduct include cheating, smoking, drinking, illegal use of drugs or the possession of drugs, sexually immoral behavior, etc. Students involved in the use, possession, or selling of drugs or alcohol may be turned over to the proper authorities.

- Any student who addresses a teacher or other staff person using inappropriate or insulting language is subject to immediate suspension. Students who bring a knife, gun or other weapon to school or who threaten the use of a weapon are also subject to immediate suspension.
- During the suspension period the student must keep up with his or her school work.
- A parent-student-Administrator conference will be held on the day the student returns to school and the student will be placed on probation for a period of six weeks or more.

**Expulsion** is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. The Administrator will refer students who have been placed on suspension, repeated suspensions or disciplinary probation to the Board. The Board will discuss the continuance in our school of any student whom the administration and/or the faculty have recommended for expulsion.

*A SUMMARY OF GOOD SCHOOL BEHAVIOR – Be at the right place, at the right time, with the right materials, in a quiet manner, with an expectant and submissive attitude.*

*AN ACCURATE, BIBLICAL DEFINITION - "Obedience is doing exactly what you're told to do, when you're told to do it, with a right heart attitude."*

# Enrollment / Withdrawal Information

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## Enrollment and re-enrollment

During the month of February applications for re-enrollment are accepted from parents of current freshmen, sophomores and juniors for the next fall term. From February 1 through March 15 applications for enrollment from eighth grade siblings of current students are considered. Processing of applications from other new students will begin on March 16. A non-refundable application fee is due with all new applications.

To reserve a spot in the upcoming school year, a nonrefundable registration fee is due by April 15.

## Evaluation Period for New Students

All new students are accepted for a one semester evaluation period. This means that during the evaluation period the faculty and administrative staff will evaluate their academic performance, behavior, attitude, and influence on others. It does not mean that any restrictions are placed on them.

## Parental Support for the Educational Process

It is essential that parents and school personnel pledge themselves to work together in order for the student to reap the benefits of a Christian education. We need and require your support of the school in discipline, dress, and educational policies. This can be accomplished by recognizing the authority of the teacher in the classroom, regular attendance at school programs and events, and praying for God's hand upon the school.

## Part-time Students

Veritas Christian Academy desires to work alongside parents and the church in educating students on a full-time basis. However, VCA is aware that some families feel led to home-school their children, but wish that some classes be taught in an institutional type setting. To this end, VCA will open its doors to any student who desires a Christ centered education to take individual classes. The student must submit an application, complete the interview process, and be accepted into the school in the same manner as a full-time student.

A part-time student will be allowed to attend a maximum of 2 blocks per school day.

Tuition will be assessed as outlined in the "Tuition for Part Time Students" policy in the Financial Information section of the Parent-Student Handbook.

## Student Withdrawal

If a student withdraws from VCA during the school year, the student's parent(s) must contact the office for the withdrawal to be finalized. All bills and school materials are expected to be reconciled before the student is officially withdrawn.

## Access to Student Records

School staff members may have unlimited access to student records if they are directly involved in the student's education. The records may not be removed from the school premises.

A student and his/her parents or legal guardians may have access to the student's records upon request. A member of the school staff shall be present when the student, parent or guardian examines the permanent record file. No document may be removed from the file without the permission of the Guidance Counselor or Administrator.

A student's confidential psychological, medical, or testing records may not be released to other agencies without the written permission of the parent or guardian.

### **Foreign Exchange Students**

Foreign exchange students who attend VCA will generally be placed in the junior or senior class. The guidance office/Administrator will make this determination upon review of the student's prior education and English language ability.

Students placed in the senior class will be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony but will be awarded a certificate of attendance instead of a diploma.

Students from VCA who participate in a foreign exchange program may receive credit for academic work completed during the program. They will need to secure approval from the guidance office in advance and should discuss what documentation is needed. Course credit will be granted after the student returns and upon review of this documentation. The student is responsible for obtaining the necessary documentation. If the student is completing his/her senior year during the foreign exchange program, a diploma will be granted upon his/her return provided the necessary documentation is obtained and the student meets New Jersey graduation requirements.

