



# **Cornerstone Academy**

**A Christ-Centered Classical School**

## **Parent-Student Handbook**

(Revised 2025)

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# **I. GENERAL PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY OF CORNERSTONE ACADEMY**

## **1.1 Objectives and Standards**

In the programs and teaching at all levels, as well as through extracurricular activities and examples set by faculty and staff, Cornerstone Academy strives to teach all subjects in the curriculum as parts of an integrated whole with the Scripture at the center (II Timothy 3:16-17); provide a clear model of biblical Christian life through the school staff and board (Matthew 22:37-40); encourage every student to begin to develop a personal relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20); and emphasize grammar, logic, and rhetoric as applicable in all subjects. As a school that has adopted classical methodology, we emphasize grammar (the fundamental rules of each subject), logic (the ordered relationship of particulars in each subject), and rhetoric (how the grammar and logic of each subject may be clearly expressed); encourage every student to develop a love for learning and live up to his/her academic potential; and provide an orderly atmosphere conducive to the attainment of these standards.

## **1.2 Mission and Vision**

**Mission Statement:** Cornerstone Academy seeks to assist parents in providing an excellent classical education by building godly character founded on a biblical worldview resulting in passionate disciples of Jesus Christ.

**Vision Statement:** Cornerstone Academy seeks to further impact this community and the world with well - educated Christian leaders who think clearly and listen carefully with discernment and understanding; who reason and articulate precisely; who can evaluate their range of experience in the light of the Scriptures; and who do so with eagerness in joyful submission to God.

The Cornerstone Academy mission and vision statement represent the desired results which we believe will come from our educational support of godly homes. We intend to fulfill these established goals through supporting parents who are already dedicated to such goals in their respective households. The school's implementation of mission and vision statement is not intended to supplant the responsibility of parents before God.

## **1.3 Statement of Faith**

The following is the foundation of beliefs on which Cornerstone Academy is based. They are also the key elements of Christianity that are unapologetically taught in various ways through all grade levels.

1. We believe the Bible alone to be the word of God, the ultimate and infallible authority for faith and practice.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.

3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that, for the salvation of lost and sinful men, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary.
5. We believe that salvation is by grace through faith.
6. We believe that faith without works is dead.
7. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
8. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved to the resurrection of life and they that are lost to the resurrection of damnation.
9. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.
10. We believe God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between one man and one woman.
11. We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in his image, male and female from conception through natural death.

#### **1.4 Nondiscrimination Policy**

Cornerstone Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial assistance, athletics, or any other school administered programs.

#### **1.5 Secondary Doctrine**

Doctrinal issues not addressed in the Statement of Faith are dealt with in the following manner:

1. Teachers must strive to present all classroom discussions of non-essential issues and doctrines in an informative, non-partisan fashion. Teachers must strive not to speak to the students in a manner causing offense to the parents.
2. Teachers must strive to portray various perspectives on a given controversial issue. Teachers may communicate personal beliefs without playing the role of their advocate.
3. Teachers should encourage students to seek counsel on such issues from their parents and pastor.

## 1.6 Code of Ethics

To maintain the testimony of Cornerstone Academy as a Christian school, all teachers, staff members, and representatives of Cornerstone Academy are expected to always conform to biblical standards of behavior. Wherever possible, Matthew 18 shall govern dealing with issues of moral character. The Board shall act as the church body.

## 1.7 In Loco Parentis Policy

**Definitions:** *In loco parentis*: Latin phrase meaning “in place of the parents.”

To ensure that parental authority over the education of their children is respected at Cornerstone Academy at all levels, the Cornerstone Academy Board, administration, teachers, and staff acknowledge that the school does not function above parental authority but rather with delegated authority in from the parents, i.e., *in loco parentis*.

## 1.8 Educational Philosophy of Cornerstone Academy

Although most Christian schools would agree on certain fundamentals, it is imperative that parents scrutinize the foundational beliefs of any school in which they may enroll their child/ren. Therefore, below are the most important philosophical elements that we at Cornerstone Academy believe distinguish our approach to education.

1. We believe that the Bible clearly instructs *parents*, not the Church or State, to "bring children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." The Church's commission is essentially to spread the Gospel and train believers (Matthew 28:18-20). The State has been directed to enforce God's laws and protect the innocent (Romans 13). The Church trains parents and the State protects families. The Family raises and educates children (Ephesians 6:1-4). Therefore, we seek to teach and discipline in a manner consistent with the Bible and a godly home environment.
2. We believe that God's character is revealed not only in His Word but also in every facet of the creation; therefore, we teach that all knowledge is interrelated and can instruct us about God Himself.
3. God wants us to love Him with our minds as well as with our hearts, souls, and strength (Matthew 22:37). Therefore, we seek to individually challenge children at all levels and teach them *how* to learn, by using the centuries-old, proven *classical* method, incorporating instruction in Latin and logic.
4. We want to help parents teach their children that all they do should be done "heartily, as unto the Lord." Therefore, we seek to encourage quality academic work and maintain high standards of conduct. This includes biblical principles of discipline.
5. We have a full range of grades because we believe that if a child is under his/her parents' authority and undergoing formal education, he should be trained biblically (Deuteronomy 6:6,7; Proverbs 22:6).

Parents can be confident that their student, at every stage of his development in school, will be loved with Christ's love at Cornerstone Academy.

### **1.9 History of Cornerstone Academy**

Cornerstone Academy began as the brainstorm of several homeschool families who were achieving success in a one-day-a-week homeschool co-op. They saw the benefits of a group schooling experience but still valued a homeschool setting. In February of 2000, these home educators began discussing the possibilities for schooling in the fall of 2000. One of the desires that surfaced was that of allowing for group teaching experiences three days per week with home study on the other two days.

In March, an Advisory Board was established to explore a school which would have paid teachers, dedicated classrooms, and would create a new educational model weaving together home study and classroom instruction. This Board was expanded to include a gifted public-school teacher and two businessmen from the community with duties as follows: Leigh Glover - President; Bob Muni – Vice-president; Erin Cook – Secretary; Craig Morrison – Treasurer; Theresa Zerr – Director; and Kathy Muni – exofficio (non-voting) member.

Research was done to locate other like-minded Christian schools around the country and to identify the philosophy of education that was right for the new school. After much prayer and consideration, the Board felt that God was leading in the direction of classical Christian education and information was garnered from Logos School in Idaho among others. Visits were made to several schools in Florida to observe and learn.

By April of 2000, the Board was meeting for several hours each week for prayer and discussion. Each member took responsibilities and drew in advice from others in the Christian community to obtain the best information possible to create a school as God directed. After prayer and consideration, the name *Cornerstone Academy* was selected to represent the firm foundation of Christ upon which the school would be built. (Isaiah 28:16 “So this is what the Sovereign Lord says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious *cornerstone* for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.”)

A series of information meetings were planned and carried out in various churches between April and June to share with the community Cornerstone’s vision. A web site was established, and a brochure and other materials were designed to communicate the school's goals.

Teacher and staff interviews were conducted by the Board, and curriculum committees spent countless hours examining the best texts and materials available for instruction. Input was sought from the homeschool community, and both public and private school teachers, all of which was bathed in prayer.

The facilities at Vineyard Christian Fellowship became available in June and the cleaning, painting, and decorating began. Many hours of labor were donated by the families that

were to be a part of Cornerstone's founding year, and on August 21, 2000, Cornerstone Academy opened its doors with 90 students for an Orientation/Meet the Teacher Day. Classes began on Tuesday, August 22. God had provided the vision, the direction, the facilities, the staff, the families, and the students. Cornerstone Academy was a reality, a testimony of God's grace.

## **II. CORPORATE STRUCTURE**

Cornerstone Academy and Ministries, Inc. is a private, non-profit (501[c] [3]) organization registered as such with the federal government and the State of Florida. The school is at 5510 NW 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue Gainesville, FL 32606, a location that may be changed at the Board's discretion.

### **2.1 Board of Governors**

The School Board of Cornerstone Academy is entrusted with the protection and preservation of the mission, vision, and values of Cornerstone Academy. Specifically, the School Board serves the school by setting policies that define and maintain the mission and goals of the school. The School Board examines the school's goals, policies, programs, and curriculum in light of biblical principles and those of classical education subject to the law, Articles of Incorporation, School Constitution, and the bylaws. As a corporate body, an individual board member has no authority over the school in any capacity.

The School Board shall consist of seven voting members; three members shall be elected, and four members shall be appointed. Additionally, four of the voting members shall have students currently enrolled in the school.

## **III. SCHOOL OPERATIONAL POLICIES**

### **3.1 New Student Admissions Policy**

All parents wishing to enroll their student at Cornerstone Academy are required to apply for Admission. Details of the complete application process, including the fees required, can be found on the school website ([www.cornerstoneacademy.school](http://www.cornerstoneacademy.school)) If a student is accepted, enrollment will consist of paying the appropriate enrollment fees. Any other necessary paperwork will be completed and collected at that time.

