



WESTMINSTER
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Parent Student Handbook

Revised May 2026

Westminster Christian Academy Administration and Support Staff

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1. Founding Principles

History

Westminster Christian Academy began in 1988 with a group of parents interested in providing their children an education with a Christian worldview and an emphasis on academics. The planning stage took almost a year, but the vision was realized in the fall of 1989 when Westminster Christian Academy began operations with a combined class of first, second, and third-grade students meeting in rented space at Faith Presbyterian Church in Watkinsville. That first class consisted of twelve students and one teacher. A new grade level was added each year until the school had a complete program from preschool through the twelfth grade. Westminster purchased 30 acres in Oconee County, completed the first phase of development at the present location in the fall of 1998, and graduated its first class of seniors in the spring of 1999. The campus now includes 40 acres and a Master Plan has been completed to allow for future campus expansion.

Westminster's founders firmly believed that God gives parents the primary responsibility for the education of their children. In seeking to fulfill this responsibility, Westminster was established as a school that would be characterized by three primary distinctions. The leadership today is still committed to that founding vision and those three distinctions.

Covenant School

Westminster functions as a covenant school. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in the education of their children, and the school's role is to work in partnership with the parents to assist them in this endeavor. For this partnership to be effective, the school and the home must be like-minded; therefore, both parents of students enrolled at Westminster must profess a personal faith in Jesus Christ. The school and its families operate in a covenant relationship with each other regarding the total education of the students. We strongly believe that the union of

our school, its families, and their churches will equip our students for a life pursuing excellence and integrity under the Lordship of Christ.

Spiritual Nurture

Westminster directs each student toward a personal relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ. Students are encouraged to develop and embrace a biblical worldview. Along with that, they are taught to reason and think critically and to develop discernment skills. The school helps train students in the content and application of God's Word and uses mentoring and discipleship to help students advance in the attainment of Christ-like character.

High Academic Standards

Westminster provides a comprehensive and rigorous academic program with a curriculum that puts biblical truth at the center of all instruction. We believe academic success requires mastery of skills through disciplined effort; therefore, Westminster actively and steadfastly maintains high academic standards. This commitment to high standards directs the focus of our instruction and is the reason behind our advanced curriculum at all levels. Students are challenged to pursue excellence in their studies and to resist educational mediocrity.

Statement of Faith

Westminster Christian Academy most emphatically affirms the essentials of the Christian faith, which are as follows:

- the divine inspiration of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, making them both inerrant and authoritative
- the existence of the infinite, personal, and holy God- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- the deity, the virgin birth, the sinless life, the supernatural miracles, the atoning death, the physical resurrection, the ascension, and the personal return of our Lord Jesus Christ

- the absolute necessity of salvation through faith alone, because of the shed blood of Christ, and only by God's grace, for the gift of eternal life

Westminster Christian Academy takes Westminster Confession of 1648 as its broader summary of biblical truth. However, the school encourages respect for various positions among Christians concerning the following:

- the mode and appropriate age for baptism
- the chronological details of the return of Jesus Christ
- the practice of the ecstatic gifts within the body of Christ
- the precise interpretation of the six days of creation in the Genesis record
- the most appropriate form of church government

These five areas are left to the teaching of the home and church. There shall be no attempt to promote these denominational distinctions.

Mission Statement

Westminster Christian Academy exists to glorify God by partnering with Christian families; equipping students with the knowledge and skills to fulfill God's unique purpose for their lives.

Philosophy of Education

We believe that it is simply not possible for students to be educated in a neutral environment. Every form of education is based on some philosophical perspective, and that philosophical perspective will serve to shape students' beliefs and influence how they view the world around them. Westminster students are educated from the perspective that God is the source of all life and truth, and they are presented with a worldview that is consistent with biblical principles.

To further clarify this philosophy, we believe a Christian education has its very foundation in the relationship between God and man as taught in the Bible. It is a

process whereby all instruction is based on the truth of God's Word. Christian education does not simply add chapel services or Bible classes to an otherwise secular education. Biblical truth is integrated into every part of the educational experience, particularly in how every academic subject is approached. This biblical approach to the various academic disciplines is closely guarded and maintained, as it is essential to the formation of Christian character, without which students will have no foundation for the application of knowledge.

Core Values

Westminster's core values incorporate the three distinctions crucial to the founding of the school, along with additional values that give Westminster its firm foundation. The following core values are as followed:

- **Covenant School**
 - Westminster operates in a covenant relationship with Christian families regarding the total education of its students. The covenant relationship between parents and the school community results in a unity of purpose which is foundational to a successful school experience.
- **Spiritual Growth**
 - Westminster desires for students to have their identity rooted in Christ and uses mentoring through personal relationships to help students grow spiritually. We strive to foster personal and corporate worship of God.
- **Christian Intellectual Development**
 - A foundational goal of our rigorous academic program is to develop in students the ability to reason and think critically from a biblical perspective, which is the expression of Christian intellect. Biblical truth informs all instruction at Westminster. Our program gives students the tools for learning and seeks to cultivate a love for learning.
- **Worldview Development**
 - Our understanding of the world, our ethical systems, our purpose in life, and our relationships, among other things- all these define our worldview. Westminster seeks to develop in students a biblical

worldview based on the doctrines of creation, fall, and redemption, and consistent with the truths in Scripture.