### **Home-School Situations**

Veritas Christian Academy exists as an extension of the Christian home. While this high school education is generally offered through a traditional program leading to a diploma from VCA, we recognize that some families choose to home school their children.

VCA will support these families by allowing their students to take classes for an appropriate fee. These classes will be offered on a space available basis, as full-time students will have priority. The standard enrollment policies and procedures will apply. While they are attending classes they shall be subject to all other policies such as dress code, discipline, etc. Any grades received will be provided to the parents. Since VCA is not responsible for their educational program, nor are they "enrolled" at VCA, these students will not receive a diploma from VCA nor participate in the VCA graduation ceremony.

In addition, home schooling groups are welcome to request the use of VCA facilities on the same basis as other organizations.

# Financial Information

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## Opportunity Fund

Tuition assistance is available from the Opportunity Fund. Application for assistance will be made through an independent aid assistance program. This independent company will then provide the appropriate materials to the Board of Trustees for its review. All opportunity fund applicants will be considered for aid.

Financial assistance can be discontinued because of (a) deliberate misrepresentation of financial facts on the application, (b) serious disciplinary action (i.e. expulsion) against the student receiving the assistance, or (c) failure to keep tuition payments current. All such discontinuance will be at the discretion of the VCA Board of Trustees.

## Textbook Fines

The student is responsible to care for all books received from the school. A fine will be assessed for any books that are lost or damaged beyond normal wear and tear.

## Tuition

VCA tuition will be payable through a tuition management service (FACTS). Tuition may be paid in one lump sum or divided over 10 months between August and May. Families enrolling after July will have their payments prorated over the number of months between their enrollment and May. All expectations regarding tuition payment (i.e. due dates, late fees, etc.) will be delivered to parents upon acceptance of the student.

If payment is not received within 10 days of the due date, a \$10.00 late fee will be assessed.

Partial refunds of unused tuition may be made, if the student is unable to complete the school year, for the following reasons:

- The student has a disabling injury or sickness, is under the care of a physician, is unable to attend classes, and the disability runs for a period of 30 days or longer.
- Death of the student.
- Death of the head of the household.
- Disability of the head of the household, resulting in loss of employment.

Requests for tuition refunds not covered by the above will be handled at the discretion of the VCA Board of Trustees.

Any student withdrawing will be obligated to pay tuition for a semester (1/2 year) whether or not the full semester was attended. In the event a student is asked by the VCA Administration to withdraw from VCA for reasons other than discipline (i.e. academic reasons), the full semester tuition requirement will be waived. In the event a student is being expelled or is withdrawing to avoid expulsion, tuition must be paid up through the end of the last month attended by the student.

## Tuition Delinquencies

Each month, the tuition management company shall submit to the Administrator a report showing the payment history of each family.

Delinquent tuition and fees generally must be paid before a student enters a new school year, takes final exams, or graduates. Any re-enrollment fees paid shall be retained by the school if re-enrollment is prohibited because of tuition delinquency.

In the event of an unanticipated financial emergency, the parents should notify the school office in writing, stating the nature of the problem and the process they propose to become current once again. The Administrator, after consulting with the Board Chairman and Treasurer, may permit a family to defer payment of tuition for a period not to exceed one semester. Any tuition waivers or extensions beyond this time require action by the Board of Trustees at the first regular meeting in the subsequent semester.

### **Tuition for Part-time Students**

Tuition for a part-time student will be determined using a prorated formula based on full-time tuition plus a premium.

## School Life Information

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### **Antiharassment Policy**

The policy of Veritas Christian Academy is to provide an academic environment that is free from harassment—whether based on sex (gender), race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability—an environment that is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation, and harassment (including sexual harassment), where all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect. The school includes bullying in its definition of harassment. The school is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy. This policy applies to the actions of administration, teachers, staff, parents, volunteers, and students. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination or expulsion.

The school does not tolerate harassment of students, nor does it tolerate reprisals against any student who makes a harassment complaint. Administration, teachers, staff, volunteers, and students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, including expulsion from school or discharge from employment. Any administrative personnel who receive a complaint of harassment and fail to appropriately report it or take corrective action pursuant to this policy are also subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

#### Definitions and Prohibited Acts

- **Sexual harassment.** “Sexual harassment” means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the work or educational setting, under any of the following conditions:
- Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual’s academic status or progress. This may occur by clearly stated acts or words or by implied acts or words.
- Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact on the individual’s academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
- Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through this school.