### **3.2 Re-Enrollment**

Current families may re-enroll current students when the opportunity opens in February. Details of procedures, dates, fees, and tuition rates for the upcoming year will be announced at the Annual Business meeting and emailed to the families at the end of January. If there are issues about grade placement, the principal in consultation with the student's teachers, and parents, will determine what is in the best interest of the student.

### **3.3 Extra-curricular Participation Fee**

Students are required to pay a participation fee for each sport or activity in which they participate.

### **3.4 Campus Visits**

1. All visitors to Cornerstone Academy campus must sign in at the reception desk and fill out a name tag. Any visitor other than a parent must be pre-approved by the parents of a child being visited and confirmed through the administration. Only people approved by the parents or guardians will be allowed on the campus unaccompanied. If the school is unable to get approval from a parent, a staff member will accompany the visitor.

2. Cornerstone Academy welcomes parental involvement in the classroom and office. Parents should coordinate with their student's teacher, room parent, or the school office.

3. Visits from parents who wish to sit in and observe class are always welcome; however, all visits must be arranged with the teacher and the reception office in advance.

4. Except for parents and guardians, students will not be permitted to receive visitors on campus during school hours except during the lunch period. Such visitors must sign in at the front desk and have administrative approval.

5. For the safety of Cornerstone Academy students and employees, teachers and staff should stop anyone seen on the campus without a visitor badge, elicit their name, and direct them to the school office.

### **3.5 Cell Phones and Lap Top Procedures**

Cell phones are NOT to be used or visible on campus during school hours. A student who needs to make a necessary phone call with his/her phone may go to an Administrator's office to do so. Students who are seen using a cell phone during school hours without permission will have their phone confiscated until the end of the day and a WARNING will be entered into FACTS. Repeat offenders will not be able to pick up their phone after school; a parent must come to the school to pick it up. The students will also receive a demerit for the second offense and any offense after, and this will be documented in FACTS. If a student receives 3 or more cell phone demerits, the parents and student will be required to meet with administration to create a behavioral contract for the remainder of the year. If policies are not followed, the student will be at risk of dismissal.

If parents need to reach their child during school hours, they may call the office and leave a message for their child.

Students may use laptops when given permission and have supervision by a teacher, administrator, or other approved authority. Research and writing papers are to be done on a laptop (or school computer), not on a cell phone. When students use laptops and computers, students should move to make their screen visible to the teacher at all times.

### **3.6 Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures**

### **Morning Drop Off**

School begins at 7:50 AM for K-5<sup>th</sup> grade students and 8:00 AM for 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students. A student may be brought to Cornerstone no earlier than 7:30 AM. Students will wait in the lobby until they are released to their classrooms. Students are never to be dropped off and left without appropriate adult supervision.

**Drop-off:** All K5 – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will be dropped off in front of the building. Alternatively, parents may park, escort their young children to the morning entry zone and then into the care of an administrator at the designated time. Students should not arrive before 7:30 AM. Parents may arrive early and supervise their own child until the students are allowed into the building. Students arriving late (after 7:50 AM or 7:55 AM) will need to obtain a tardy pass from the school office before going to class.

**Pick-up:** School is dismissed at 3:15 PM and 3:25 PM Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Thursday is early release at 2:15 PM and 2:25 PM. Parents should pick up their student(s) within 25 minutes of dismissal unless they are involved in a supervised after-school activity such as a club for Secondary students or after - school program for Grammar students. Grammar and Logic students who are not picked up within 25 minutes of dismissal will be taken to the after-school program. Appropriate fees will be added to your family's FACTS account. Rhetoric (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>) students who are not picked up within 25 minutes of dismissal will wait in the lobby. The school will not be held liable for any student left unattended.

**Early Pick – Up:** Occasionally students may need to be dismissed from school before the day is complete due to sickness, doctors' appointments, or other reasons. Parents and only those authorized by the parent in FACTS can pick up a student(s) and must show an I.D. and sign out their student(s) in the school Office. Office staff will contact the teacher to dismiss the student to the school office prepared to go home. To maintain an appropriate closure to the instructional day, early dismissal of students 15 minutes before the dismissal of school will not be permitted.

### **Please remember these safety guidelines in the Drop-off or Pick-up line:**

1. Park only in designated spots.
2. Watch the people directing traffic and follow their directions. Even if there are pedestrians waiting to cross, please go by what the traffic director and Safety Patrol tells you.
3. Drive slowly.
4. Pay attention and move forward as the cars ahead of you do so.
5. Be sure your doors are closed, and your children are buckled in their seats before driving off.

6. Pedestrians: If you are crossing from the parking lot to the school, please watch the person monitoring the crosswalk and only cross when you are given the right of way. Please tell your children to watch as well.

### **Student Driving & Parking**

Cornerstone Academy welcomes students to drive to and park at school. The parking lot is off limits during lunch and during the school day unless a student asks permission to get something from his/her car. No student may be in the parking lot except seniors who are getting into or out of their cars to leave campus or upon arrival back to campus. Seniors may not be in the parking lot except to leave campus and to return. No student may sit in a car during lunch or any other time during the day. If found sitting in a car, that student will have ALL lunch and driving privileges taken away for the remainder of the year, and the student will have to eat lunch with a staff member. Additionally, demerits and/or other disciplinary action may be taken.

### **3.7 After – School Program**

Our after-school program begins 30 minutes after the dismissal of school and goes on until 6:00 pm for our K5-8<sup>th</sup> grades. Please see the Finance Department for pricing.

### **3.8 CA Communication Vehicles**

Cornerstone Academy strives to be distinctive in relationships and communication, and to that end, many vehicles are used to communicate with parents. The following is a summary of the variety of communication vehicles utilized by the school. In addition, the school uses email extensively to communicate with parents. **Parents should check their emails regularly and inform the school if their email address changes.**

**FACTS:** FACTS is a private and secure parents' portal that allows parents to view academic information specific to their children while protecting their children's information from others. You may view your child's grades, attendance, homework, and other useful school information. You can also communicate with teachers and other school staff online whenever necessary. All you need is an Internet-capable computer. Each student and parent will receive log in information at the beginning of the school year. Parents may purchase the app for a minimal annual fee.

**Grade Reports: Parents** can review their child's progress through FACTS at any time. It is highly recommended that parents sign up for weekly gradebook progress reports for their child. Students in K5–12th grade receive report cards at the end of each quarter. Parents will receive an email with a link to view and print their student's report card.

**Website:** As well as serving as a strong recruitment tool for prospective parents and students, the Cornerstone Academy website ([www.cornerstoneacademy.school](http://www.cornerstoneacademy.school)) also serves as a wonderful resource for existing parents and employees with its parent, faculty, and homeschool links.

**School-Wide Mailings:** The school tries to consolidate mailings to parents whenever possible and often uses the Cougar binder for delivering information to grammar school parents. On some occasions, mail will be used school-wide to assure simultaneous delivery to all families.

**School Calendar: The school calendar is in FACTS and is the best way to keep up with events.** All school-wide activities and athletic events will be updated regularly, and it is subject to change without notice.

**Parent Alert:** Occasionally the school will utilize Parent Alert, a text reminder system for important updates, reminders, and severe weather notifications.

**3.9 Storm Days:** Cornerstone Academy will normally follow the Alachua County Public Schools' decisions about suspending school on storm days; however, for specific details, please be alert to administrative emails, parent text alerts from the school and Facebook.

### **3.10 Required Forms/Records**

To ensure that the school complies with all necessary state regulations and to maintain pertinent information about all students in its care, the following guidelines must be observed:

1. The following forms are required to be on file for all students:
  - a. Application for Admission
  - b. Signed Statement of Faith
  - c. Signed Re-Enrollment Application (one for each year)
  - d. Copy of Birth Certificate or Passport
  - e. Physical Examination Form (Florida Department of Health's form 3040) both sides need to be filled out.
  - f. Immunization Record (Florida Department of Health's form 680)
  - g. Student Records (see #2 below)
  
2. The school will coordinate the transfer of student records from schools attended previously by newly enrolled students. Should parental permission be required, the parents will be contacted to sign a release.
  
3. The records will be kept confidential.

### **3.11 Health Policy**

Cornerstone Academy expects families to keep ill children at home so that infectious conditions are not spread to classmates, faculty, and staff. This includes not sending children to school if they have had any of the following within the previous 24 hours:

- a. Fever > 100.0
- b. Vomiting
- c. Diarrhea
- d. Excessive coughing

e. Excessive nasal drainage

1. Should a child become ill or injured during the school day, the office will make every effort to care for him/her so that the child may return to class. If necessary, students will be allowed to rest 15 – 20 minutes before deciding if they will return to class or if a parent will be contacted to take the child home.

2. A student whose temperature is 100.0 degrees F or higher, who experiences vomiting or diarrhea at school, or who the teacher feels has excessive coughing or nasal drainage will be asked to go home and should not return to school until he/she has not experienced these symptoms for 24 hours.