- **Classical Methodology**

- Education that uses a classical methodology takes advantage of a child's natural stages of development, the stages of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. Through the respective stages, students are taught mastery of facts, logical reasoning, and persuasive expression.

- **Pursuing Excellence**

- Excellence is defined as a process that is measured by individual and corporate improvement. Striving for excellence (i.e., improvement) naturally leads to success. Through this approach, we believe that a Westminster student will be prepared spiritually, socially, and academically to succeed at the next level.

- **Relational Discipleship**

- Principles rather than policies, and relationships rather than rules take precedence in the life of the school community. We will always seek to develop strong, loving, biblical relationships with all Westminster students and their families.

- **Servant Leadership**

- Learning, modeling, and practicing servant leadership is central to worldview and leadership development. Tangible evidence of placing the needs of others before self is expected in all aspects of school life.

2. Administration

Board of Trustees

Westminster is currently governed by a nine-member Board of Trustees, primarily composed of parents in the school. The Board utilizes a policy governance model. The Board's primary responsibilities are to safeguard the schools' founding principles and ensure financial stability of the school and support the Head of School.

Faculty and Staff

All faculty members must hold a minimum of a Bachelor's degree and demonstrate a mastery and love for the subject material they are teaching. Teachers must profess a personal faith in Jesus Christ and display godly character and personal decorum, serving as a role model both in and out of school to students and as an example to parents and fellow faculty members. Our faculty and staff are highly committed to investing in the lives of their students. They embrace a biblical worldview, which is the foundation of their instruction. Realizing that God gives different gifts and even the same gifts in different measure, our teachers help students recognize their unique gifts and talents in a supportive environment.

3. General Information

Affiliation and Accreditation

Westminster is a member of the Southern Association of Independent schools (SAIS), Council on Educational Standards and Accountability (CESA), and the Georgia Independent Schools Association (GISA). We have dual accreditation through the Southern Association of Independent Schools and Cognia. The school competes in the Georgia Independent Athletic Association for athletics, fine arts and academic competitions.

Parent Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences will be held at the end of the first quarter to discuss student progress. A parent may request a conference with a teacher at any time during the school year.

Field Trips

Westminster seeks to provide educational activities for students both within and outside of the classroom. Depending on the nature of the trip, students may be responsible for expenses involved. A Field Trip Permission Form must be filled out and submitted on Rank One in order for students to participate in any school day

field trip. Instructions for doing so are located under the Parent tab on our website. Overnight trips may require an additional trip form. Additional guidelines regarding field trips are as follows:

- Unless employed by the school, drivers must be on the school's approved driver list. To be on the approved driver list, an individual must submit a Volunteer Driver/Chaperone Application Form and copy of his/her driver's license and current vehicle insurance card.
- Siblings are not allowed to attend school field trips.
- Student driving for school-related purposes may not transport other students.
- Cellphones are prohibited unless instructed otherwise.
- All Field Trip fees will be billed to your FACTS account in advance of the trip.

Upper School Lockers

Lockers are issued to students in grades six through twelve each academic year. Lockers are school property and are subject to inspection by an administrator without notice or prior consent. The office will provide a combination lock upon request to any student who wishes to secure his/her locker. No locks may be used except those provided by the school. For maintenance reasons, students are not allowed to put stickers or markings on the outside or inside of the lockers.

Lost and Found

As a courtesy to parents and students, the school has a lost and found bin in the Upper School gym. Westminster assumes no responsibility for articles left on school premises, and such items will be collected each day and placed in the lost and found bin. *Please make sure to label all student clothing, lunch boxes, and backpacks.* Periodically, all unclaimed items will be donated to charity. While reminders of this may be sent out, it is the student's or parents' responsibility to regularly check the lost and found bin.

Lost or Damaged Textbooks

If a student loses or damages a textbook, the total replacement cost for the book must be paid, and a replacement textbook will be issued. An appropriate fee will also be assessed for textbooks that are damaged beyond what occurs with normal use.

After School Program

After school care is available for lower school students not picked up by 2:45 pm. The daily schedule includes lunch brought from home and a variety of activities and free play, both inside and outside. The after-school program begins following dismissal and ends at 5:15 pm. Students are allowed to have free playtime and are given help with homework. For more information, you may contact the program coordinator.

Party Invitations

Party Invitations may not be distributed at school unless all students of one gender in the child's class (not grade) have been invited to attend. Phone numbers and addresses of students can be obtained from the school directory found in FACTS SIS. Parents should not contact the school office or classroom teacher to ask for contact information for the purpose of inviting students to a party.

School Closings

Any school closings will be communicated via text, email, website, and social media.

School Communication

Weekly Announcements are sent via email each Wednesday afternoon and can also be found on the school website.

Lunch

Catered lunches are available Monday through Friday for all students. Ordering information will be provided in the weekly announcements and/or school email.

Arrival and Dismissal

To ensure the safe arrival and departure of students both to and from school, these procedures are to be followed.

Students who arrive at school at any point after the school day has begun must report to their office to sign in, explain the reason for the late arrival, and receive a tardy slip to get into class.