-- **Unwelcome and Offensive.** The fact that a student may not openly object to others’



actions or words does not prove that they were welcome. Under the law of harassment, or bullying and intimidation, a student does not have to openly object to others' actions or words to prove that the actions or words are unwelcome. Harassment, bullying, or intimidation may occur even if the student originally remains silent or fails to show disapproval. Acts and statements that may not offend some people may be highly offensive to others. Therefore, all employees, volunteers, and students should be sensitive to the feelings of others whether they object or not.

-- **Verbal Harassment.** Prohibited statements include, but are not necessarily limited to, the use of derogatory descriptions of a student or group of students based on race, color, disability, ethnic or national origin, or age. It is also a violation of this policy to state stereotypical classifications concerning race, national or ethnic origin, color, age, or disability of a student or group of students, especially if they are repeatedly made. Although some students or individuals may enjoy discriminatory identifications and jokes, the school does not tolerate such on its premises or during working hours.

Other examples of prohibited statements include, but are not necessarily limited to, derogatory or vulgar comments regarding a person's gender, sexually vulgar language, remarks about a person's physical anatomy or characteristics, dirty jokes, sexual innuendo, or display of written or graphic materials. Also prohibited are suggestive pictures, magazines, posters, offensive cartoons, and other words or pictures of a suggestive nature. Also prohibited are statements that demean women.

-- **Physical Sexual Harassment.** Prohibited actions include, but are not necessarily limited to, touching a student in a sexually suggestive way, or touching another so as to invade his or her personal privacy. This includes intentional touching or intentional movements made in order to observe another in a sexual manner. Also prohibited are physical acts such as hitting and pushing, and making physical gestures of a sexual nature. As a general rule, any act or touching of a person that most individuals refrain from doing with a stranger should not be done with another student.

-- **Sexual Harasser.** A harasser may be a male harassing a female, a female harassing a male, a male harassing a male, or a female harassing a female, just as long as the harassment is sexually-based or based on the gender of the student.

-- **Race, Color, National or Ethnic Origin, Age, and Disability Harassment.** Unwelcome statements, name calling, or other verbal or physical conduct based on a student's race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability is prohibited if and when any of the following occurs:

- Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's academic status or progress. This may occur by clearly stated acts or words or by implied acts or words.
- Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact on the individual's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
- Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through this school.

-- **Electronic Harassment.** Harassment may occur through a number of mediums or means, including electronic communications. The student antiharassment policy applies to all harassment, including any that occurs by or through any type of electronic communication. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, Internet, email, cell phones (including picture texts, text messaging, as well as voice messages), other communication devices, and facsimile (fax) communications of any type. This list of electronic devices is not inclusive, and the policy is intended to cover other types of electronic communication.

-- **Physical Harassment.** Prohibited actions include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Display of signs, pictures, cartoons, written statements, or other material that denigrates, intimidates, bullies, or otherwise discriminates against any student based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability.
- General harassment, pushing, shoving, or other intentional acts perpetrated in whole or in part because of the student's race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability.

-- **Definition of Bullying or Intimidation.** "Bullying or intimidation" means any written, oral, or physical act or gesture that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of harming a student or damaging his or her property or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or that has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying includes a gesture or an act, whether written, oral, or physical, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by a characteristic such as sex (gender), race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability.

- Examples of Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation. **Unwelcome conduct of this type can include a wide range of verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual or other nature. Among the types of conduct that would violate this policy are the following:**
  - Unwanted sexual advances or propositions.
  - Offering academic benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
  - Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
  - Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters.
  - Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, and jokes about a student's race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability.
  - Verbal abuse of a sexual or other nature; graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, or disability; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations.
  - Physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, impeding, or blocking movements.
  - Any conduct that has the effect of insulting or demeaning a student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational

mission or that is severe, persistent, or pervasive so that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

### Application of Antiharassment Policy

The student antiharassment policy applies to school hours; to any school-sponsored event or activity, including during school-arranged transportation of any type to or from an event or activity, and whether the activity or event occurs on or off the school campus; while on school property or at school-leased facilities; or at any other time when the event or activity has any school recognition. Additionally, as a Christian school, the school has the right to expect and does expect that students and any employee of the school will conduct themselves in a Christ-like manner and/or as a Christian role model. Conduct violating these biblical standards—whether occurring at school or during school-sponsored events, activities, or functions or not, or on campus or not—is subject to appropriate action by the school.