3. When parents are notified of the need to pick up their child, the child should be picked up within 30 minutes of being called.

4. Please keep the office updated on any changes in relevant health history or medication. When you choose your local emergency contact, make sure that person is aware of your choice, and consider providing him/her with copies of your medical insurance information/card and a Power of Attorney that legally authorizes him/her to seek medical care for your child if you are unavailable.

### **3.12 Medication Policy**

The policies regulating the administration of medication during school hours are for the student's safety and are mandated by the state and accreditation. School personnel will only be able to administer medication after the medical administration portion of the application is properly completed and signed by the parent and by the physician for prescription and over-the-counter medication.

1. It is recommended that the first dose of any medication be administered at home. If you or your child's physician decides it is necessary for your child to receive medication during the school day, including self-administered medication, authorization must be on file in the office.

2. Over-the-counter medication must be in the original manufacturer's container and must be brought to the school office by the parent with a Medical Administration Form signed by a parent AND the physician. This lets us know the medication is safe for the child to take.

3. Prescription medications must be brought to the school office by the parent in the current, original, properly labeled container, as dispensed by the pharmacist or physician. Under no condition will children, including siblings, be allowed to share prescription medications. A Medical Administration Form must be signed by a parent AND the physician who prescribes the medicine.

4. The parent must deliver all medication (over the counter and prescription) for verification and inventory. All medication must be picked up by the parents at the end of the school year or upon discontinuation of use. Any medication not picked up by the end of the school year will be discarded.

5. Medication labels must contain the student's name, name of medication, directions for use, and date. The physician's order and medication label must be the same.

6. For those students with Epi-pen prescriptions, a Medical Authorization Form must be completed and signed by the parent AND physician. This form is available in FACTS under Resources. **Two sets** of emergency medications are to be supplied by the parent – one to remain in the classroom with the child and one in the school office.

7. NO medication of any kind may be carried on a student's person, except for cough drops, Chap Stick, inhalers for asthma or emergency medications for allergies and diabetes. If your child has asthma and carries an inhaler to be self-administered, state law requires that a Medical Authorization Form be completed and signed by the parent AND the physician. This form is available on FACTS under Resources. Routine medications are to be administered through the school office if specific arrangements have been made.

### **3.13 Serious Disease Policy**

This policy applies to all students, employees, and volunteers of the school. Serious diseases are communicable diseases that are potentially life-threatening or that can cause permanent bodily damage. Meningitis, AIDS (Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome), pneumonia, and COVID-19 are examples. Common colds, acute influenza, chicken pox, strep throat and the like, though unpleasant, and contagious, are not considered serious diseases.

1. The administration will take all appropriate precautions (including isolating the student(s) who may have contracted or been exposed to the disease) to reduce the risk of any student, employee, or volunteer by any known serious disease.

2. The school will not be held responsible for communicating any serious disease that was introduced to the school without the administration's knowledge.

3. Upon receiving reliable information that a student, employee or volunteer has contracted or been exposed to a serious disease, the administration will immediately contact the parents of any involved student, the Board and (at the discretion of the Administration) local health officials and the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia, to obtain pertinent information.

4. Based upon all available information, the Administration will determine what actions are necessary. The Administration will then contact the parents of the affected student(s) and relay to them the information it has received and the decisions it has made.

5. The Administration may require a student to remain at home for either a specific or indefinite period.

6. The Board and Administration may close the school in extreme cases.

### **3.14 Telephone Usage/ Parent Messages**

1. Students may use the phone in the school office to make necessary local phone calls (i.e., to inform a parent that after-school practice is cancelled or that they left their lunch at home).

2. Important messages for students may be called into the school office and the receptionist will make sure students receive them. Please limit the number of messages for your child, particularly at the end of the day when the office staff is very busy. It is difficult to ensure delivery of messages called in 15 minutes prior to pick-up.

3. We prefer that students not be taken from their class to take a phone call.

4. Because the use of cell phones by students during regular school hours is prohibited, please do not call, or send text messages to a student during these hours. Important messages should be called to the school office.

### **3.15 Lost and Found**

As a courtesy to parents and students, the school has a Lost and Found bin in a designated location on campus. Periodically this bin will be emptied. Labeled items will be returned to students. Unidentifiable uniform items will be laundered and added to the school's stock of used uniform items available for parents to purchase. Unidentifiable non-uniform items will be taken to a thrift store. A notice will be sent home via email whenever the lost and found bin is scheduled to be emptied.

**It is important that all students' clothing be marked with a complete and legible name.** Please do not use the student's initials or the student's first name to mark clothing. The marking's purpose is not only for the student to recognize his/her clothing, but so that a staff member will know to whom it should be returned. The use of iron-on or sew-in name labels is highly recommended. **In addition, please do not forget to clearly mark your student's lunch box, backpack, and notebooks.**

### **3.16 Lunch Program ("Lunch Pail")**

Cornerstone Academy offers a lunch program for students in K5 through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Orders:** Lunch pail will be open to receive orders online through the Parent Resource section of FACTS. Ordering will be available every week and will be closed every Saturday at 11:00 pm. All orders are completed and paid for online

**Menu:** Our vendors include Chick fil A, Jimmy Johns, PDQ and others can be added

**Allergies: Cornerstone Academy is sensitive to the needs of all students with allergies; however, we cannot be certain that all food products are free of potential allergens, notably peanut or peanut related products.** If a student has a severe allergy, we strongly advise you to consider other lunch options.

### **3.17 Textbooks – Damaged or Lost**

1. In the case of lost textbooks, parents will be billed for the total replacement costs.
2. Appropriate fines for damaged books will be determined by the office.
3. Report cards and transcripts will be held until books are returned or replacement fines paid.

### **3.18 Transportation Policy**

This policy covers driver selection, maintenance, rentals, and miscellaneous transportation issues.

1. Students may not drive other students on official school trips or to and from sporting events or school without explicit written parental permission for each occasion from both the parents of the driver and passengers. If permission is granted, the student must carry a valid Florida driver's license and liability insurance with prudent limits.

### **3.19 Tuition and Fee Collection Policy**

To ensure that tuition and other accounts payable are collected in a timely manner and to establish policies whereby unpaid bills (fees) are collected as quickly as possible, Cornerstone Academy has adopted the following collection policy.

Tuition pays for the cost of instruction at Cornerstone Academy. In addition to tuition and registration fees, families may pay additional expenses to cover field trips, curriculum, teacher gifts, and awards for students. Parents also pay for uniforms and participation fees for various extra-curricular activities.

### **Tuition Payment Options**

The different tuition payment options available to parents are stated on the Enrollment Application and/or Re-Enrollment Application.

### **Definitions**

**Overdue Account:** An account of any family whose tuition or fees, or any money owed to the school is 30 days past due.

**Late Fees:** A \$35 penalty assessed to all overdue accounts charged to your FACTS account.

Financial Probation: The status of an account which is more than 30 days past due and arrangements have not been made with the Director of Finance.

1. Any family who becomes concerned about their ability to meet their financial obligation to the school should immediately contact the Head of School or Director of Finance before their account becomes past due.

2. If at any time a family's account with the school becomes more than 60 days past due, they will immediately be placed on "Financial Probation."

a. The student may not sign up or participate in any sports activities until released from probation.

b. The FACTS account of all students in the family will be locked along with the withholding of a student's progress report and transcript.

c. If at the end of the school year a family's account is not paid in full, the child's final report card will be withheld. If a student is transferring to another school (including college or university), records and transcripts will not be sent until a family's account is paid in full.

### **3.20 Tuition Responsibility**

This policy defines a family's responsibility for tuition payments upon withdrawal of a student. It reflects that when a child is enrolled at Cornerstone, the school must make substantial financial commitments (facilities, texts, faculty, etc.) which normally cannot be terminated if a child is withdrawn. This policy applies to a family who initiates the withdrawal of a child from the school any time after a student has been enrolled through the application or re-enrollment process. For this reason, parents must understand that they are entering into a contractual agreement with the school. A student is considered enrolled once the relevant forms have been submitted and the enrollment fee paid.

The following is the specific wording taken from the Parental Agreement which carries the signature of the parent(s):

"Because the school must make year-long financial commitments to faculty, staff, vendors, and others on behalf of our student, the following financial agreement is accepted by each parent/guardian through our signatures. We understand that by signing this application, we are committing to paying the full year's tuition. Exceptions to this are outlined in the Withdrawal Policy (Parent-Student Handbook, section 3.21). Additionally, a request for withdrawal must be submitted in writing and all accounts paid in full including a withdrawal penalty if withdrawal occurs before May 1<sup>st</sup>".