- Lower School Arrival Procedures
 - Families dropping off lower school students should enter the campus via the Bishop Farms Pkwy entrance.
 - Staff will be on duty beginning at 7:30. At that point, students may enter the building.
 - Drop off will be in a single line, so drivers should pull up as far as possible to keep the line flowing.
 - Students should be ready to exit their vehicle quickly, and parents should never exit their vehicle during drop-off.
 - Students must exit from the right side of the car – never the left, and for safety, students should never retrieve belongings from the trunk of the car.
 - Parents may drop off their upper school children with their lower school siblings in the carline and have them walk down to the gym.
 - Students are considered tardy at 8:00 am and will sign-in with the staff on duty until 8:05 am.
 - After 8:05 am, parents should park in the lot and walk students into the reception area to sign-in with our lower school receptionist.
 - For the safety of our children and carline workers, please pay close attention our staff on duty as well as our safety patrollers as they will direct you to where you should go. Please avoid phone usage while in the carline.

- Parents who wish to walk up for drop-off should park in the lower lot near the admin building. We kindly ask you to say your goodbyes before your students enter the building to head to their classroom.
- After you have dropped off, you may exit campus via either the Bishop Farms Pkwy entrance or the New High Shoals entrance. We strongly recommend exiting via the New High Shoals entrance if you plan to turn right onto New High Shoals Rd.
- Lower School Dismissal Procedures
 - Families picking up Lower School students should enter the campus via the Bishop Farms Pkwy entrance.
 - For the safety of our students, please do not use cell phones while in the carline.
 - Lower school parents should make any carpool changes in their School Pass app. This portal will also alert teachers to the change.
 - Students in half-day preschool will be dismissed at noon from the lobby of the lower school. Please pull up and wait in your car, as an assistant will safely load each student into his/her car.
 - Each driver should have a School Pass tag on the passenger side of the front windshield for scanning.
 - Vehicles should never back up.
 - Please do not leave your car unattended in the traffic line.
 - Lower school students can only be picked up by upper school students who are leaving campus by 3:15 pm. Upper school students are not allowed to supervise siblings while on campus.
 - Any lower school student not picked up by 2:50 pm will be taken to the After School Program, and parents will be billed for his/her After School Program attendance.

- For the safety of our children and carline workers, please pay close attention to our staff on duty as well as our safety patrollers as they will direct you to where you should go.
 - Parents who wish to walk up for pick-up should park in the lower lot near the admin building and check-in with the staff on duty.
 - After you pick-up, you may exit campus via either the Bishop Farms Pkwy entrance or the New High Shoals entrance. We strongly recommend exiting via the New High Shoals entrance if you plan to turn right onto New High Shoals Rd.
- Upper School Dismissal Procedures
 - Student drivers may enter the campus via either the New High Shoals Road or Bishop Farms Parkway entrances. Students should drive slowly and carefully to the student parking lot and park in their assigned space.
 - All Upper School students should be dropped off and picked up in the traffic circle adjacent to the Upper School Building and Founders Hall. Students should be seated in the passenger side of the vehicle to allow for safe exit.
 - Please pull forward to allow other cars access to the traffic circle.
 - At no time should a vehicle be left unattended in the traffic circle.
 - Please refrain from the usage of cell phones while in the car line.
 - Following drop off and pickup, please exit the campus via the New High Shoals Entrance.

Student Driving Guidelines

Being allowed to drive to and park at school is a privilege that comes with important responsibilities. Student drivers must always use great caution. As our school grows, so does the number of drivers and cars on campus. Our school serves children of all

ages, and young children are often not aware of the potential danger around them from traffic. It is, therefore, incumbent upon drivers to pay extra attention to people walking through the driving and parking areas.

- Guidelines for student drivers include:
 - Students may park in designated areas only, as assigned by the administration.
 - The speed limit on campus is 10 mph.
 - Loud music may not be blaring from vehicles on campus.
 - Students may not drive off campus for lunch.
 - Students may not drive off campus during school hours for any reason without parental and administrative permission.
 - Students may not go to their vehicle during school hours without administrative permission.
 - Driving and parking is at the student's own risk. Westminster will not be held responsible for any damage incurred because of another person's recklessness.
 - At any time that a student's driving, parking, or misuse of a vehicle puts the safety of others at risk, driving privileges will be suspended. Students who choose to disregard these guidelines will receive additional disciplinary action.

Visitors to Campus

Parents, alumni, and student pastors are always welcome to visit students, it just must be during lunchtime. Former students and outside visitors are not permitted in the school buildings without a faculty escort during school hours. Class time should not be interrupted by visitors of any kind, and only students who are officially shadowing are permitted to sit in on Westminster classes.

Technology Use Policy

Westminster offers students access to its computer network for educational purposes only. Students are only permitted to visit Internet sites that are directly related to their schoolwork, and personal use of the computer is never permitted. The computer system, including all programs and files, is school property, and the school reserves the right to track network use and access all student files at any time.

Westminster has attempted, in good faith, to block access to inappropriate internet sites using a filtering system; however, no filtering system is perfect. If a student can access an inappropriate site, or if inappropriate content appears through pop-up ads or any other means, the student should leave the site immediately and report it to the supervising teacher.