### Prohibited Actions

- **Employee-Student Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation.** Employee-student harassment, bullying, or intimidation of any type is prohibited.
- **Student-Student Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation.** Student-student harassment, bullying, or intimidation of any type is prohibited.

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

- Students who feel that they have been subjected to conduct of a harassing, bullying, or intimidating nature are encouraged to promptly report the matter to one of the school officials designated below.
- Students who observe conduct of a harassing, bullying, or intimidating nature are also encouraged to report the matter to one of the school officials designated below. All complaints will be promptly investigated.

### Where to Report Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation

- The following individuals are specifically authorized to receive complaints and to respond to questions regarding harassment:

<u>Sean Bevier</u> Name	<u>Administrator</u> Title	<u>973-579-6333</u> Telephone
<u>Paul Vincenti</u> Name	<u>School Board President</u> Title	<u>973-579-6333</u> Telephone
_____	_____	_____
Name	Title	Telephone

### Confidentiality

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

### Protection Against Retaliation

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

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

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

#### Before and After School

Students may study or socialize with each other before school begins under the supervision of the duty teacher. Students are expected to be in their first block room SEATED, QUIET, and READY for devotions at the bell, which begins the school day. Following afternoon dismissal, students are not to remain at school unless they are involved in an approved activity under adult supervision (i.e. sports, special practices, prearranged conferences, etc.).

#### Cancellation, Delay, Early Dismissal

Announcements relating to the cancellation, delay or early dismissal of school will be broadcast *on the radio at 102.3 FM WSUS and posted on the school's website, [www.veritasnj.org](http://www.veritasnj.org)*.

#### Schedule for 2 Hour Delayed Opening

9:20	Faculty Prayer Meeting
9:45 – 10:41	Block 1
10:45 – 11:41	Block 2
11:45 – 12:41	Block 3
12:41 – 1:19	Lunch
1:19 – 2:19	Block 4

If the district in which the student lives has closed, there will be no busing in that district. If the student's safety is not in jeopardy and we are having classes, please make every effort to get your student to school. If this is not possible, this will be counted as an approved absence.

#### Cellular Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Students may bring a cellular phone to school, but it must be dropped off in the school office upon arrival. Cell phones are to be turned off during school hours.

**Other electronic equipment:** Possession or use of electronic devices to view videos, play games, or listen to music (ipods, mp3 players, etc.) during school hours is prohibited unless authorized by a member of the faculty or administration. Such items will be confiscated and taken to the office. Students may have this equipment in their possession at school. However, it is to remain in their locker or backpack during school hours.

**Penalty:** Item will be taken from student and returned after the school administrator meets together with student and parent.

## **Chapel**

All students are required to attend the scheduled chapel services. This special time in which we seek to minister to students through special speakers, music, other students, video presentations, etc., is a key part of the school's program. Our chapel committee and our worship team work with the administration to plan our chapel program and work for its success.

Since worship, inspiration and teaching are the main objectives of our chapel services, we encourage each student to come prepared in heart for this important time together as a body of believers. Please bring your Bible to chapel.

## **Classroom Code**

The designated authority in each classroom is the teacher. Our classrooms are special places of study and learning. When class is in session there should be no disruptive talking or behavior. Students must be seated in their assigned seats unless given permission by the teacher to be away from his or her seat for some purpose. A student must raise his or her hand to be recognized by the teacher before speaking or getting out of his or her seat.

Students share with the administration and staff a responsibility to develop and maintain a positive climate within the school that is conducive to learning and spiritual growth.

Your presence in class: Simply stated, students who are present for school are expected to be in class. Being absent from a class to do work for another class, work in the library, or talk with adults or other students is unacceptable except with the permission of the teacher whose class you are missing.