### **Arbitration/Mediation**

The Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve

disputes in private or within the Christian church (see Matthew 18:15-20; I Corinthians 6:1-8). Therefore, any claim or dispute arising from or related to this policy shall be settled by biblically based mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker ® Ministries (complete text of the rules is available at [www.Peacemaker.net](http://www.Peacemaker.net)). Judgment upon an arbitration decision may be entered in any court otherwise having jurisdiction. These methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of this policy. By signing the Cornerstone Academy Student Enrollment Agreement, the parties expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit in any civil court against one another for such disputes, except to enforce an arbitration agreement.

### 3.21 Withdrawal Policy

**Withdrawal Policy:** A withdrawal of a student is one that takes place after an Admission Application or Re-Enrollment Application has been signed for the current or upcoming school year.

The Parent-Student Handbook lists the steps required of a family who is withdrawing. A family must notify the school in writing if they intend to withdraw. The family is responsible for a percentage of tuition (shown in the chart below) and fees except for the following reasons:

1. The student’s family is required by a third-party employer to move beyond a 35-mile radius from school.
2. The student withdraws before the start of the school year.

Students are accepted at Cornerstone Academy with the understanding that they will remain enrolled for the entire academic year. In the event of student withdrawal, tuition will be due and payable as follows:

Withdrawal After	% of Tuition Due
August 31 <sup>st</sup>	20%
September 30 <sup>th</sup>	30%
October 31 <sup>st</sup>	40%
November 30 <sup>th</sup>	50%
December 31 <sup>st</sup>	60%
January 31 <sup>st</sup>	70%
February 28 <sup>th</sup>	80%
March 31 <sup>st</sup>	90%

### 3.22 Grievance Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the resolution of disputes and grievances in the operation of Cornerstone Academy that are in line with biblical principles. These guidelines should be followed whenever a dispute or grievance concerning any aspect of the school’s operation arises between or among any parties connected in a direct way to the school, including students, parents, volunteers, staff, administration and Board.

## **Definitions**

**Dispute:** Any disagreement that results in broken fellowship or trust between or among parties that disrupts the lines of authority in the school, or that (in the judgment of either disputant), threatens the successful implementation of the school's objectives and goals.

**Grievance:** A concern about any decision made by one in authority, where the concern is substantial enough to warrant an appeal of the decision to the next higher authority.

**Concern:** The substance of a dispute and/or grievance.

## **Students or Parents to Faculty**

1. Parents or students (if sufficiently mature and respectful) should present their concerns about in-class situations first to the appropriate teacher.

2. If there is no resolution, then parents or students may bring the concern to the appropriate Department Head. The Department Head will decide if the respective teacher should attend the conference as well. If the student brings the concern, a parent may also attend.

3. If there is no resolution, then parents or students may bring the concern to the Head of School. If the student brings the concern, a parent may also attend.

4. If there is no resolution, then the parents may request a hearing from the Board.

## **Parents (including volunteers) to Administration**

1. Parents should bring their grievances or disputes about the general operation of the school (apart from in-class situations) to the appropriate administrator.

2. If there is no resolution, then they should request a hearing with the next higher authority, be it the Head of School or the Board.

3. This procedure applies also to Board members who are acting in the capacity of parent or patron, not as representatives of the Board.

**Additional Guidelines:** Should any dispute arise that this policy does not address, the administration will determine a procedure to follow based on parity of reasoning from the procedures established by this policy.

## **3.23 Student Cumulative Folders**

1. Student cumulative folders shall contain permanent and current records showing each child's name, address, parent's name, attendance, health, weight, physical examinations, evidence of state required immunizations or religious exemption form, cumulative

academic progress, periodic progress reports, and individual results on standardized tests.

2. The Head of School, Principal, Director of Business Operations, Academic Advising Department, and admission personnel have free access to student's cumulative folders. Parents and teachers may request access to a child's cumulative folder by contacting the office.

### **3.24 Privacy Policy**

For the purposes of this policy, "Cornerstone Academy" refers to persons who are part of the faculty, staff, and/or members of the governing Board of Cornerstone Academy. "The Community of Cornerstone Academy" refers to persons who are students, other members of the student's own household, and persons who are part of "Cornerstone Academy."

The Community of Cornerstone Academy – Personal Information: The privacy of the students, parents, faculty, staff and Board of Cornerstone Academy is valuable and is a matter of foremost importance and trust.

Personal information, (including, but not limited to names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses) may only be distributed among persons belonging to the community of Cornerstone Academy and may not be distributed by Cornerstone to other parties.

Friends and Guests – Personal Information: Personal information received by Cornerstone Academy belonging to persons other than the community of Cornerstone will be treated with care. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the information is distributed only as needed at Cornerstone Academy and will not be distributed to other parties.

Cornerstone Academy – Internal Communication: Personal information may be distributed within Cornerstone Academy for purposes of school-related business only. Cornerstone will endeavor to avoid excessive reproduction of personal information to minimize the possibility of improper distribution of personal information belonging to the community of Cornerstone Academy and personal information belonging to friends and guests.

### **3.25 Communication with Divorced and Separated Families**

The following policy is intended to clarify several issues that are sometimes confusing to both staff at the school and parents in a divorce or separation situation.

- Applications: Unless one parent has sole custody of the student enrolling at Cornerstone Academy, both parents must sign all applicable applications.
- Primary Parent: The school will send all correspondence requiring a response to the parent living at the student's primary residence.

### **3.26 Parental Involvement and Service Hours**

The family unit is of first importance to Cornerstone Academy since the family is the most

important human institution ordained by God. No other institution is given the high calling of bringing forth and raising up children; therefore, Cornerstone Academy is continually seeking ways to constructively involve the parents, grandparents, and siblings of our students in the school's regular and special programs.

Communication with the schools' parents, in terms of parental involvement, is only second to having the parents in the classroom. The parents should never have to be in the position of wondering what is happening in their child's class or how their child is progressing.

Ways parents may be involved in the school include, but are not limited to, involvement in the PAC (Parent Action Committee), as a Prayer Warrior, Homeroom Parent, Event Worker or Chairperson, Guest Speaker, Fieldtrip Host Driver or Chaperon, Teacher's Aide, Office Assistant, Building Maintenance Helper, Lunch Pail Assistant, Substitute Teacher, Drama Support Person, or Fundraising.

Grammar school parents are required to attend monthly Parent In-service meetings with teachers. Secondary parents are required to attend meetings as they are announced, usually once a semester.

Each family (mom, dad and/or grandparents) at Cornerstone Academy is expected to volunteer for a minimum of 30 hours of service over the course of each school year. This is tracked by the family on the Honor System and is recorded on a Service Hour Log Sheet that is to be filled in through FACTS, by the parents, in the Family section and completed by the last day of school. Hours that have not been completed by the last day of school may be "bought out" at \$20 per hour. There are also limited opportunities to earn hours during teacher post-planning. You may check with the office for availability.

Though the "letter of the law" is 30 Volunteer Hours, Cornerstone is seeking to enroll families that understand the importance of parental involvement to the success of their student and the overall program. Such parents will have the attitude of a heart of service and will be willing to continue to help in appropriate ways even when their 30-hour obligation has been fulfilled.

### **3.27 School Hours and Office Hours**

School hours are for Monday through Friday. Grammar school students in K5 through 5th grade begin at 7:55 am and end at 3:15 pm with early release at 2:15 pm on Thursday. School hours for 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades begin at 7:50 am and end at 3:15 pm with early release at 2:15 pm on Thursday. Office hours are from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday. In the summer, the office will be open from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The office will be closed for one week during the summer. Dates will be announced prior to the end of the school year.

### **3.28 Reporting Misconduct**

*Florida requires that Cornerstone Academy provide the public a reporting procedure for educator misconduct. All instructional personnel and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct.*

### **Florida Statutes and Rules:**

Florida Statutes s. 1006.061 states all employees and agents of the district school board, charter schools and private schools, have an obligation to report misconduct by an instructional personnel member or school administrator.

Florida Statutes s. 1012.795 provides the Education Practices Commission with the authority to issue disciplinary action against an individual's Florida Educator certificate.

Florida Statutes s. 1012.796 provides authority for the Department of Education to investigate and prosecute allegations of educator misconduct.

State Board of Education Rule 6B-1.001 defines the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida.

State Board of Education Rule 6B-1.006 defines the Principals of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida.

### **How to Report Misconduct:**

- Report allegations or suspicion of misconduct by an instructional personnel member to your school administrator.
- Report allegations or suspicion of misconduct by your school administrator to the Board President.
- Document the activities or details of the event.
- Secure evidence (if applicable)

### **If someone tells you about misconduct, be a LEADER:**

Listen  
Evaluate  
Act immediately  
Document  
Encourage  
Report

### **Who Should Report Misconduct?**

All employees and agents of a district school board, charter school or private school have a duty to report misconduct.