The school is not able to guarantee that a student will never be able to access inappropriate internet content, particularly if the student makes an intentional and sustained effort to do so. If a parent is concerned that their child may lack the maturity or self-control necessary to follow the guidelines for computer use, or may inadvertently be exposed to inappropriate content, the parent may request that their child not be allowed access to the computer network.

- Laptop Use Requirements:
 - Students must have an educational goal when accessing the Internet or using a computer.
 - Students are not permitted to transmit, receive, submit, or publish any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, threatening, offensive, or illegal material.
 - Students must respect all copyright laws that protect software owners, artists, and writers. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated.
 - Physical or electronic tampering with computer resources is not permitted. Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks intentionally will result in the loss of computer privileges.

Additionally, students will be responsible for repairs or replacements that result from tampering or misuse.

As for non-school related personal technology such as cell phones, smart watches, tablets, headphones, etc., Westminster is personal technology free campus. Personal technology will be collected at the beginning of the school day. Students will be informed of the location and the schedule for collection and return of personal technology. Electronics need to be turned off before they are turned in. For further details outlining our Technology Use Policy, [click here](#).

Attendance Requirements

Regular attendance in class is essential to a successful school experience. There is no substitute for hearing first-hand a teacher's instruction.

- Lower School Attendance Requirements
 - Students in grades K-5 must be in class at least one half of the day to be counted present for that day. For K-5, students with more than 20 absences in a school year will require an administrative review.

- Upper School Attendance Requirements
 - At the Upper School level, attendance is taken during each class period. Upper School students who accumulate more than four (4) absences in a block class or eight (8) absences in a regular class per semester may be subject to administrative review.
 - Students that arrive late to school will need to sign in at the front office. Students who are tardy to class any other time during the day are to go directly to class. A note from a teacher is required for the tardy to be excused. Tardies will be cumulative per semester.
 - Students in middle school will be counted absent when they are more than 15 minutes late or are checked out more than 15 minutes early.

- Chapel attendance is required.
- Consequence for Tardies
 - Detention will be held either before or after school.
Students will be assigned a detention date. Additional detentions may be given if a student misses the detention deadline. Detention should be 30 minutes in length. **Students may work on schoolwork, but may not have access to any technology (phone, computer, etc.)**
 - 4 tardies to a class = detention
 - 5 tardies to 1st period = detention and possible loss of driving privileges
 - Each additional tardy = detention (Excessive detentions for tardies may result in additional penalties.)
 - Since the school calendar allows for several vacation opportunities periodically throughout the year, parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule vacations and doctor's appointments to coincide with school breaks and in-service days.
- Final Exam Exemptions
 - Fall Semester
 - No exam exemptions
 - Spring Semester
 - Graduated exam exemptions for students in grades 9-11 during the spring for core academic classes (English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language). AP and Dual Enrollment course exams cannot be exempted.
 - Students with an A average could exempt in:
 - 9th Grade: 1 exam (class that student has an A)
 - 10th Grade: 2 exams (classes that student has an A)
 - 11th Grade: 3 exams (classes that student has an A)
 - 12th Grade: exempt all exams regardless of average

- Note to Students Involved in Extracurricular Activities
 - Students must learn how to plan ahead and manage their time wisely. Being an athlete or club member with long practice hours and possible late-night activities does not relieve a student of the responsibilities of being at school on time, attending classes, turning assignments in on time, or taking tests when scheduled. Students may not participate in athletic events or other school-related activities on the same day they have been absent more than four class periods, except when the absence is due to a medical appointment.

Checkout Procedures

Under no circumstances is a student allowed to leave campus without parental permission. A parent will sign a student out at the office. In the event of an emergency or sickness, students of driving age may sign themselves out if the office has been notified via email (office@wcalions.org). Students checking out for lunch is not a valid reason. Parents are asked to make every effort to schedule medical or other appointments outside of school hours and to check out students early only when absolutely necessary.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

Teachers and staff will take special care to assist students whenever there is a potential for harm from fire, severe weather, and natural disasters. Teachers will instruct students on proper procedures should a school evacuation be necessary. As required by Georgia State Law, Westminster regularly conducts fire, tornado, and lockdown drills. In addition, an emergency evacuation plan will be placed in each classroom.

4. Academics

Academic Assistance

Academic assistance is offered in a number of ways to offer students the greatest possible pathway to success.

- Student Success Program
 - All upper and lower school students have access to the resources provided by the Student Success Program. Resources include but are not limited to tutoring opportunities and assistance with developing action plans for student success.

Homework

Homework helps students to master or reinforce skills and information and develop self-discipline and organizational skills. The following criteria should apply for any assigned homework:

- Homework can be used for reinforcement or enrichment of skills, as well as for remediation.
- Students should bring completed homework to school each day. It is a student's responsibility to inquire about homework assignments when he/she is absent. It is not the responsibility of the office personnel to gather homework for students who are absent.

Student Records

The school maintains a permanent cumulative file on each student, containing such information as health records, report cards, standardized test scores, and disciplinary reports. The confidentiality of these records is maintained. Records will be released upon the written request of the parent or legal guardian, provided all financial accounts have been paid in full and all school materials have been returned.