## **Veritas Christian Academy Conduct and Discipline**

As an expression of Veritas Christian Academy's mission, the high school discipline policy is intended to support the discipleship process for students, and to serve as a reflection of Jesus Christ and as an extension of the home. As such, the primary purpose of the discipline process is to produce growth in students while maintaining an environment of learning and order, providing a support to parents, and reflecting Scriptural principles of conduct and influence. In keeping with this purpose, the Scriptural principles that provide the foundation for the discipline policy are as follows:

- The responsibility of parents for the education of their children (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)
- Submission to authority (I Peter 2:13-17)
- The principle of reaping and sowing (Galatians 6:7-8)
- Confrontation, restoration, and separation (Matthew 18:15-17)

Under the guidelines of these Scriptural principles, the goal of Veritas Christian Academy through the disciplinary process is to:

- Work alongside of parents within the process of discipline.
- When appropriate, involve the spiritual authority and influence of a family's church affiliation
- Provide an environment of order and respect that promotes an atmosphere conducive to learning
- Apply necessary and appropriate consequences for choices
- Guide in the restoration of relationships with Jesus Christ and with Veritas Christian Academy, its employees, and its students
- Use relational influence to produce spiritual growth, correction, and right choices
- Do so in a context that seeks the best interest of both the involved parties and the student body as a whole

## Code of Conduct

In order to best fulfill the goals of the discipline process, Veritas Christian Academy has established a Code of Conduct that defines expected student behavior, and establishes the procedure and process for addressing disciplinary matters. Please be aware that student conduct and behavior outside of Veritas Christian Academy can affect a student's standing at VCA as well as the reputation of VCA, therefore it is the expectation of the administration that students adhere to the code of conduct at all times. It is therefore also understood that violations of the code of conduct both inside and outside of school, including breaks from school, may be addressed as a disciplinary concern by the administration. Students are specifically considered to be under school jurisdiction at any time at which they are under the direct supervision of Veritas Christian Academy and its employees, including when riding a school bus or attending a school function or activity.

Students are expected to demonstrate the following behaviors and characteristics:

- Integrity in the keeping of one's word, speaking the truth, doing one's own work, carrying out responsibility (doing assignments adequately and on time) and respecting authority
- Respect for self, Veritas Christian Academy and its employees and students, and the property of others
- Courtesy extended in all relationships – student to student or student to teacher/staff
- Stewardship of the property, supplies, and equipment of Veritas Christian Academy, as well as wise stewardship of personal items
- Preparation for class and readiness to learn
- Reconciliation through Biblical and appropriate repentance and forgiveness when offenses have been committed or received

Students are expected to refrain from the following behaviors and characteristics:

- Unexcused tardiness to class
- Failure to conform to the expected dress code
- Careless and/or reckless behavior (i.e., throwing objects, running in halls, driving recklessly, etc.)
- Disruptive behavior that impedes the educational process
- The use of cellular phones and other electronic devices during school hours
- Inappropriate public displays of romantic affection (i.e. holding hands, kissing, excessive hugging)
- Profanity and vulgar or offensive speech and/or gestures
- Dishonesty in any form, including lying, theft, cheating, and plagiarism (Note: indication of cheating on any assignment will result in zero for the assignment; this guideline applies to the person copying as well as to the person knowingly supplying the material to be copied)
- Gambling
- Rebellious or disrespectful attitude
- Flagrant disrespect and disobedience
- Skipping class, leaving campus without permission, or truancy
- The possession and/or distribution of pornographic materials and information, including the distribution of sexually suggestive material via cell phones and computers
- Harassment in any form, both physical and/or sexual in nature. Sexual harassment includes all acts of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, which are unsolicited, unwelcome, inappropriate, and/or demeaning, which interfere with an individual's performance, or which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive atmosphere. Physical harassment includes threats or intimidation of any nature, or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct which creates a hostile, offensive, or fearful environment. Examples of threats or intimidation include, but are not limited to, provoking a fight, fighting, bullying, acts that inflict injury or damage, and/or acts intended to control by fear and/or intimidation.
- Immoral sexual conduct
- Use or possession of weapons and/or dangerous items (i.e., guns, knives, explosive devices, etc.)