If you are aware of or observe misconduct, **REPORT IT IMMEDIATELY!**

### **Whom Should You Report?**

- Classroom teachers
- Paraprofessionals
- Substitute teachers
- Librarians, academic advisors and social workers
- Career specialists and school psychologists
- Principals, Assistant Principals and Deans

### **FAILURE TO REPORT MISCONDUCT**

Penalties for instructional personnel or site administrators who fail to report misconduct may include:

- Written reprimand
- Suspension with or without pay
- Termination of employment
- Discipline/sanctions on an educator's certificate

Apply the litmus test:

1. Do you feel uncomfortable?
2. Do you question the person's motives or actions?
3. Are you unsure?

Protect the students and yourself- REPORT.

Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by this chapter or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action.

### **For Further Information Contact:**

Florida Department of Education  
Office of Professional Practices Services  
Turlington Building  
325 West Gaines Street  
(850)245-0438

### **Report Professional Misconduct To:**

Cornerstone Academy  
Jamie Cline, Head of School

[jamie.cline@ca.school](mailto:jamie.cline@ca.school)

## **IV. POLICIES REGARDING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

### **4.1 Admission Requirements for the Student**

A child must have reached the age of four years by September 1st of the fall in which he/she would be entering the K-4 class. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis. A child must have reached the age of five years by September 1st of the fall in which he/she would be entering Kindergarten. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

If a child has successfully completed the previous school year and his/her schoolwork and behavior seem equivalent to the comparable grade at Cornerstone Academy, the child will be placed in the grade for which he/she is applying. However, if through the administration of Cornerstone Academy placement tests or other evidence, it is determined that the child may not be adequately prepared for the next sequential grade level, it may be necessary that he/she repeat the previous grade.

Grades (and credits for high school level coursework) will be validated for students transferring to Cornerstone Academy in the following way: All transfer students will submit official copies of standardized test scores, official transcript, report cards and any other permanent file information. Student placement will be dependent upon Math placement test and English placement test. Credits will be accepted from state public schools, private schools and those students completing a home education program after review by the Academic Advisor department. The final decision regarding acceptability of transfer credits is the responsibility of Cornerstone Academy. In addition, home education students will also submit a list of courses completed and include course syllabus, work samples and curriculum list per course. Evaluation of standardized test scores are also required. Home education courses will be certified on a case-by-case basis.

One credit hour is equal to 150 hours of coursework; one half credit hour is equal to 75 hours of coursework.

The child should also understand that his/her parents have delegated their authority to the school on days with classroom instruction. Therefore, he/she is subject to the instruction and discipline of the teachers and administration in their prescribed roles at Cornerstone Academy.

#### **4.1a Non-Discrimination Policy**

If the student and parents comply with the requirements outlined here, Cornerstone Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities accorded to and made available to all students at the school. Cornerstone Academy does not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships, athletics, and other school administered programs.

#### **4.2 Admission Requirements for the Parents**

The parents of students in Cornerstone should have a clear understanding of the biblical philosophy and purpose of Cornerstone Academy and be in full agreement with the Statement of Faith. This understanding includes a willingness to have their child exposed to the clear teaching (not forced indoctrination) of the school's Statement of Faith in various and frequent ways within the school's program. The parents should be willing to cooperate with all the written policies of Cornerstone Academy. This is most important in discipline and schoolwork standards, as well as active communication with the respective teacher(s) and administration.

### **4.3 Homework**

The amount of homework a student needs to complete varies from day to day, from grade to grade, and from student to student. Students often need some amount of extra practice in specific new concepts, skills, or facts. In certain subjects (e.g., math or languages), there is not enough time in a school day to do as much practice as may be necessary for mastery. Therefore, after reasonable in-class time is spent on the material, the teacher may assign homework to allow for the necessary practice.

Repeated, short periods of practice or study of new information are often a better way to learn than one long period of study. Due to the unique educational model at Cornerstone Academy, weaving together classroom and home education, homework is used as an opportunity for parents to actively assist their child in his or her studies.

Since homework, by its nature, takes time at home, it is not to be assigned due to the teacher's poor planning or in place of an assignment that could have been completed in school. Parents can access FACTS for Lesson Plans, including homework required. These guidelines apply to all weekdays except Wednesday. On Wednesday, there should be no homework assigned except for math and language. AP classes may be an exception.

Guide for Approximate times in each Grade level

1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> ~ 10-20 minutes

3rd - 5<sup>th</sup> ~ 15-30 minutes

6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> ~ 30-45 minutes

9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> ~ 30-90 minutes

Normally homework is not to be assigned over holidays and vacation periods. On Monday and Thursday, Grammar Teachers assign complete lessons for students, whether students are in school or at home. Monday for Logic and Rhetoric School, teachers assign complete lessons for students, whether students are in school or at home. Teachers assign a normal amount of work for a typical school day. The time taken to complete such work will be determined by the student's ability, work ethic, and access to a distraction-free environment.

#### 4.4 Student Promotion Policy

To establish consistent standards for academic promotion, current Cornerstone Academy students must meet the following criteria to be promoted to the next grade:

1. Grammar students must pass Reading, Math, and English with at least a 70% average.
2. Grammar students must have no more than one failing grade (or 'U') per quarter in any other academic discipline and have their teacher's recommendation to be promoted to the next successive grade.
3. Secondary students must receive at least 60% in a subject to pass it. Lower grades may result in that course being retaken. A Teacher recommendation would then be needed for promotion to the next successive course. Summer tutoring may be an option for such a student.
4. The Academic Advisor, in consultation with the appropriate Department Head and Head of School, will consider any petition to diverge from the requirements of this policy and will decide regarding such an appeal.

#### Remedial Coursework:

Students may remediate a course once they have earned a "D" or lower in that course. After completion of the course, if the grade earned is higher than previously earned, the transcript will reflect the higher grade. If the remediated course grade is lower, the initial grade earned will be reflected on the student's transcript. Departmental and Academic Advisor approval is necessary prior to re-enrolling in said course. This policy shall also apply to transfer students.

#### 4.5 Grading Scale

Cornerstone does not assign letter grades to students feeling that a percentage grade more accurately reflects the student's accomplishments. Secondary students who transfer from Cornerstone Academy will find that their GPA is calculated at the new school according to the grading scale of the new school. While Cornerstone Academy only uses percentage grades, a table of letter grades, percentages and grade point equivalents follows for your convenience:

Percentage Grade - Letter Grade - Regular Courses - Honors Courses - Advanced Placement Courses

90-100	A	4	4.5	5
80-89	B	3	3.5	4
70-79	C	2	2.5	3
65-69	D	1	1.5	2
0-64	F	0	0	1

Other evaluation assignments are used primarily for Kindergarten and First Grade such as

E = Excels (in skill acquisition); S = Satisfactory; N = Needs Work; I = Incomplete (work missing, not enough grades to assign letter); and U = Unsatisfactory (in skills or behavior).

There will be a minimum of 9 grades per 9-week period for each subject in Grammar and Secondary School.

#### **4.6 Semester Exams**

Comprehensive semester exams may be given in any Secondary course at the end of the first and second semesters. They may count as much as 20% of the semester grade. The exams may be given in class time or the designated day before the end of the semester.

#### **4.7 Progress Reports**

Cornerstone Academy uses a school-wide system called FACTS ([www.factsmgmt.com](http://www.factsmgmt.com)) which serves to increase the ability for parents to have more accurate and timely information on their student's progress throughout the school year. Each nine-weeks a "Progress Report" reminder to check FACTS will be sent out.

#### **4.8 Report Cards**

Report Cards are emailed to the parents with a link to view and print the report card.

#### **4.9 Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parents of Cornerstone Academy students are encouraged to stay in close communication with their students' teachers and, if necessary, the appropriate Department Head. Educating children is the responsibility of parents and as such, the administration and faculty of Cornerstone Academy see themselves as part of a bigger team. A parent can schedule a conference with a teacher at any time during the school year by contacting the teacher directly. To schedule an appointment with a Department Head, parents should call the school office.

#### **4.10 Attendance and Tardy Policy**

Regular school attendance is required by law and a prompt arrival to classes is important for a successful education. Students should attend class daily and provide the school with an adequate explanation and appropriate documentation for all absences. It is the responsibility of each student's parent or guardian to explain the student's absence to the school. Reasons for excused absences include:

- Sickness; injury; death in the family
- Documented appointments with health care professionals
- Participation in an academic class or school-sponsored activity approved by the Head of School
- Court appearances (copy of subpoena required)
- All other absences are considered unexcused, including suspensions from school.

The number of absences a student may have per semester and still be eligible for credit are:

- 6 excused with a parent note
- 6 unexcused
- Medical excuses with documentation from a health-related professional
- Students with many medical excuses must meet with the Director of Admissions

A student who exceeds the number of unexcused absences may be unable to receive credit for his/her semester classes. Students who have 11 or more unexcused absences in a semester in any class will be referred to the principal and are subject to not receive credit for the entire semester for that class.

### **Notification of Absence**

Notification of Absence forms are available in the school office and in FACTS for those times a family or student has a planned absence from school due to family trips etc. Students must take this form to each of their teachers a week in advance to fill out for their absence to be excused. Teachers may assign schoolwork to be completed and turned in when the students return.

