



# Heritage Christian Academy

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Hours of Operation  
6:45am-6:00pm  
Based on school calendar

Elementary  
Student Handbook  
2017 – 2018

**Administrator: Kara Marsh**

## **NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO STUDENTS**

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



## Forward

Heritage Christian Academy has assembled faculty and staff who are committed to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The school supports the idea of Christ not just in the Church, but also in home life and education, as school personnel works together with parents/guardians to assess and meet the needs of every student. All employees view their work as a ministry to which they were called.

This handbook is a method of coordinating the efforts of parents/guardians, faculty, and administrators as they care for students on a day-to-day basis; it supersedes any and all previous versions published. It cannot, nor will it, address every situation which may occur. It does, however, provide general guidelines to help maintain an orderly level of communication between parents/guardians and school personnel.

Heritage Christian Academy is a Christ-centered institution, with a strong desire and commitment to serve children and support the Christian family as it strives daily to teach students.

## School Board

As an independent Christian school, the governing body of Heritage Christian Academy is the Board of Trustees. The affairs, policies, functions, and operations of the school – including financial and business matters, the educational program, and the physical facilities – operate under the policies and procedures put into place by the school board. The school board shall consist of no more than nine and no less than five members. Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month, and are open to the public, except when executive sessions are called. Please check the school calendar at [www.hcapatriots.com/community.html](http://www.hcapatriots.com/community.html) for the exact date and times.

If you wish to address the Board on any policy or procedure matter, the Board requests that you submit a written memorandum or inquiry letter, and submit it to the Board at least three business days prior to a meeting. The Board asks that any grievance already be addressed and an attempt toward resolution made with the employee(s) in question and the Administrator prior to Board discussion.

## Teacher Commitment

All teachers at HCA are born-again believers in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The teachers are expected to always emphasize the spiritual component of life and the importance of a saving relationship with Christ in all that they teach. It is this component of HCA that makes it substantively different from other academic schools.

## Bible Study

The Bible is God's Word to man and contains the plan of salvation for each individual child. Bible story and age appropriate application is required for each class and built into the daily schedule. Students are taught to seek God's will for their lives.

Each teacher will begin the school day with Bible time, prayer and a verse.



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# Admissions

## General Enrollment Policy

Heritage Christian Academy offers a program for students who desire an education in a Christian environment and who are capable of succeeding in a program dedicated to academic excellence. The Academy is a Christian school and would prefer at least one parent/guardian who professes a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Initial admission to Heritage Christian Academy will require compliance of academic and behavioral guidelines as outlined in Board Policy.

Heritage Christian Academy does not guarantee admission to any applicant. Heritage Christian Academy recognizes that there may be applicants for admission whose behavior; ability to be consistent in attendance and potential for cognitive performance may require extraordinary attention and/or resources. Admission would, therefore, disproportionately reduce the attention and resources available to other students. When this issues arises, it becomes necessary to offer either probationary admittance or denied admittance altogether.

**Heritage Christian Academy reserves the right to determine the class placement of a student.** Special priority consideration will be given to staff and faculty of Heritage Christian Academy. In all cases, admission of a student is contingent upon the approval of the Administrator within the policies set forth by the Heritage Christian Academy School Board.

## General Enrollment Guidelines

1. The Administrator will determine final acceptance and class placement of students.
2. "Full Enrollment" is understood to be for the full duration of the stated school year, unless behavior, cognitive or attendance issues arise.
3. Kindergarten students must be of appropriate age for the assigned class prior to the beginning of the stated academic school year in order to obtain enrollment.
4. All Kindergarten students and above must be fully self-sufficient with regards to restroom hygiene.
5. It is understood that parents/guardians agree with the policies of the school as stated in the "Parent Statement of Agreement".
6. Certificates of immunization and Physician Statement must be on file in the school office by the end of the first week of school. Students may NOT be admitted to class without complete records after that time. Health records must be signed and dated by a licensed medical professional.
7. No student will be denied admission because of sex, national origin, or race.



## Admissions Paperwork

Parents/guardians must submit all completed application forms and payment of applicable fees to begin the enrollment process. Incomplete applications and unpaid fees will not be processed for enrollment.

Enrollment applications will be accepted at any time during open enrollment periods, provided that there is a vacancy in the desired program and the administrator does not require an admissions interview to determine qualification.