- The use and/or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and the abuse of prescription medication. Violations of this policy may also result in random drug testing, per Veritas Christian procedures, at the expense of the student.

### Discipline Procedures

Most disciplinary issues are managed by the teacher in the classroom, and the process can involve any of the following, separately or in combination as appropriate:

- Personal conference with the teacher
- Notification of behavior problems to parents
- Detentions
  - Detentions are scheduled 3:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays
  - An In-school suspension will be assigned for the fourth (4) detention received per quarter, and for each subsequent detention in that quarter.
- Student conference with the administrator
- A parent-teacher-student or parent-teacher-administrator conference

More extreme or persistent cases of misconduct will be managed by the administration and treated with one or more of the following measures:

- Conference with the administrator and/or teacher
- Probation, combined with appropriate application of consequences relevant to the offense
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Withdrawal, temporary, until restitution and restoration can be confirmed via visible student behavior and pastoral counsel and recommendation; reinstatement on probation
- Withdrawal, permanent
- Expulsion

The following violations of the Code of Conduct will result in an automatic suspension from school, pending a more thorough investigation of the matter, and may result in withdrawal or expulsion:

- The use and/or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or illegal drugs, and the abuse of prescription medication
- Immoral sexual conduct (which includes, but is not limited to, extra-marital sex, adultery, and homosexuality)
- Obtaining or facilitating an abortion
- Possession of weapons and/or dangerous items
- Repeated dishonesty
- Flagrant disrespect and disobedience
- Leaving campus without permission
- The possession and/or distribution of pornographic materials and information
- Harassment in any form, both physical and/or sexual in nature
- Vandalism
- Continued willful disobedience, misconduct, disrespect
- Any action taken by a student that disturbs the privacy or invades the private property of a teacher or administrator at his or her home, or that affects his or her private property at school.

A student may be suspended for a period of one to ten days at the discretion of the administrator. All assignments or tests missed during the period of suspension must be completed. All missed assignments will receive a 50% reduction in grade, and test/quiz grades will be reduced by 10%. Students may not practice or participate in athletic events for the duration of the suspension, nor may they be involved in extracurricular activities during that time. Any other corresponding participation consequence will be

determined according to Athletic and/or Fine Arts policy. In addition, students may not attend school activities on the day(s) of suspension. Students may be expelled from school after other disciplinary procedures have failed or when major moral or social offenses have been committed.

In the event that a parent feels the administration has not followed due process during the suspension and/or expulsion proceedings, the parent may submit to the administrator in writing an explanation of the factors which they believe have not been duly considered and/or those procedures which were not properly followed by the school administration. If the parents are not satisfied with the response of the Superintendent, they may then submit an appeal in writing to the Board of Directors recounting their appeal to the Superintendent and their reasons why they believe the response of the Superintendent was inadequate.

### **Dress and Appearance Code**

The school dress code has been developed to:

- Promote cleanliness, neatness, and modesty during school hours;
- Encourage a God-consciousness in all students and masculinity in the young men, and femininity and modesty in the young ladies;
- Encourage proper Christian thought and behavior in an educational atmosphere.

All students

- **Slacks and Shirts** Appropriate styles and colors must be purchased through the VCA website.
- **Blazers** Blazers may be worn at any time throughout the year, **but must be purchased through the VCA website.**
- **Footwear** Casual or dressy footwear may be worn. Athletic shoes and sandals, with heel or ankle straps, are permitted, as long as they are neat. Flip-flops, slippers, and shower shoes are not permitted.
- **Jeans/Denim Material** Jeans/Denim material are not permitted under the dress code policy, except on those “dress down days” approved by the Administration. On “dress down days”, jeans/denim material will be permitted. However, all modesty rules and all other dress code policies will be observed.
- **Optional Attire** Items such as sweatshirts, fleece jackets, mock turtlenecks, Cardigans and V-neck sweaters (with approved shirt beneath) are approved for use at VCA, **but must be purchased through the VCA website.**
- **General** During times of cold weather, school sweaters, school sweatshirts and school jackets may be worn in the classrooms. All of these must have been previously approved by the administration.