Academic Transcripts

A student's academic transcript includes all high school courses taken and the semester grades earned in each course. It is intended to be a complete and accurate record and is, therefore, not subject to exclusion of any part of the student's academic history. High school credits earned in eighth grade will also be reflected on the transcript and in the student's grade point average. If a student enters Westminster after the ninth-grade year, the high school credits and grades earned from another accredited school will count toward graduation requirements.

An official transcript will be sent to colleges, scholarship programs, or other parties as requested by the student or parent. Any request should be sent by email to the guidance office with the name and address of the institution where the transcript should be sent.

Graduation Diploma Plans

Westminster offers two Graduation Diploma plans. Both will lead toward a College Preparatory Diploma with the Distinguished Diploma plan preparing students for more selective college admissions requirements.

Westminster College Preparatory Diploma Plan:

- English 4
- Math 4
- Social Studies 4
- Science 4
- Bible 4
- Foreign Language 2
- Electives 4

Total 26

Westminster College Preparatory with Distinction Diploma Plan:

- English 4
- Math 4

- Social Studies 4
- Science 4
- Bible 4
- Foreign Language 3
- Electives 3

Total 26

Students must also complete 4 AP/Dual enrollment courses. Outside courses do not count toward the 4 AP Dual course requirement.

Students must have an overall academic GPA of 90 or higher.

Students with a qualifying diagnosis taking ASL and have a desire to earn the CP with Distinction will need to develop their plan with the administration.

Additional Information:

- Honors Recognition: 90 GPA CP Gold cord, CP with Distinction Blue and Gold cord.
- Diploma Type will be noted on the transcript and a special seal will be placed on the diplomas with distinction.
- All electives will be from grades 9-12.
- Valedictorian and Salutatorian honors would come from the College Preparatory with Distinction honor group.

FAQ's:

- What are the differences between the two plans?
 - The biggest difference is in foreign language, electives and levels of classes. Each plan allows students to focus on courses within their areas of strength.
- How will students be recognized for excellence?

- There is recognition in both plans for high achieving students. With a 90 average, students are recognized as honor graduates.
- How will this impact my GPA?
 - There will be no impact on student GPA. GPAs are unweighted for all students.
- When will I need to make this decision?
 - You will need to make this decision during spring registration of your sophomore year.
- What if I want to change plans?
 - Students can change plans so long as they can meet the plan requirements prior to graduation.
- Will I be able to attend college with 2 foreign language classes?
 - Yes, the current state of Georgia requirement is two foreign language classes.
- Do I have to take Honors English to be in the distinguished plan?
 - No, so long as you meet the requirements of the distinguished plan.

Late/Make-up Work Policy

In guiding students in completing late or make-up work, parents should refer to the following policies.

- Lower School
 - Each teacher will determine which assignments a student misses due to absence are to be made-up. The following time schedule will determine the due date for make-up work:
 - For every day a student is absent, he/she will be granted that same number of school days to complete the work missed. For example, if a student is absent Monday, he/she will have one day, Tuesday, to complete the missed work. The completed work will be due on Wednesday. Days of the weekend are not calculated when

determining make-up work due dates. For example, if a student is absent on a Thursday and Friday, make-up work will be due on Wednesday of the following week.

- An exception to this policy applies to assignments that are due on a standing day every week, i.e., Friday spelling assignments or tests, memory work or vocabulary exercises. If a student is absent on the day before one of these weekly assignments is due, he/she will be expected to come to school prepared to complete the assignment along with the rest of the class. In rare cases of emergency or extenuating circumstances, the teacher may decide to allow one of these types of assignments to be made up later. If a parent feels that a child's absence reflects an excusable hardship, he/she should discuss this with the teacher before sending the student back to class.
 - If a parent knows in advance that his/her child will be absent due to a family activity, he/she may request work in advance with the understanding that in some cases this is not feasible. When assignments cannot be given in advance of a family trip, the student will follow the guidelines listed above. Work that is given to a student in advance of a family trip is to be completed and turned in on the day the student returns to school. The parent should take care to clearly understand the teacher's expectations of the student prior to taking the student out of school for a reason other than sickness.
- Upper School
 - Daily Work
 - Students who missed assignments on the days they were absent will have **two days** for every day missed to make up the work without a penalty. Assignments not made up in that time generally result in no credit. Missed work may be obtained through FACTS.

It is the student's responsibility to see the teacher about make-up work.

- Quizzes and Tests
 - Students who miss the day of a quiz or test will be required to make up the quiz or test **the day they return to school unless new information was taught during their absence**. If a student misses the day prior to a test or quiz, that student will be required to take the assessment on the originally scheduled day unless new information was given during that absence. Students who miss multiple days prior to a test or quiz will work out the make-up test or quiz with the teacher not to exceed two days for the number of days they were absent.

Report Cards and Grading

Westminster uses FACTS as its student information system. Parents may access their child's grades through FACTS using a school provided username and password. This access information will be provided at the beginning of the school year. Report cards are issued to students at the close of each semester.