### **Tardies**

It is important to be at school on time. If you arrive late, you will miss class time and may disrupt the learning of others. On the quarterly report cards, parents should note the number of tardies, and absences indicated. You are tardy if you come to school after the beginning of the school day or if you are not in your classroom when the school day begins.

- If you are tardy to school, you or your parent must sign in at the front office or the attendance office. The Registrar will decide whether to excuse your tardiness to school. The registrar will not accept the following reasons for being tardy: heavy traffic, oversleeping, returning home for forgotten items; and non-educational appointments other than doctor/dentist.

**Six (6) unexcused tardies to school or unexcused early releases from school will result in one absence for purposes of determining truancy.**

**After (3) tardies excused or unexcused, a student will receive an Absence Due to Tardy.**

\*Please note that parents may write notes to excuse only six days of absences per semester. Once six days have been excused with parent notes, other documentation will be needed to excuse an absence -- regardless of the reason. Students may make up work only for excused absences.

\*\*The parent of a senior may give written blanket permission for their student to leave campus; however, the student must have an administrator's approval before leaving campus each time. An administrator must know where and why they are going and when

they will return. The student must also sign out at the front desk. Seniors must attend home base, chapel services and Houses.

**Truancy:** If a student has more than fifteen unexcused absences within ninety calendar days, he or she will be considered truant. Under Florida's Compulsory Attendance Law, truant students and their parents may face legal sanctions, including appearance in truancy court.

**Scholarship Students:** If a student misses 5 days of school in a row without a valid excuse, they are in jeopardy of losing his/her scholarship.

### **PARTICIPATION IN AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Students must be in school on the day of an after-school activity to take part in extracurricular events. They must be present for a minimum of four (4) periods for the day. The Directors in charge of each event are responsible for making sure that this rule is followed.

**The required grade point average for participation in an extracurricular activity is 2.5 (unweighted)**

Students who participate in extracurricular activities are role models and represent God and Cornerstone Academy.

### **Make-Up Work**

Students with absences are expected to make up missed work. Make-up work will be due on the following schedule:

Time Allowed for Make-Up Work:

One day = One extra day

Two days = Two extra days

Three days = Three extra days

Four days = Four extra days

Five or more days to be worked out individually

For example, if a student is absent Monday and Tuesday he/she will have two extra days (Wednesday and Thursday) to make up any missed assignments including quizzes and tests. Any exception to this rule is at the discretion of the teacher.

Being absent the day before a previously announced test or quiz does not exempt a student from taking the test. Any exemption is solely up to the discretion of the teacher who can make the best determination of the necessity of any review for success on the test.

### **4.11 Academic Probation**

All incoming students will be placed on academic probation with evaluations after 30, 60 and 90 days (about 3 months). At the end of the 90 days, a meeting will take place with the family if the student continues their education at Cornerstone.

### Grammar School Students

Students in grades K5 – 5 will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The principal will work with the student's teacher and parents to determine the best possible action to take for a struggling student.

### Logic and Rhetoric School Students

All Cornerstone Academy students participating in extracurricular activities must maintain a 2.5-point average (see Athletic policy). Students that do not maintain a 2.5 grade point average will also be put on academic probation.

#### **4.12 Plagiarism**

Plagiarism should be discussed at the beginning of the year in every class

First offense – 0 on assignment; can redo for 50% credit. 3 demerits

Second offense – 0 on assignment. No redo. 5 demerits

Third offense – dismissal from school

#### **4.13 Homeschool Participation on Athletic and Other Teams.**

All homeschool students who participate on a Cornerstone Academy team must agree to abide by all the rules and policies of the school. (see Athletic Handbook)

#### **4.14 Upper School Graduation Requirements**

A total of 26 credits are needed to graduate from Cornerstone Academy. The credits must be in the following subjects:

4 Math

3 Science (2 with labs)

4 English

1 Rhetoric/Debate

1 Rhetoric/Capstone

1 Logic

3 Foreign Language (1 must be Latin or Greek)

1 Physical Education

4 Bible

3 Social Studies

World History (1)

American History (1)

American Government (1/2)

Economics (1/2)

1 Performing Arts

In addition, each senior must complete a Senior Project and present it to the 6th - 12th grade students, families, faculty, and staff during his/her Senior Year.

Students are required to perform Community Service hours as follows:

Community Service hours are required for graduation from Cornerstone Academy. 100 hours must be served during a student's high school years and documentation turned into

the Academic Advisor Office before graduation. Students may begin accruing community service hours the summer of the year in which they begin 9th grade and continue throughout their high school experience.

Hours must be served in the community. Some examples of community service hours are working at VBS, serving in a soup kitchen, church nursery, outreach ministry, summer mission programs, etc. (During the height of the Covid-19 crisis, volunteer service hours were allowed to be performed at Cornerstone Academy. Examples were volunteering at an SG event, helping clean the school, volunteering in a classroom, etc.) If a student is unsure if an activity qualifies for community service, he/she should contact the Academic Advisor Department for clarification and approval.

Documentation should include the following: Date(s) of service, hours served, activity pursued, and should include a signature of the immediate supervisor of the ministry who is verifying the work. Duplicate copies of all community service hours should be kept by the student and originals submitted to the Academic Advisor Office.

#### **4.15 Honors and Awards**

Cornerstone Academy maintains a system of formal honors and awards because the recognition of good work is endorsed in the Scriptures from the writings of Solomon in Proverbs to those of Paul (Romans, Ephesians, I Timothy, etc.). Therefore, we seek to publicly recognize those students accomplishing the necessary prerequisites to receive the applicable award/honor. We hope to encourage the motivation to good work among all the students by demonstrating to them that such work is not overlooked or taken for granted, but rather it is noticed and commended. We want to draw public attention to the high quality of work being done by our students to the glory of God and their parents.

#### **4.16 Honor Roll Requirements**

To encourage excellence, the school will recognize honor roll students quarterly in grades 5 – 12, as determined by the given marking period. There are two designations for honor roll:

1. A student qualifies for Honor Roll when a grade of 80% or higher is earned in every subject that quarter.
2. A student qualifies for High Honor Roll when a grade of 90% or higher is earned in every subject that quarter.
3. A student will be promoted to the next grade with Honors if the cumulative average for the year is 80% or higher in every subject.

4. A student will be promoted to the next grade with High Honors if the cumulative average is 90% or higher in every subject.

5. A student will graduate from Cornerstone Academy Cum Laude if the cumulative GPA for 9 – 12 grades is 3.0 or higher based on weighted Cornerstone Academy grade.

6. A student will graduate from Cornerstone Academy Magna Cum Laude if the cumulative GPA for 9 – 12 grades is 3.5 or higher weighted Cornerstone Academy grade.

7. A student will graduate from Cornerstone Academy Summa Cum Laude if the cumulative GPA for 9 – 12 grades is 4.0 or higher weighted Cornerstone Academy grade.

8. The valedictorian will be the senior who has the highest weighted GPA based on classes taken at Cornerstone Academy that have been taken for graduation requirements or the transfer classes accepted by Cornerstone that fulfill Cornerstone's graduation requirements. The student must have attended Cornerstone for at least two years unless he/she is coming directly from another Christian, classical school. Dual enrollment classes are not included in the calculation.

9. The salutatorian will be the senior who has the second highest weighted GPA based on classes taken at Cornerstone Academy that have been taken for graduation requirements or the transfer classes accepted by Cornerstone that fulfill Cornerstone's graduation requirements. The student must have attended Cornerstone for at least two years unless he/she is coming directly from another Christian, classical school. Dual enrollment classes are not included in the calculation.

#### **4.17 Field Trips**

Education is not limited to the four walls of a classroom. Teachers may choose to take their classes to on-site locations for firsthand experiences. All field trips must be organized by a faculty or staff member and must be approved by the administration. To participate in a field trip, students must have a signed consent form from a parent or guardian on file in the office. Any faculty member, with the consent of the Head of School, may choose not to take any student who has demonstrated a lack of self-discipline and may be a potentially be a disruptive influence on the trip. Parents will be provided with all the information concerning a field trip and adequate chaperones will be required.

Parents are required to conform to all Cornerstone Academy policies and protocol while they are acting in loco parentis as a chaperone.

#### **4.18 Learning Disabilities Policy**

Definitions:

**Severe Learning Disabilities:** Any condition in a potential student which would require separate classroom, program, or personnel to provide the educational services desired by the parents. Severe learning disabilities include, but are not limited to, Downs Syndrome, deafness, blindness, and students who are nonverbal.

**Mild Learning Disabilities:** Any condition in a potential student which does not require separate classroom, program, or personnel to provide the education services desired by the parents. Mild learning disabilities include attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and minor dyslexia. For the purposes of this policy, it is not important whether the condition was accurately diagnosed and is a genuine learning disability.