All clothing must be neat and modest. Any article of clothing that would reveal the abdomen or midriff is not permitted. Accessories advocating or identifying with un-Christian values or behavior are not to be worn. Neither skin-tight nor oversized, baggy clothing may be worn since they do not conform to the neatness or modesty standards. Visible undergarments are not permitted. No headwear shall be worn in the building during normal school hours. Only natural hair colors are permitted.



## Young Men

- **Shorts** Shorts may be worn from the beginning of the school year until October 15 and from May 1<sup>st</sup> through to the end of the school year, **but must be purchased through the VCA website.**
- **General** Young men's hair must be clean and neat. Extremes, as determined by the administration, are to be avoided. No facial or body piercing or visible tattoos are permitted.

## Young Ladies

- **Skirts, Skorts and Capri Pants** Appropriate styles and colors must be purchased through the VCA website.
- **Stockings** Stockings may be worn at any time throughout the year. No fishnet, print, or lace stockings are permitted.
- **Shoes** Shoes with heels two inches or less may be worn.
- **General** Appropriate undergarments must be worn at all times. No more than two ear posts or rings per ear are permitted. Posts and earrings are not allowed anywhere else on the body. No visible tattoos are permitted.

## Dress for Chapel

On periodic Chapel days, ties will be required for all young men, and skirts will be required for all young women.

## Dress for Gym

Students will be given time to change into the school gym uniform and appropriate athletic shoes at the beginning of the gym period.

## Enforcement of the dress code

Students observed to be in violation of the above standards by their homeroom or classroom teacher will be directed to the administration.

The administration retains the right to revise this code as deemed necessary. The administration will have the final word in all discrepancies.

## Driving to School

Each student who desires to drive and park on or near campus must obtain a parking permit request form from the office. Students must park their cars in the designated areas as soon as they come on campus and get everything out that is needed for the day. Failure to abide by the student parking agreement will result in disciplinary action. Vehicles are not to be used for transportation during the school day without permission from the office.

## Fire Alarm

When the fire alarm sounds, students are to stop working and quietly move to exit the building as shown by the fire drill evacuation chart in the classroom. If an exit is blocked, proceed to the nearest unblocked exit unless directed otherwise. All windows and doors are to be closed. Students are not to talk during fire drills and are to exit single file with their class group, line up by class groups, and wait until told to re-enter the building.

## **Student Conduct Expectations**

While we know that not all of our students are mature Christians, we do anticipate that they will be cooperative with our Christian worldview of doing all that we do to please the Lord (Colossians 2:6,7; 3:23,24). A specific aspect of this expectation is that we expect students to be respectful to those around them. Remember: *GIVE RESPECT; IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE EARNED.*

*Therefore, give respect:*

- to those in authority. Because teachers and administrators are here in your parents' place, the same respect required of you by God to your parents (Exodus 20:12; Mark 7:10; Ephesians 6:2) is therefore to be shown to anyone in authority here at VCA. Therefore, watch your facial expression (actions speak louder than words), accept willingly any discipline (Genesis 4:5-7) and watch your tongue (James 1:26).
- to your peers. I Peter 2:17 says, "Honor all men . . ." Any disrespect to others is forbidden.
- to property. Treat school property and the property of others the way you would like your own property to be treated (Matt. 7:12).

Students share with the administration and staff a responsibility to develop and maintain a positive climate within the school that is conducive to learning and spiritual growth. We expect students to conduct themselves in accordance with acceptable Christian standards of conduct. Problems that arise from lack of conforming to Biblical principles as evidenced by disregard for school rules, school property or others' personal property, or disrespect of other students, will be dealt with by the teacher or Administrator. Serious or persistent problems will be brought to the parents' attention so they can assist in correcting the situation.

While we recognize that the student is normally under the parents' jurisdiction during most of his or her off-school hours, it is nevertheless a fact that the whole lifestyle of all students and teachers has a bearing on the testimony of the school and reflects on the Lord. The school, therefore, does maintain an interest in how its students live at all times. Any illegal activity is considered to be contrary to a Godly life and gives evidence of a lifestyle that is not in keeping with the ideals expected of a student at this institution.