- Because a high level of mastery of skills is essential in grade K, students will be graded according to the following scale:
 - **E** Excellent (represents superior performance beyond grade level mastery)
 - **S** Satisfactory (represents solid academic performance, indicating readiness for the next grade level)
 - **N** Needs Improvement (indicates partial mastery of fundamental knowledge and skills)
- The following grading scale will be used for students in grades 1-5:
 - **A** = 90-100 **B** = 80-89 **C** = 70-79 **F** = Below 70

- In grades 6-12, a student will be given a numerical average as his/her grade. A grade of 70 or above will be considered a passing grade. In grades 9-12, a passing grade for a semester will earn one-half unit.
- 8th grade students completing Algebra I or Latin I will earn one-half unit for each semester passed, as these courses are high school content courses.
- High school semester classes are not averaged together. Each semester grade is reported on the transcript.

Summer Reading Requirements

Westminster holds that it is vitally important for students to continue the learning process over the summer. Therefore, all students will be required to complete a summer reading assignment. Assignments for each grade are available on Westminster's website.

5. Discipline

Expectations and Discipline

Our expectations for behavior can be primarily summarized in two simple rules: Students will treat classmates, faculty and property with respect. Additionally, students will display integrity (honesty) in all that they say and do.

Bullying Policy

Westminster will not tolerate any bullying behavior. Parents and students are required to report any such behavior to the Dean of Students (Upper School) or division principal. Time is of the essence in reporting instances of bullying.

When the school administration becomes aware of harassment or bullying, the situation will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from school for serious violations, even in the case of a single expression, act, or gesture.

No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of harassment or bullying. Retaliation in any form against anyone for making a complaint under this policy or for participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation should also be reported pursuant to this policy and is itself a cause for disciplinary action.

The WCA bullying policy includes cyber bullying. This includes methods of harming or intimidating another student by harassing them using phone calls, text messages, instant messenger, posting or spreading hurtful comments, videos, or audio records online through personal websites and social networking platforms such as Facebook, X, TikTok, Instagram, and any other method.

The safety of our students and staff are of the utmost importance. Any threatening behaviors that compromise a safe learning environment will be investigated.

Items Prohibited from Campus

Tobacco or tobacco related products, vape pens, alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, weapons of any kind are prohibited from campus. Students who possess illegal items on school property or at school functions may be reported to law enforcement and face immediate expulsion. Students who are aware of or suspect that a prohibited item has been brought, or will be brought, on campus has the responsibility to alert a teacher or administrator immediately.

Search of Personal Property

While on school property, no student has any reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to personal property. The administration reserves the right to conduct searches and inspections of student clothing, purses, backpacks, cars, or other possessions if the school has a reasonable suspicion that there has been a violation of any policy. Lockers are school property and are subject to a search at any time.

Property Damage

Any damage brought to the school buildings, furnishings, or grounds caused by foolishness, negligence, or willful destruction will be repaired and/or replaced by those individuals, and at the expense of those individuals causing the damage. Students intentionally causing damage will also be subject to disciplinary action.

Cell Phone Use on Campus

Westminster enforces a cell-phone free policy during school hours unless authorized by an administrator. Students are required to leave their cell phone in their car, at home, or turn them in to an administrator at the beginning of the day to be kept in a phone locker during school hours. Students may retrieve their cell phone at the end of the day. If students need to get in contact with a parent, they may use the receptionist phone to do so. If a cell phone is in use during an unauthorized time or in an unauthorized way, the cell phone will be confiscated, and further disciplinary action will be taken.

Social Networking Sites

Westminster prohibits the use of social networking sites during school hours and on school computers (refer to Technology Use Policy). In addition, if the school is made aware of inappropriate use of a grievous nature at any time, the school will take the necessary action to involve parents, school officials, and local authorities as necessary to resolve the issues. Inappropriate use could include such things as publicly denigrating the school, school staff, or fellow students in a malicious manner; harassment; slander; making threats; and posting suggestive material or photos. This applies to students, staff, and parents.

Public Display of Affection

Wholesome friendships are encouraged at school, but students are to refrain from public displays of affection such as kissing, holding hands, or prolonged physical

contact at all times on school grounds. Any such offense is subject to disciplinary action.

Dress Code and Appearance Guidelines

Westminster's dress code is intended to be practical, simple, and promote a successful learning environment with a standardized expression of neatness and modesty. Students are expected to always be well-groomed and in uniform during the school day and their dress should reflect pride in their school. The uniform dress code is not a reflection of current fashions. Enforcement of the dress code, like all other discipline matters, is based on a partnership between students, parents and the school. A detailed list of approved uniform items can be found on the WCA website under the "Parents" section or by [clicking this link](#).

- General Dress Code Guidelines
 - Hair must be clean and well-groomed and cannot be an unnatural color or of distracting nature.
 - Hats may not be worn inside during school hours.
 - Body piercing (other than earrings for girls), visible tattoos, and distracting makeup or accessories are not permitted.
- Upper School Friday Guidelines
 - Students in grades 6-12 have the privilege of wearing non-uniform clothing on Friday each week. These Fridays are a privilege that may be forfeited if students do not follow the dress code on Monday-Thursday. All guidelines regarding neatness and modesty (including guidelines for length) still apply on Friday. Specific guidelines are noted in the above link to the dress code.
- Lower School Friday Guidelines
 - Students in the Lower School will have the privilege of wearing spirit wear each Friday of the school year. Below are the guidelines for Spirit Wear Fridays:

- All WCA t-shirts, shirts, sweatshirts, or hoodies may be worn.
- The rest of the Lower School dress code will remain the same: uniform bottoms, socks, and shoes.