### Checklist for Applying

Due at registration

- Registration Fee (Non-Refundable)
- Supply Fee (Non-Refundable)
- Activity Fee (Non-Refundable)
- Completed and signed Application
- Immunization records (current)
- Completed Application

### Checklist for Admission

Due August 1 or at time of enrollment if later than August 1

- Physician Statement

## Enrollment Priorities

Registration will proceed according to the following priority dates:

- **Current families and Alumni**, including previous students and siblings never before enrolled, will have first priority, provided that applications and fees are received by the priority registration deadline. Applications may be submitted with fees at any time, with the understanding that the tuition and fees are subject to review and change by the school board prior to registration, or February first of the enrolling year.
- **Open enrollment** for new families will begin approximately 2-3 weeks after current families, and applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis, provided that fees are received in full. New families may be placed on a waiting list based on meeting the attendance, behavior, and cognitive requirements for admission.

An application may be submitted with fees at any time during the school year, with the understanding that the tuition and fees are subject to review and change by the school board prior to registration, or February of the enrolling year.

## Admissions Interviews and Status

An interview may be required to insure that students who attend the school come from homes that reinforce the values and beliefs taught during the school day. To this end, the administrator will assess the parent/guardian's motivation in seeking the student's enrollment in the school, as well as the student's willingness to attend and adhere to the philosophy and policies of Heritage Christian Academy.

Should the Administrator require an interview, admission decisions may fall into one of the following categories: full admission, probationary admission, or denial of admission.

**Full admission** is reviewed annually for continued enrollment. A full admission for the school year is given to students who: 1) are performing at age appropriate level; 2) attend school regularly; and 3) submit to school policy and regulations. Full admission status can be changed for cognitive, attendance or disciplinary reasons.

Applicants with deficiencies in any of the specified areas may be offered **probationary admission**. Probationary status will be reviewed quarterly and, if necessary corrections have not been made, the student may be denied further enrollment. If the administration believes that it is highly likely the deficiencies will be corrected in a timely manner, probationary admission can be extended.

The administration will give a **denial of admission** if the applicant is deficient in one or more of the above specified areas and correction during the first quarter is unlikely. Denial of admission does not prohibit a student from reapplying once deficient areas are corrected.

## Waiting List

Once a maximum number of students have been enrolled for a class, a waiting list will be started for all other applicants. A student will not be officially considered on the waiting list until all enrollment forms are turned in. Any student that is assigned to the waiting list will have the registration rates frozen according to the amount at which time the applicant applied.

If an opportunity to enroll is turned down, the applicant is removed from the waiting list with no guarantee of future placement.

# Fees and Payments

## Registration Fee

The registration fee (non-refundable\*) helps to offset costs related to processing student applications and is due when the completed application form is returned to the school office. The admissions procedures cannot continue until the registration fee is received. This fee does not guarantee a seat in the classroom.

\*If placement in the classroom is not available at the time of registration, the registration fee will be returned to the parent/guardian and the student will be placed on a waiting list until a seat does become available in the classroom.

## Supply and Activity Fees

The supply and activity fees (non-refundable\*) help to offset costs for student curriculum, field trips and general supplies. These fees are due when the completed admission forms are returned to the school office. The enrollment procedures cannot continue until these fees are received: half of the Supply Fee and the full Activity Fee. The second half of Supply Fee must be paid by September first for student to retain admission status.

\*If placement in the classroom is not available at the time of registration, the Supply and Activity fees will be returned to the parent/guardian and the student will be placed on a waiting list until a seat does become available in the classroom.

## Tuition

The tuition rate for each program is an annual amount. This can be paid in full at registration (or June 1, whichever is later), or through one of the available payment plans (see below).

All tuition payments must be made through FACTS Management System.  
<https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/4L3GP>

No personal checks will be allowed for tuition payments throughout the year. We are making an exception for the August payment if you have not signed up with the FACTS system and you are a new enrollee.

All tuition must be paid in full before June 1<sup>st</sup> for the previous school year. If an outstanding balance remains after this date, all registration and supply fees may be forfeited and applied to the unpaid balance. Your reserved class space for the next school year will be offered to the next student on our waiting list. Also, Heritage Christian Academy will not release student report cards until your account is paid in full.

## Payment Plans

### Elementary

A monthly payment plan is available. Under this plan, the number of payments is based on registration date.

- Registration on or before June 1 – Tuition is due in 12 payments, with the first payment due June 1.
- Registration after June 1 – Tuition will be divided into even payments, based on the number of months (rounded) that remain until and including the following May.
- Registration after September 15<sup>th</sup> – Tuition rate will be prorated based on the number of class days remaining in the year, according to the formula below.

### Prorated tuition

A daily rate is calculated by dividing the yearly tuition for the class by the total number of school days in the year. This is multiplied by the number of school days left to get a total tuition owed. This is then divided into even payments, based on the number of months (rounded) that remain until and including the following May.