## **Transportation**

Transportation by public school districts in New Jersey is available. Districts have the right to reimburse the family rather than provide transport.

Students must observe bus safety rules. Students may not stand or change seats while the bus is in motion, or throw objects at any time. They must remain quiet and not distract the driver, who is to be treated with respect at all times. Of course, all safety rules and traffic laws must be obeyed. Whether students are Christian or not, the bus drivers perceive our students as representing Christ; therefore, they are expected to behave accordingly.

## **Young Men-Women Relationships**

VCA provides a social environment which encourages group relations. Therefore, physical contact between two students who are "dating" is not permitted during school hours or at any school sponsored event.

## **Visitors to the School**

**All** visitors must report to the main school office and sign in and out in the logbook.

School parents, prospective students and out-of-town visitors may spend an entire day visiting classes. Former students will normally be limited to a half-day visit.

If a student desires to bring a visitor, he or she must secure advance permission from the Administrator. We require that visitors comply with our dress and conduct codes. On the day of the visit the visitor shall remain with his or her student-host.

The school reserves the right to restrict the visiting privileges of anyone in violation of school policies.

## Miscellaneous Information

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### **We're Here to Serve You**

Our purpose for existing includes a commitment to serve you for Jesus' sake. Our school staff is always willing to talk with you at any mutually convenient time. It is our desire to help you in any way we can. Please do not hesitate to ask. We cannot overemphasize the importance of good, open communication between your home and the school.

### **If You Have a Complaint or Problem**

Since we are all human beings, there will be times when we make mistakes and disagree on things. Matthew 18:15-17 gives us God's order in resolving such matters of disagreement. Based on that instruction, the following **grievance procedure** for students and parents has been established.

Upon encountering a problem with either a procedure or a member of the school staff, the parent and/or student shall first discuss the situation with the staff person involved. If no satisfactory solution is obtained, the matter may next be taken to the Administrator for resolution. If this level does not resolve the problem, the parent/student may then present their concern in writing and solicit assistance from the Board of Trustees. Should no amicable resolution be achieved by any of these means, the matter may finally be taken to the Association of Christian Conciliation for final resolution.

These four steps are to be followed in the above order. Please do not go to the Administrator or to a board member first.

Whether the situation involves a conflict with a teacher or another student, God desires that we not murmur or gossip to another but seek to resolve the problem with the person involved. Before going to the person, pray that God will give you the proper attitude and ask God what you can learn through the situation. Then go to the person and seek to resolve the matter.

### **Church Attendance**

We urge that our families unite with us in maintaining a regular involvement with a Bible-believing, Christ-honoring church. We cannot overemphasize the importance of this as part of the life of every school family. Since our school seeks to build upon the foundation laid at home and at church, every student should be actively involved in Sunday school, youth group, and church programs. Students miss a vital spiritual dimension which results in inconsistency when involvement and accountability in a local church is absent.

### **Fund-Raising**

ALL FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES MUST BE APPROVED BY AND SCHEDULED THROUGH THE OFFICE.

### **Notification of Change of Address or Telephone Number**

Parents are responsible for notifying the school office immediately of any change of address or telephone number (home or business). It is imperative that we keep this information current, in order to contact parents in case of emergency.

### **Student Health**

Any student who has a major health problem or allergies must inform the office.

No student will be given any medication by school personnel without a doctor's consent. The doctor's consent and the medication should be brought to the office upon arrival at school.

### **Students Who Work**

High school students often work after school and on weekends. The school cautions these students not to underestimate the demands that their schoolwork will place upon them. God's will for you at this time in your life is that you get a good Christian education. Although there is often no harm in working at a part-time job, we urge you to keep your priorities clearly sorted out. Excessive hours at your job can hurt you academically and also keep you from participating in school activities.

In most cases students who have an after-school job will need to have working papers as required by state law. You must apply for working papers through the school district in which you live. These forms must be signed by the Administrator here at VCA, by your employer, by your parents, and by a doctor when you receive your physical exam. You should have promise of employment, certification that you are in good health, and proof of age.

Students who work more than twenty hours per week are asked to notify the Administration. We strongly urge that any student on academic restriction cut his or her working hours so he/she has more time for his or her studies.