6. Health and Services Requirements

Immunization

As required by Georgia law, your child must have proof of immunization on file at the school. All students new to the state of Georgia or enrolling in school for the first time must have the Certificate of Immunization. All students entering seventh grade must have a second MMR vaccination, varicella vaccination or proof of having had the disease. When getting the vaccination, the student will receive a proof of immunization form, which will be placed in his/her permanent records. The student will be instructed to remain at home until all immunization records are obtained.

Illness and Injury

All students must have a medical release and emergency contact information on file. Parents are required to update information at the beginning of each school year. It is the parents' responsibility to notify the office during the school year of any changes in the information provided. Should a student become ill or have an accident while at school, we will take appropriate action, including the procedures permitted by the parents as listed on the medical release form. If a student has indications of an infectious illness such as fever, coughing, skin rash, vomiting, diarrhea, eye infection, head lice, etc., he/she will be sent home.

Both students and staff are asked to stay at home if they have an infectious illness. Such illnesses include, but are not limited to, the following: influenza, strep throat, chicken pox, conjunctivitis (pink eye), and gastrointestinal or respiratory viruses. *To prevent infecting others, a student should not return to school until he/she has been without fever, vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours.* Parents should provide a detailed

reason for why the child was absent to the office for upper school students or the classroom teacher for lower school. Please note that giving a child medication to reduce fevers and make him or her more comfortable is not the same as the child being “fever-free.” The 24-hour period of having no fever cannot be induced by medication.

Lice Policy

If a parent suspects or confirms that his or her child has been infested with the parasite, the parent is expected and required to inform the school office. Students who are examined by school personnel and found to have nits or adult lice will be sent home. If the school becomes aware that a case of lice exists among the students, a notification following this policy will be emailed to all parents within that class. Responsibility for treatment and “head-checking” rests predominantly with the parent. Since schools are not able to consistently catch lice in children’s hair, the school will not rely on group checks to identify problems.

Medication

The school will have on hand and may administer items such as Tylenol, cough drops, throat lozenges, Tums, Advil, topical anti-itch and antibiotics, and Benadryl at the discretion of teacher or office personnel with given consent. All student medication brought from home must be left with the office upon a student’s arrival at school. Lower school student medication will be given to the classroom teacher. Upper school student medication will be kept in the upper school office. Any student having medication for emergency situations (i.e., Epi-pens, etc.) may also have these available in their teacher’s classroom if deemed necessary. In order for school personnel to administer any medication during the day, there are two requirements:

- The student must provide a note from a parent indicating dosage instructions.

- The medication must be brought to school in its original container, and if it is a prescription, the prescription must be written for the student to whom it is to be administered.
- Lower School classrooms will prominently post any serious allergies from which students suffer. Medication and/or treatment procedures will also be posted and followed in case of emergency.
- Parents must contact the school each year to update the staff on any serious medical conditions their child may have.

7. Student Organization and Activities

Sports and Extracurricular Programs

Westminster is proud to offer a variety of sports and extracurricular programs. Registration forms, information on fees, and other information can be obtained from the athletic director for sports and the upper school office for extracurricular programs.

Policies

The following policies apply to students who participate in extracurricular athletics:

- All students are eligible to participate in the extracurricular/athletic program, assuming they meet the age and grade level requirements of each sport/activity.
- Anyone in grades 6-12 who participates in athletics must have a physical exam for the current school year completed and on file before his or her first day of practice.
- All fees must be paid before a student will be issued a uniform or allowed to participate in scheduled games/activities.
- Team members must attend practices and competitions. When this is not possible, they will notify their coaches immediately.
- No athletic practices will be held on Sunday.

- Students must be in attendance at school at least 3 periods of the day in order to participate in an athletic/extracurricular event that day.
- Students will be granted an excused absence when missing classes due to participation in an athletic/extracurricular event. However, it is the student's responsibility to inquire as to any missed class work or homework assignments.
- Students are expected to be at school on time the morning after a late night athletic/extracurricular event.
- Because students on teams are representatives of the school, if a student engages in behaviors either inside or outside of school that are inconsistent with the values of the school, the student's participation in athletics/extracurricular activities may be affected.

Expectations of Parents of Athletes and Extracurricular Activities

Parents will represent Westminster in a manner that is honoring God. Parents will pledge to demonstrate the best sportsmanship possible. They will respect themselves, players, opponents, coaches, officials, and fans. Parents will maintain a positive, "team first" attitude.

8. Relational Policies

Human Dignity

Westminster intends to provide its students with an environment that is free of offensive kinds of behavior. Conduct that subjects another person to unwanted attention, comments, or actions because of race, national origin, age, sex, physical characteristics, or disability is not permitted. Instead, we expect all persons to treat each other with respect, acknowledging that we all are made to reflect God himself. Students engaging in offensive behavior will be disciplined.