### Discounts

- Accounts paid in full at registration or when the first payment is due will be given a 3% discount.
- Accounts paid in full for a semester when the first payment is due will be given a 1% discount. Semesters are due August 15 (or when registering, if after June 1), and on or before January 15.
- Families with multiple children attending will receive a 5% discount for both the first and second child, 7% discount for the third child, and 9% discount for any additional children.

### Late Fees

Payments are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month for which they are owed. Payments are considered late at close of business on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the month for which they are owed. There will be a \$30.00 late fee applied to all unpaid tuition balances after the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month, which will continue to accrue monthly until total balance is paid in full.

### Overdue accounts

Families with account balances more than 45 days past due will be placed on suspension from all classes until overdue amounts are paid in full, or for 10 business days following the first day of suspension. If overdue balance has not been cleared by the end of those 10 business days, it will be considered a full expulsion from school and class seats will be opened up to families on the waiting list for those classes.

Registration for the upcoming year may also be suspended at any time if an account becomes past due.

## **Returned Checks**

There will be a \$30 fee for all returned checks.

## **Refunds**

Families who choose to prepay tuition in full or by half-year, but need to withdraw their student from the program for such things as loss of job, job relocation, finances, or other personal reasons, will be refunded the remaining days left in the program at the daily rate.

The supply, activity and registration fees are non-refundable.

Please note: In the case of expulsion, there will be no refund of tuition paid for the month in which expulsion occurs and all previous fees and tuition are likewise non-refundable.

## **Fines/Debts Incurred**

Students are subject to the incurring of financial indebtedness during the course of the school year. Fines for overdue library books, damaged textbooks, and damage to property can accumulate. The school office will hold all school records and reports until any financial obligations have been cleared.

## Communication and Support

Heritage Christian Academy is working hard to take advantage of the technological advances available to us. This provides great opportunities to save time and reduce costs in paper usage, photocopying, and manual labor. HCA uses RenWeb as its administrative software where parents can view their child's grades and homework from home. You can access RenWeb through our website under "Parents" tab as well as "Students".

The school communicates with families in a variety of ways. These include the following:

- Email
- School blog ([www.hcablog.com](http://www.hcablog.com))
- Teacher blogs
- Notes sent home
- School website ([www.hcapatriots.com](http://www.hcapatriots.com))
- Other social media, such as Facebook and Twitter

Parents or guardian are encouraged to check the school website and blogs for school related information.

## Communication to parents from the classroom: Friday Folders

A consistent means of contact with parents (other than through e-mail and RenWeb) will be through the "Friday Folders" which will be sent home every Friday with the students. These folders will contain items such as the student's work for the previous week and memos from the office or from the teacher. A parent or guardian will need to sign the folder and any papers requiring a signature. Any questions for the teacher can be placed in the folder, and the teacher will reply as soon as possible. It is the student and parents' responsibility to make sure the Friday Folders get back to school on Monday. Parents may request an extension should they need more time to review the contents. Consequences will be necessary if a child consistently forgets to bring the Friday Folder signed on Monday.

Occasionally, notices will be sent home with students during the week. **Students' backpacks must be checked daily, as they may contain important dated material.**

## Information Updates

The office should be notified immediately about any of the following changes to addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses:

- Family Contact Information
- Student's Emergency Contact Information
- Student's Physician Information
- Parent / Guardian Employment Information
- Custody Changes (including a copy of The Court's Orders)
- Other Pertinent Information, such as changes in a student's health or new known allergies

## Media within the School

A written request for authorization to use your child's name, photo, video, or audio in local media coverage of school events, as well as in school yearbook, newsletters, web page,

brochures, mailings, etc. will be sent home in a secondary information packet after admittance has been granted. It is understood that if you neglect to mark your express choices or the box indicating “none of the above”, you are granting full permission. You may change this at any time throughout the year by providing notice in writing to the administrative office. However, please note that applications done before your request may not all be able to be undone (such as in the case of brochures, mailings, etc.)

Students will not be allowed to use personal media devices (including, but not limited to: cameras, cell phones, iPads, and tablets, etc.) during school hours, except at times expressly permitted by the teacher with administration approval for special projects or curriculum purposes.

## Student Release

During official school hours and any official school functions, children will only be released to their parent or legal guardian unless that parent/guardian has submitted a WRITTEN request in advance. The Administrator or his/her appointed designee may waive the necessity for this written request.

## Visits to the School

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit the school at any time. However, we ask that personal items (such as books, homework, lunches, etc.) be given to the school receptionist when they are dropped off after the student is in class. To avoid disruptions during instruction time, personal items will be held at the front desk until the class has a break time.

Teachers consider the beginning and ending of each school day crucial as they open and close the learning day routine with their students. Often parents/guardians just want a quick word with a teacher, but it does distract the teacher from giving his/her full attention to the students. Please write a note or an email, or leave a voice mail if you wish to communicate with the teacher, even briefly. You may also arrange with the office to have the teacher call you during a free period.