To clarify the school's educational goals with respect to learning disabilities, the following guidelines are to be followed:

1. The school cannot admit children with severe learning disabilities due to the lack of adequate staff, funding, and facilities.
2. Students diagnosed with mild learning disabilities must meet the same academic standards as all other children in their grade level.
3. Students diagnosed with learning disabilities will be given as much individual instruction and encouragement as their classmates. Cornerstone Academy has accepted the McKay Scholarship on occasion. The determination is made based on interviews with the parents and child, and the teacher's and principal's assessment of Cornerstone's Academy ability to serve the student well.

#### **4.19 Standardized Testing**

1. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills is given to all students in first through eighth grades each year. Students and parents are given a copy of the results when they receive their report cards in June. School-wide results are also shared with the Board. If a parent wishes to receive a copy of the overall test results, he/she should contact the office.
2. The PSAT is given to all students in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades and to lower grade students upon parental request during October.
3. Seniors are personally responsible for signing up and taking the SAT and/or ACT examinations. Information regarding the test dates is on the College Board website ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)).

4. Upper school students are eligible to participate in AP testing for college credit and CLEP testing for college credit.

#### **4.20 Summer Reading and Math**

1. Part of the school's mission is to help instill within its students a life-long love for learning. To help achieve this goal, the school partners with parents as they convey to students the importance of developing strong reading and math habits.

2. Books and math work will be assigned as a requirement for each student.

3. The school's hope and desire are for students to read several books over the summer.

#### **4.21 College Counseling**

Cornerstone Academy is committed to giving its students the tools for life-long learning and helping them pursue the ends of education, which it believes to be wisdom and virtue and to glorify God with their lives. Cornerstone Academy fully expects its students to desire admission to the best colleges for which they are fit. For that reason, the students and parents of the Upper school are served by an Academic Advisor. This person assists students and their parents as they prepare for college admissions. The school recognizes that college planning is multi-layered, so Cornerstone has taken a holistic approach to equipping students. The Academic Advisor gives attention to everyone in the 11th and 12th grades periodically but is available to meet with students and parents in other grades. The Advisor assists with the full application process, test preparation, facilitating letters of recommendation, Bright Futures, financial aid issues, and helping to keep students on track.

### **V. STUDENT CULTURE**

#### **Education Philosophy of Cornerstone Academy**

Each student is an individual with unique personal, social, and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation becomes unique in nature. Consequences for misbehavior provide the best learning values when matched to the unique students and his/her situation. The odds for children learning from their mistakes increase dramatically when children see a reasonable connection between their behavior and the resulting consequences.

Our school staff dedicates itself to following a set of core beliefs that provide a guide for dealing with student disciplines. Those core beliefs guide our attempts to individualize disciplinary procedures and to help students see reasonable connections between their behavior and the resulting consequence. Since their core beliefs provide the guiding light for our professional decision, the staff encourages parents to bring concerns and questions to us if we operate inconsistent with these core beliefs.

Although most Christian schools would agree on certain fundamentals, it is imperative that parents scrutinize the foundational beliefs of any school in which they may enroll their child/ren. Therefore, below are the most important philosophical elements that we at Cornerstone Academy believe distinguish our approach to education.

We believe that the Bible clearly instructs parents, not the Church or State, to “bring children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” The Church’s commissions are to spread the Gospel and train believers (Matthew 28:18-20). The State has been directed to enforce God’s laws and protect the innocent (Romans 13). The Church trains parents and the State protects families. The family raises and educates children (Ephesians 6:1-4). Therefore, we seek to teach and discipline in a manner consistent with the Bible and a Godly home environment.

We believe that God’s character is revealed not only in His Word but also in every facet of the creation; therefore, we teach that all knowledge is interrelated and may instruct us about God Himself.

God wants us to love Him with our minds, as well as with our hearts, souls, and strength (Matthew 22:37). Therefore, we seek to individually challenge children at all levels and teach them how to learn, by using the centuries-old, proven classical method, incorporating instruction in Latin and Logic.

We want to help parents teach their children that all they do should be done “heartily, as unto the Lord.” Therefore, we seek to encourage quality academic work and maintain high standards of conduct. This includes biblical principles of discipline.

We have a full range of grades because we believe that as long as a child is under his/her parents’ authority and undergoing formal education, he should be trained biblically (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Proverbs 22:6).

Parents may be confident that their student, at every stage of his or her development in school, will be loved with Christ’s love at Cornerstone Academy.

## **5.1 Code of Conduct**

### **Cornerstone Academy Code of Conduct for Logic and Rhetoric**

1. I, as an imitator of Christ, will emulate His teachings in all I do. (Ephesians 5:1-2; Proverbs 23:12)
2. I will govern my words with love and respect. (Colossians 4:6; Proverbs 18:21)
3. I will be responsible for my preparedness, dress, and academic work; others may be involved; but I alone am responsible. (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12)

4. I will both lead and follow with humility and joy. (Hebrews 13:17)
5. I will be kind, encourage the weary, and defend the weak. (Ephesians 4:29)
6. I will do the things that are hard. (Romans 5:3-5) I will turn away from immorality and self-contamination. (Romans 12:9-11)

### **Cornerstone Academy Code of Conduct for Grammar School**

\*Please note this is merely a simplified version of the Logic and Rhetoric Code of Conduct.

1. I will act like Jesus and do what He teaches in all I do. (Ephesians 5:1-2; Proverbs 23:12)
2. I will speak with love and respect. (Colossians 4:6; Proverbs 18:21)
3. I will be responsible for getting prepared for school each day. I'll think ahead and plan for what to wear, what to bring, and keep "on top" of my schoolwork. My parents will help me, but I am responsible. (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12)
4. I will both lead and follow with humility and joy. (Hebrews 13:17)
5. I will encourage those who are feeling down and defend the weak. (Ephesians 4:29)
6. I will do the things that are hard. (Romans 5:3-5)
7. I will turn away from sin and things that are harmful for me to see, hear, taste, eat, or think. (Romans 12:9-11)

### **School-wide Classroom Expectations**

1. Be obedient and follow directions the first time.
2. Treat others the way that you want to be treated.
3. Be ready to learn and listen carefully.
4. Work responsibly.
5. Be kind and loving with your words and actions.
6. Respect school and personal property.

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

Ephesians 4:29

"Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge." Proverbs 23:12

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you." Hebrews 13:17

## **5.2 Discipline**

### **Behavioral Philosophy of Cornerstone Academy**

Our Code of Conduct can be summed up in two words: RESPECT and LOVE. It is not about behavior modification (system of secular humanism.... we can control someone's behavior); It is about HEART transformation (only the Holy Spirit can do that).

- Any type of teasing, harassment, or making fun of another person is a major issue. John 13, “The world will know we are His disciples by the love that we have for one another.”

### **System of Demerits**

Demerits are given as a reminder to students that they have overstepped the school's expectations. A reminder/warning may be given at the discretion of the teacher, however, in order to maintain classroom management and standards, teachers are expected to give a demerit to any student who does not meet school and classroom expectations.

Demerits will be entered into FACTS the same day of the offense. This will automatically send a communication to the parent(s). Teachers should also notify administrators for any significant offenses requiring a 3+ demerit at one time or for an accumulation of 3 or more demerits in one class per semester.

**1 demerit** – Mild offense (not meeting expectations without harm to others)

*Examples: talking out of turn, failure to follow simple instructions, unprepared for class, uniform infractions*

**2 demerit** – Repeated mild offense or first-time offense that disrupts the class environment

*Examples: repeated talking after redirection, leaving seat without permission, minor disrespect toward instructions.*

**3 demerit** – Moderate offense (behavior disrupts learning or shows disregard for school rules)

*Examples: arguing with teacher, inappropriate language (non-directed), refusal to follow directions, repeated dress code violations.*

**4 demerit** – Serious offense (behavior causes harm—emotional or physical—or shows significant defiance)

*Examples: direct defiance to staff, intentional exclusion or unkindness toward peers, intentional property damage under \$25.*

**5 demerit** – Major offense (behavior causes harm to others, property, or significantly disrupts the school environment)

*Examples: physical aggression, bullying/harassment, intentional property damage over \$25, dishonesty in serious matters.*

- 5 demerit offense- parent conference with the Head of School and could result in dismissal from school
- 10 cumulative demerits (one school year)– parent conference with the Head of School
- 15 cumulative demerits (one school year) – dismissal from school

\*Other consequences for individual demerits may be given at the time of offense at the discretion of the teacher or school administration.

### **5.3 School Dress Code**

Cornerstone Academy believes that a dress code plays an important role in maintaining a culture conducive to cultivating virtuous scholars.

Cornerstone Academy students are expected to wear the approved school uniform while on campus during school office hours.

### **School Dress Code Disciplinary System**

A) Instruction - students are instructed by faculty and staff concerning the rules and regulations they are expected to obey. If students do not have the proper uniform attire they are required to call a parent to bring them the proper attire or receive appropriate attire from the used uniforms.