Conflict Resolution

It is expected that the guidelines in Matthew 18 will be followed whenever a concern involving any aspect of the school's operation arises between or among parties, including students, parents, staff, administration, and board. In short, this passage directs believers to first go directly to the person involved when conflicts arise, and then to continue through the channels of authority until a resolution is reached.

- *The Matthew 18 Principle: A Scriptural Understanding and Practical Application of this Important Biblical Principle*
 - Nobody really loves conflict and confrontation. Since, however, relationship difficulties are normal parts of the human experience, some conflicts and confrontations are simply unavoidable. Breakdowns in effective relationships, when not handled properly, often hinder progress, usually upset all parties, and, generally speaking, are destructive and demoralizing. Therefore, it is extremely critical that a proper application of sound problem-solving skills be employed at WCA.
 - Christians should be encouraged to know that the ultimate textbook of knowledge and wisdom, God's Holy Word, provides very specific guidelines and mandates for effective conflict resolution. Specifically, Matthew 18:15-17 provides the following scriptural mandate for keeping communication lines open and intact:
 - "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two brothers along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

- In practical terms, how are the principles of Matthew 18 applied to the real-life situations at WCA? First, the offended party should always directly confront the “offending” party before taking the issue to any other party. Hopefully, the problem will be solved at this point. If a satisfactory resolution is not forthcoming at this level, the two parties should take the issue to the next level. If the issue is between a parent and a teacher or staff person, the next level would be the principal or headmaster and beyond that, the Board of Trustees. If an issue is with a principal or the Head of School and is not resolved by speaking with him/her, the issue should then be taken to a Board representative. The key here is to make every effort to resolve conflicts without involving outside parties.

Non-custodial Parents

When custody rights have been established by a court of law, a copy of all pertinent legal documents must be on file with the admissions office. The following guidelines have been adopted to assist the school in situations where a non-custodial parent wishes to become involved in school-related activities of a child or wishes to have contact with or take custody of the child while he/she is at school:

- Ordinarily, the school will not resist or interfere with a non-custodial parent’s attendance at school-related programs or access to the child or the child’s records unless the school is presented with a court order or comparable legal document restricting such involvement or access.
- Only parents who have entered into a contractual relationship with the school are considered part of the parent body.
- A non-custodial parent may not remove a child from school premises unless the school is presented with a written court order or verified written authorization from the custodial parent.

- If the actions of parents, custodial or non-custodial, become disruptive to the operations of the school, the school has the right to restrict access by such parents and to take other necessary action.
- Concerning student activities that require parental consent, the school will accept consent only from the custodial parent.
- By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is a minor or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the school records if the school has been given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

9. Admissions Procedures and Policies

Admissions Standards

Westminster Christian Academy admits all eligible students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities. Westminster's goal is to provide a challenging, college-preparatory education to children of Christian families. Therefore, admission to Westminster is primarily based on two criteria: (1) Both parents are Christians and are actively involved in an evangelical church, and (2) The student is performing approximately on or above grade level and gives evidence of good conduct and attitude.

Therefore, a family or student not meeting these two criteria may be denied acceptance to Westminster. Furthermore, at the advice of the administration, the admissions committee may deny acceptance if the administration voices substantiated concern related to other factors that acceptance would not be in the best interest of either the student or the school.

Admissions Procedures

Following are the procedures required for admission to Westminster:

- To apply for admission, parents must submit a completed application, application fee and deposit, and authorization for the release of student records.
- An academic evaluation will be required of prospective students entering kindergarten through eighth grade. Following a review of the student's records, further evaluation may be required for a student entering ninth through twelfth grade.
- All parents will be interviewed by a principal and the Director of Admissions.
- Students may be placed in a waiting pool, depending on space availability. Acceptance of students on the waiting list is based on a thorough evaluation of the student's qualifications; enrollment will not be determined by the date of application.

Continuous Enrollment

Westminster utilizes a continuous enrollment model. Once a student is enrolled, his or her enrollment will automatically continue each year unless a formal withdrawal is submitted.

Continued enrollment is contingent upon the following criteria: (1) the student is passing his/her academic classes and is not on probation, (2) the student is not exhibiting ongoing discipline problems, and (3) the family remains in good standing regarding financial responsibilities. The school reserves the right to deny continued enrollment to any student whose actions demonstrate that it is not in the school's best interest to allow continued enrollment.

This process allows current families to retain their child's placement while enabling the school to plan effectively and maintain a stable, Christ-centered educational environment.

Withdrawal/Opt-Out Process

Under continuous enrollment, student enrollment automatically renews each year unless a family chooses to withdraw during the designated opt-out period. The opt-out period occurs each January, and families must submit a withdrawal form by January 31.

If a withdrawal notice is received on or before January 31, no further tuition obligation will be incurred for the upcoming school year. After January 31, enrollment is considered finalized and families are financially responsible according to the terms of their enrollment contract.

For withdrawals submitted after January 31 but prior to the first day of school, 25% of the annual tuition will be due. If a student is withdrawn on or after the first day of school, the full annual tuition (100%) is owed.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

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