Should a parent/guardian wish to observe a class for a period during the day, arrangements should be made in advance through the school administration office. Conferences between parent/guardian and teacher are best planned after school and should be prearranged for the convenience of all concerned.

If a parent/guardian wishes to visit with the Administrator regarding any question or concern about the policies and procedures utilized by the school, arrangements should be made in advance for the convenience of all concerned.

If a parent/guardian wishes to serve as a substitute or chaperone during the school day or during planned activities, a **background check is required** and must be filled out at least five days prior to ensure that results are returned to the business office before the activity takes place. This is not a requirement for parents or guardians assisting teachers within the classroom.

## Withdrawing From School

Parents or guardian will contact the school administration 10 days before the withdrawal date. All outstanding library books must be returned and fines as well as any outstanding tuition balance must be paid. The school refund policy will be followed.

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

Heritage Christian Academy believes it is very important for the school and home to work together. Toward that end, teachers are available to work with each parent individually through e-mail, phone, handwritten notes and conference periods.

In order to promote effective communication and understanding, parents are asked to cooperate with the following guidelines:

1. Please send a note or e-mail the teacher; or call the office to schedule a conference.
2. Please do not try to catch your child's teacher before class, or during car line. The teacher's primary responsibility in the morning is greeting the children and beginning the day. In the afternoon, teachers must focus on getting each child safely into the appropriate car.
3. Please respect the teacher's family time. Do not expect an immediate response.
4. Parents may schedule as many conferences as they choose; however, please allow time between conferences for some remediation to occur.

Please remember many needs can be met through a simple conversation between parent and teacher. Concerns, shared first and quickly between the parent and teacher, have the greatest opportunity for a successful outcome for your student.

An administrator will be available for parent-teacher conferences should either the parent or teacher request. (In severe situations, the Administrator may initiate the conference.)

## Issues Resolution

The Board recognizes that at times there may be issues of unease or disagreement concerning the activities and decisions of the school staff or board members. It is important that these be addressed promptly and in a Christ-like manner. Biblical management of complaints maintains healthy, vibrant relationships among God's people and is always to our benefit. The following steps are based upon the Biblical principles set forth in the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew.

In Matthew 18, the Lord Jesus Himself gives us the model for resolving conflict, outlining the process by which we should seek peace and resolution with one another. Parents or guardians, staff, students and Board members are bidden to submit to this procedure. We encourage the offended party (or parties) to address those causing offense, in order to give opportunity to clarify the problem and, if necessary, seek forgiveness.

In situations where there may be a difference of opinion between two people, the attitude should be that of submitting to one another in love. In cases that are not resolved in a one-to-one basis, the Administrator may pursue a resolution as the third party, or if necessary, on behalf of the offended party. In all cases, we strongly encourage the handling of problems in a God-honoring, professional, charitable, *private* manner. The temptation to talk about the problem with others is



great, but it is not God's way. The problem should be discussed only with those involved in the problem or its resolution, to avoid gossip or slander.

The following steps serve as a guide for issue resolution.

1. The parent/guardian meets privately with the teacher to seek a resolution of the problem with a spirit of reconciliation
2. If the problem persists, the parent/guardian meets with the teacher and the Administrator to seek resolution, again in the spirit of reconciliation.
3. If the problem remains unresolved, it is presented to the HCA School Board. The Board calls upon the parties involved in order to work out a final solution. **All School Board decisions are final.**

**Note:** If the complaint relates to a policy or procedure of the school, the parent/guardian should begin with the Administrator.

## State Minimum Standards

A copy of the Minimum Standards and a copy of the most recent licensing report will be kept on file and made available to parents/guardians to view upon request. Parents/guardians may contact Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, agency mail code: 182-6, Child Care Licensing, 9702 Bissonet, Houston, TX 77036 or P.O. Box 16017, Houston, Texas 77222-6017, phone number (713) 940-3009, FAX (713) 940-5184, website address [www.hhsc.state.tx.us](http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us) Parents/guardians may contact the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400.

## Vaccines for Employees

Heritage Christian Academy follows Brazoria County in determining if employees are required vaccines. At this time, Brazoria County does not require that employees of school maintain a current vaccine record. If that changes at any time, Heritage will begin requiring all employees to maintain their vaccines, and a vaccine record in their employee file.

# General School Policy

## Dress Code

Clothing with words, graphic design or illustration is not allowed. If your child attends school in anything we deem inappropriate, we will request that your child change. A complete secondary set of clothing is to be provided by parents/guardians including a top, bottom, socks and undergarments; and kept in a plastic storage bag in the child's backpack in case of accidents, spills, or dress code infractions. If secondary clothing has not been provided, you will be contacted and asked to bring an appropriate replacement outfit.