B) Correction -

1. Warning - the first 3 intentional uniform infractions for a Rhetoric student will result in a warning from the teacher or administrator that noticed the infraction. The students will be required to change into appropriate uniform attire and an email will be sent home. Each warning should be documented as a warning in FACTS by the teacher who gives the warning.

2. Demerit - If a student has been given 3 warnings, the student will receive a 1 demerit for the uniform infraction. This should be documented in FACTS the day of the offense.

### **SPIRIT & DENIM DAYS**

- Students may purchase a Spirit Day t-shirt to be worn on every Friday with uniform bottoms. Only Spirit Day t-shirts can be worn on these days.
- Denim Day is the last Friday of every month. Families may buy a \$25 yearly ticket and their student may wear jeans (without holes above the knee, rips, or frays) with any Cornerstone t-shirt on these special days.

### **MEN ONLY**

**The fit of all clothing must be appropriate and present an overall neat, modest, and clean appearance.**

**PANTS** – Do not need to be purchased from French Toast or Land’s End; however, French Toast and Land’s End are still available for purchase.

- Must be khaki, navy blue, or gray in color. \*
- Must be properly sized, not baggy, or tight.
- Must be worn at the waist.
- Must not have frays or holes.
- Must be worn with a solid color brown or black belt unless they have elastic waistband.
- Must have no writing.
- Pants must be similar in style, material, and fit as the uniform pants purchased through French Toast and Land's End. Pants that cannot be worn include jeans or jean look-a-likes, corduroy, and cargo pants.
- Before purchasing or wearing questionable pants, parents are encouraged to check with the administration for approval.

### **SHORTS**

- Do not need to be purchased from French Toast and Land's End; however, French Toast and Land's End are still available for purchase.
- Shorts will be knee length.
- Throughout the school year male students are permitted to wear shorts. Cargo shorts are **NOT** permitted. Approved colors are khaki, navy blue, and gray. \* These must be similar in style, material, length and fit to the uniform shorts purchased through French Toast or Land's End.

### **TOPS**

- **Must be purchased through French Toast or Land's End with the school logo.**
- Polos must be gray or navy blue in color and have the school logo.
- Oxfords must be blue or white with the school logo.
- Must be tucked in.
- **ALL Grammar** students must purchase a **navy-blue** polo shirt for field trips.
- An undershirt, if worn, must be white or the same color as the polo.

### **HATS, CAPS, SWEATBANDS, ANY HEADWEAR, AND SUNGLASSES**

- Headwear and sunglasses may not be worn in the building.

### **BODY PIERCINGS/TATTOOS**

- No visible tattoos or piercings.

### **OUTERWEAR**

- Must have Cornerstone Logo
- Must be purchased through Land's End, French Toast or Rollins Apparel.
- Students may wear athletic jackets that have been approved by the Athletic Department

- Polo shirts are required to be worn under outerwear.
- Outerwear may not be worn under the polo shirt.
- Make sure to purchase before the colder weather arrives.
- No hoodies worn during school hours.

### HAIR

- Boys' hair is to be in natural colors, off the collar, and above the eyes.
- Must be clean shaven with no facial hair.

### SHOES

- Closed toe shoes laced and tied, or sandals with a strap in the back.
- **NO** flip flops, crocs, or clogs
- **GRAMMAR students must wear closed toe shoes.**
- **GRAMMAR STUDENTS** – NO lights, squeaks, wheels, OR music.

### SOCKS

- Socks are to be solid navy, white, or gray. \*

### WOMEN ONLY

**The fit of all clothing must be appropriate and present an overall neat, modest, and clean appearance.**

### PANTS

- Do not need to be purchased from French Toast or Land's End; however, French Toast and Land's End are still available for purchase.
- Must be khaki, navy blue, or gray in color. \*
- Must be properly sized, not baggy, or tight.
- Must be worn at the waist.
- Must not have frays or holes.
- Pants with spandex are not allowed.
- Must be worn with a solid color black or brown belt unless the pants have elastic waistband.
- Must have no writing.
- Pants must be similar in style, material, and fit as the uniform pants purchased through French Toast or Land's End. Pants that **cannot** be worn include jeans or jean look-alikes, stretch pants, jeggings, corduroy, and cargo pants.
- Before purchasing or wearing questionable pants, parents are encouraged to check with the administration for approval.

## **SHORTS**

- Do not need to be purchased from French Toast or Land's End; however, French Toast and Land's End are still available for purchase.
- Shorts will be knee length and not tight on the legs.
- Approved colors are khaki, navy blue, or gray. \* These must be similar in style, material, length and fit to the uniform shorts purchased through French Toast or Land's End.

## **SKIRTS**

- **ALL SKIRTS must be purchased through French Toast or Land's End.**
- Colors allowed are Cornerstone Plaid, khaki, navy blue and gray. \*
- Jumpers and dresses in plaid or navy blue are permitted for grades K-2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Skirt length is required to be at least to the top of the front and back of the knee.
- Solid navy-blue or grey leggings without embellishments are permitted to be worn under skirts.

## **TOPS**

- **Must be purchased through French Toast or Land's End with the school logo.**
- Polos must be gray or navy blue with the school logo.
- Oxfords and button-down shirts must be blue or white with the school logo.
- Must be tucked in
- **ALL Grammar** students must purchase a **navy-blue** polo shirt for field trips.
- Long sleeve shirts may be worn underneath polo shirts on colder days if they are a solid color and the same approved colors as the polo shirts.
- An undershirt or cami if worn must be white or the same color as the polo it is worn under.

## **HATS, CAPS, SWEATBANDS, HEADWEAR, AND SUNGLASSES**

- Headwear and sunglasses may not be worn in the building.

## **BODY PIERCINGS/TATTOOS**

- No visible tattoos or piercings.

## **OUTERWEAR**

- Must be purchased through French Toast, Land's End or Rollins Apparel.
- Students may wear athletic jackets that have been approved by the Athletic Department.
- Polo shirts are required to be worn under outerwear.
- Make sure to purchase before the colder weather arrives.
- No hooded outerwear may be worn during school hours.

## **HAIR**

- Hair is to be in natural colors and out of the eyes.

## **SHOES**

- Closed toed shoes, laced, and tied, or sandals with a strap in the back.
- **NO** flip flops, crocs, or clogs
- **GRAMMAR students must wear closed toe shoes.**
- **GRAMMAR STUDENTS** – NO lights, squeaks, wheels, OR music.

## **SOCKS**

- Socks are to be solid navy, white, or grey. \* Small logos are acceptable.

## **DRESS FOR PRESENTATION DAYS and SPORTS GAME DAYS**

### **Pants or Skirts**

- For presentations at school any of the approved uniform pants or skirts \*
- For teams on game day – The coaches will decide what color pants or skirts. \*

### **Shirts**

- For presentations at school, white Oxfords or designated button-down shirts purchased through French Toast or Land's End.
- Shirts must have the uniform logo.
- For teams on game day – The coaches will decide.

**Navy blue or grey tie for boys and navy blue or grey crossover tie for girls will be worn.**

## **DRESS FOR EXTRACURRICULAR EVENTS**

### **Athletic Events**

#### **MEN**

- May wear modest shorts, loose fitting jeans, sweatshirts, and t-shirts to indoor/outdoor athletic events.

#### **WOMEN**

- May wear modest shorts, loose fitting jeans, sweatshirts, and t-shirts to indoor/outdoor athletic events.
- All tops must be long enough to cover torso with hands extended straight above the head.

- Spaghetti strap tops are not permitted.
- Leggings, bodysuits, cropped tops, spaghetti strap tops, and halter tops are not permitted.

**FORMAL EVENTS (Spring Formal)**

**MEN**

- Conventional dress suit or tuxedo with shirt and tie, dress shoes and socks.

**WOMEN**

- Strapless dresses must fit modestly and be straight across in the front and back.
- Necklines should be no lower than one hand-width from the collarbone.
- Backless and low-cut necklines are not permitted.
- **For the Spring Formal, dress length must be floor length.**
- **Dress slit must be no higher than the top of the knee.**
- Dresses for dances other than Spring Formal must be no higher than the top of the knee in length.

**2027-2028 Uniform Revisions**

School uniforms will be divided by Grammar School, Logic School and Rhetoric School as follows.

**Tops**

	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>
<b>Grammar</b>	Navy Polo/ White Oxford or button down	Navy Polo/White Oxford or

	for presentations	button down for presentations
<b>Logic</b>	Grey Polo/White Oxford or button down for presentations	Grey Polo/White Oxford or button down for presentations
<b>Rhetoric</b>	White Polo/White Oxford	White Polo/White Oxford

**Ties For Presentations**

	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>
<b>Grammar</b>	Navy Blue crossover tie	Navy Blue straight tie
<b>Logic</b>	Grey crossover	Grey straight
<b>Rhetoric</b>	Navy Blue crossover	Navy Blue straight