### Elementary

Elementary students may not wear clothing in a way that creates a distraction within the classroom – including inappropriate sizing, pictures, logos, glitter, shimmer, or other color distractions – except on appropriate school event days.

### Shoes

We do require that all students wear appropriate footwear, such as sneakers, appropriate sandals (closed toed with a strap), loafers, etc. **FLIP FLOPS AND CROCS ARE NOT ALLOWED, AS THEY PROVIDE A HIGHER RISK OF FALLING INCIDENTS.** Your child will have opportunities for running and play during PE instruction and recess, and appropriate footwear is necessary.

### Slacks, Jeans, Shorts, Skorts, Skirts, Dresses, or Jumpers

- Shall be solid color or striped. If wearing striped bottoms, the corresponding shirt must be a solid color.
- Slacks must fit at the waist and be properly hemmed or cuffed.
- May NOT be leather, suede or vinyl.
- Length of shorts, skorts, skirts, dresses, or jumpers must be no more than three [3] inches above the knee. Bloomers or bike shorts should be worn under skirts, dresses, or jumpers.

### Shirts or Blouses

- Shall be any solid color, striped or appropriate campus spirit shirt. If wearing a striped shirt, the corresponding bottoms must be a solid color.
- May have a standard collar, golf style, polo style, dress shirt style, or turtleneck, unless it is one of the appropriate campus spirit shirts.
- May NOT be leather, suede, or vinyl.
- May not be sleeveless.

### Chapel Dress (every Wednesday)

- We meet corporately for Chapel every Wednesday. Dress code on Wednesdays is a Navy colored top with Khaki bottoms or skirts.

## **Sweatshirts, Vests, Sweaters, Windbreakers, Sports Coats, Blazers, Outside Jackets, and Coats**

- May be worn only over the standard shirt.
- Must be appropriately sized in the shoulders, sleeves and length.

## **Hair**

- Must be neat, clean, and well groomed.
- No type of head covering, cap, hat, or hair rollers may be worn inside the building.
- Headbands, barrettes, and bows are acceptable for female students, provided they do not create a distraction within the classroom due to size or extravagance.
- Distracting styles and/or coloring are not allowed except on appropriate school event days.

## **School Supplies**

All standard school supplies for each grade will be furnished. On occasion, teachers may ask for volunteers or supplementary supplies for special projects.

## **Personal Items**

The school is not responsible for lost or damaged personal items. It is the responsibility of parent/guardian and students to **clearly label** all personal items with each student's name.

Students may bring items to share with the class after approval from their teacher, but these should also be clearly marked with their names. Students are not allowed to have electronic devices, except by approval from the administration. (The school office will specifically communicate Approval.)

## **Lunch Program**

All students will bring a lunch from home. The lunch period will be approximately 30 minutes.

Snacks are not provided by the school. Students may bring a snack from home for a "snack break" mid-morning.

## **Transportation**

Transportation of students will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians. Each parent/guardian will be expected to see that students are at school on time and picked up at the end of the school day on time.

On the occasion that students must be transferred from the school to a field trip location, it is necessary for parents to provide their child's transportation. If a parent/guardian is unable to provide transportation, alternate arrangements can be made. A student may be transported by a designated Heritage Christian Academy employee if:

- Arrangements have been made in advance and
- A parent/guardian has presented a signed Student Transportation Waiver to the school.

## **Student Activities**

Heritage Christian Academy offers a variety of student activities designed to give systematic extra-curricular opportunities to all students in achieving optimal development. All student activities reflect the school's stated educational philosophy and are in compliance with school policies. Such activities may include, but are not limited to, awards ceremonies, contests, performing groups, and class parties.

## **Student Activities Eligibility**

Extracurricular activities provide opportunities for learning Christian leadership and socialization skill.

To be eligible for any extracurricular activities, students must:

1. Maintain an average of seventy-five (75) in each subject
2. Maintain a minimum conduct grade of Satisfactory (S).
3. Be in attendance at school on the day of the activity (for evening events).

## **Daily Schedule**

The daily schedule begins with the Pledges to the United States, Christian, and Texas flags, as well as, the Bible corporately. (See Pledges, page 43) The remainder of the day's schedule consists of circle time, Bible, math, language arts, science, social studies, music, art, and more.

## **Chapel Services**

Chapel services will be held once weekly. Selected speakers and special programs will be included, along with varied participation of students. Please note our Chapel dress code of a Navy top with Khaki bottoms.

## **Sunday Activities**

Sunday is a special day reserved specifically for corporate worship for God's people. It is our standard not to infringe upon a family's or staff member's liberty to worship the Lord on the entire day of Sunday by planning any kind of non-ministry school activity. There may occasionally be optional school-sponsored opportunities for Christian service and for students to minister on Sundays. In no way will the student(s) be penalized for not participating in a school-sponsored ministry on a Sunday.

## **Academic Honors Awards Program**

At the conclusion of the academic year, special programs are held for the purpose of honoring students who have excelled in their academic endeavors during the year.

## **Field Trips**

Teachers may choose to take their classes off campus for first-hand experiences and learning opportunities. In order to participate in a field trip, a student must have a signed permission form from his/her parent/guardian and must have earned the right to attend. In order to earn this right,

a student must demonstrate that he/she has the discipline to obey the rules and regulations that are necessary to have a safe and successful trip. Any faculty member, with the consent of the Administrator, may choose not to take any student who has demonstrated a lack of self-discipline and may be a potentially disruptive influence on a trip.

With advance notification, Heritage Christian Academy is able to provide care at the school for children who do not attend a field trip.

Parents/guardians will always be provided with all information concerning a field trip. Adequate chaperoning, based on the age group and number of students attending, will be provided. Transportation will be provided by Teachers and Parents, as stated in the Transportation Policy.

## Parties

Class parties may be held at school during the school day at the discretion of the teacher. Parties may consist of student birthdays, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, 100 Day, End-of-Year, and other special occasions. These parties will be planned by the room-mothers or classroom volunteers with the teacher's help, and will adhere to the guidelines established by the Administration. **Due to latex allergy concerns: All latex balloons are prohibited for all parties and celebrations.**

Invitations to parties away from school cannot be distributed at school unless everyone in the class receives an invitation.

Please remember that we are a non-denominational Christian school. Out of respect for the different practicing Judeo Christian denominations and the way they choose to celebrate these holidays, we ask that you refrain from bringing or incorporating ANY secular symbols of these holidays. (I.e. Santa Claus, Easter Bunny, etc.) **WE DO NOT CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN.**

## Discipline

A high standard of conduct is required of each student at HCA for the purpose of maintaining order and building Christ-like character.

## Philosophy and Guiding Principles of Disciplining

As I Timothy 1:5 states, "the goal of instruction is love." We want to teach and exhort students to love God and obey Him out of that love. It is our desire to see our students learn to love others with the selflessness of Christ.

Discipline is inseparably linked with the process of discipleship. The goal of our disciplinary procedures is to teach personal responsibility for one's actions, obedience to authority, and dependence on God and His Word. The purpose is to teach and maintain order-not to punish. The Biblical model we follow is II Timothy 3:16: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness."

That Jesus Christ is Lord is a foundational principle at HCA. Christ has ruled directly through His Word and a personal relationship with us, and indirectly through parents and teachers in the life of a student. The Lord places children under the authority of their parents and gives parents responsibility for educating them. HCA provides a resource for parents to use to assist them in that responsibility. In return, we ask parents to recognize the school's authority over the children during the time they are under our supervision.

## Biblical Guidelines for Student Management

**Respect Authority** "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. God has established the authorities that exist. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rules hold not terror to those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right, and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good." Romans 13: 1-4

### **Be An Example**

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12

### **Seek Excellence**

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

### **Be Honest**

"Providing for honest things not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of man." II Corinthians 8:21

### **Be Truthful**

"Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body." Ephesians 4:25

### **Practice Clean Speech**

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." Ephesians 4:29

### **Reflect Jesus**

"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is admirable-if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-think about such things."  
Philippians 4:8

## **General Rules of Conduct**

The following rules are presented to the students at HCA and reinforced at all times:

- Students must attend all classes daily and be on time.
- Students must be dressed properly, according to the Standardized Dress Code.
- Students are expected to be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments. In addition, they are expected to turn all work in on time.
- Students must not leave the school property without permission of the Administrator unless they are with teachers, parents, or guardians.
- Students are expected to exhibit an attitude of respect toward all individuals and property at all times.
- Students should always speak in such a way as to lift up others (Eph. 4:29).
- Students should bring only teacher-required materials, supplies, and approved personal items to school.
- Students are expected to obey all rules.

When an offense is committed, reconciliation will be sought in a Biblical manner.

## **Student Behavior**

In order to achieve Biblical excellence in our school, it is important for students to understand that acceptable standards of behavior will be expected at all times. Discipline will be administered when any individual's actions interfere with the right of the teachers to teach and students to learn. Students are reminded that any faculty or staff member in the school has the right to correct individuals at any place and at any time that are displaying behaviors contrary to the above standards.

**Positive consequences** are applied for following guidelines, and will vary from grade to grade. Teachers will clearly state the reward each child or the whole class will receive if they meet certain, specific criteria. The younger the student, the sooner he/she must be rewarded for obeying and making Christ-like decisions.

The majority of potential discipline issues are dealt with at the classroom level. The nature of the offense, the number of prior offenses, and the attitude of the student dictate the disciplinary action to be used. Parent conferences will be required for serious or repeated discipline issues.

The following are some examples of student behavior that violate school policy when they occur at school or during school-related activities. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. Students may be disciplined, suspended, or even dismissed from school for any of the following:

- The possession, transmission, and/or use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, knives, fireworks, firearms (or any item that is used as a weapon)
- Insolence, disrespect, insubordination, or defiance
- The use of improper language
- Bullying, fighting or physical altercations
- Inappropriate displays of affection
- Aggressive behavior: running, pushing, shoving, yelling, throwing objects
- Leaving a classroom without permission
- Class tardiness or truancy
- Threatening or intimidating to cause bodily harm to any person
- Repeated classroom disruptions
- Forgery
- Cheating
- Destruction of property

## Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior

The Discipline Report Form is used for reporting classroom infractions such as failure to follow classroom procedures. These reports are filed only after sufficient warning has been given to the student and/or for obvious non-compliance to expected school conduct (e.g., no running in the building, etc.). Reports will be signed by the Administrator and issued to the student by the teacher. They are used as a form of communication to the parents.

Signed Discipline Reports are to be returned to the teacher on the day following issuance. Continued behavior that results in the need for additional Discipline Reports will constitute cause for a conference between parents, the teacher(s), and the Administrator to discuss further disciplinary action.

Should a parent/guardian not make themselves available for a conference with the school within a reasonable amount of time (3 to 5 business days), it could result in the immediate expulsion of the student.

## Steps in Discipline

The disciplinary response chosen should be the least aggressive response adequate to correct the undesirable behavior. The following actions constitute acceptable responses to inappropriate behavior by students at HCA. The options are listed in order of seriousness and are generally followed in this order:

1. Counseling: Praying with and warning students regarding their actions and attitudes.
2. Correction: In keeping with the offense and the age and maturity level of the student(s) involved, this may include -



- A verbal reprimand;
  - Re-direction;
  - Time-out;
  - Loss of privilege;
  - Isolation from peers, or
  - Removal from class;
  - A Student Discipline Form sent home to parents or guardians.
3. Correspondence: Communicating issues with parent/guardian after second offense, either by telephone or in writing.
  4. Referral to Administrator's Office: Student is sent to the office for corrective action and/or parent/guardian conference.
  5. Disciplinary Probation:  
A student placed on Disciplinary Probation is in imminent danger of losing his/her position in class and the privilege of attending HCA.

When a student is placed on Probation, the Administrator will notify the parents or guardian immediately. A conference will then be held with the involved parties to determine terms and duration of the Probation. A written explanation of the details of the Probation will be signed by the parents or guardian and placed in the student's permanent file. The Administrator and other appropriate staff members will review the evidence at the end of the assigned probationary period (a minimum of three (3) weeks) to determine whether sufficient improvement has been made to lift the status. If not, the probation will be extended.

All tuition payments must continue to be made throughout the disciplinary probationary period to ensure the student's spot remains reserved. Any overdue balances could result in a suspension, or even full expulsion. (see Overdue Accounts, page 15).

#### 6. Out-of-School Suspension

A student may be suspended for a period of one (1) to five (5) days at the discretion of the Administrator. An unexcused absence is issued for each day a student is on Suspension, and all classroom work and tests missed will receive a "zero" (0) grade. Grounds for suspension may include:

- Insubordination;
- Disorderly Conduct;
- Persistent violation of rules and regulations;
- Repeated truancy;
- Infliction of physical harm to any student or employee;
- Use of profane and/or abusive language;
- Intentional damage or destruction of school property;
- Commission of any act that is disruptive to the best interest of the school;
- Other serious infractions deemed appropriate by the administration;
- Suspension may only be assigned by the Head Administrator.

## 7. Expulsion

If extensive documented attempts to correct a student's behavior have failed, if the misbehavior persists, or if the offense is extremely dangerous as to warrant HCA's most drastic sanction, then the Administration may recommend to the School Board that a student be expelled. The following serious offenses are potential grounds for expulsion:

- Repeated defiance or direct confrontation with school authorities
- A second out-of-school suspension
- Failure to comply with the terms of disciplinary probation
- Repeated instances of stealing, destruction or other serious moral offenses.
- Activities outside the school which call for police intervention
- Assault of a teacher or other individual
- Intentional destruction of school property
- Possessing, delivering, or using any firearm, explosive, knife or other weapon while on premises or while attending any school-related activity or event
- Possessing, delivering, using or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage; controlled substance or dangerous drug; abusable glue paint, or other chemical substance; any mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drugs while on school premises or in attendance at any school-related activity or event.
- Any off-campus misconduct seriously detrimental to the reputation and Christian witness of HCA
- Intentional repeated biting incidents

Any expulsion is effective for the remainder of the school year in which the offense occurred. An expelled student may or may not be eligible for re-admission to HCA the following school year, depending upon whether reconciliation is evident. References may be requested from family members, pastors, and/or other individuals or professionals before re-admittance is granted. The School Board makes the final determination in such cases. Refund of fees and tuition paid for the month in which expulsion occurs will not be given.

## Biting Policy

Any child who bites another child or a teacher will have a written report sent home and a conference with the director at the time of the 1st biting incident. A series of repeated intentional biting will result in a temporary dismissal from HCA. The child will not be allowed to return to class for at least five (5) days.

All tuition payments must continue to be made throughout the temporary dismissal period to ensure the student's spot remains reserved. Any overdue balances could result in full removal from the program. (See Overdue Accounts, page 12).

Upon the child's return to the classroom, one (1) additional incident of biting will result in expulsion from the program for the remainder of the year.

In the case of expulsion, there will be no refund of tuition paid for the month in which expulsion occurs and all previous fees and tuition are likewise non-refundable.

## School Attendance

Attendance at school provides a student with the classroom experience. This experience is composed of participation in class activities and direct instruction conducted by the classroom teacher. The instructional program designed by each teacher is a progressive and sequential experience. It is generally impossible for that experience to be "made up". For this reason, failure of a student to attend class will be seen as a serious problem and will not be allowed.

## Absences

Failure of a student to attend school will be considered an absence. Each absence will be considered excused or unexcused. The authority for determining the legitimacy of an absence rests with the school administration. The Administrator will consider the legitimacy of excusing absences due to family trips after receiving written request and following a conference with parent(s).

## Excused

An excused absence is an absence due to a personal illness, serious illness in the family, death in the family, school-approved trips, medical or dental appointments, court appearances, or absences due to providential hindrance. Family vacations (*except during Testing Week*) can be an excused absence with at least one-week advance (written) notice to the teacher.

### **(Known in advance)**

When a student will be out of school and the time of the absence is known ahead of time, it is the responsibility of the parents to contact the Administrator and teachers, and secure the class assignments for that period of time. All course work and homework assignments are due on the day they return to class. Family vacations will **NOT** be excused during Testing Week, regardless of advance notice. The exact dates for Testing Week are published on the school calendar.

### **(Not known in advance)**

When a student will be out of school for any of those reasons, and the time of the absence is NOT known ahead of time, the parent must call to secure their student's work as soon as possible. A student with an excused absence will be given a reasonable opportunity to make up assignments and exams missed during the absence. A reasonable time to make up assignments or tests is one day for each day absent up to five (5) days. It is the parent or student's responsibility to arrange for make-up tests or assignments.

## Unexcused

Unexcused absences are when a student is out of school for reasons not cited above as excused. Any absence without a note by 8:00 am on the second day of the return of the student to class will be counted as an unexcused absence. If a student receives an unexcused absence all course work and homework assignments are due, and receive a grade not higher than a C or 75. In addition, 30 points will be taken off the student's paper, project, or test. After three (3) unexcused absences in a grading period, the letter grade of the course will be dropped one (1) letter grade. With each unexcused absence after three (3), the letter grade will be dropped an additional letter grade per unexcused absence.

## Minimum days present for credit

A student must be in attendance at least ninety percent of the school year to receive credit for that year. Excused and unexcused absences are counted equally when assessing total days absent. The School Board must be petitioned for a waiver if a student fails to attend one hundred sixty days.

## Reporting Back To School after Absence

Upon returning to school after an absence, the student is to bring a signed note from the parent(s) detailing the cause of the absence; a telephone call to the office or the teacher will NOT be accepted in place of a note. The note should be neatly written. The student must present the note to the school office before returning to class. The office will give an admit slip to the student. This dated slip will permit the student to return to class and will indicate to the teacher(s) whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

## Appeal Procedure

A student who is in danger of not meeting the ninety percent attendance class requirement, but who has successfully earned a passing grade, may appeal for credit in the course at any time during the grading period.

The Administrator will review the appeal request and determine whether the student should be required to make up the class time and work missed. Eligibility for credit due to extenuating circumstances will be recommended only for extended personal illness, illness or death in the family, quarantine, weather conditions making travel dangerous, or other extenuating circumstances.

If it is determined that class time and work is to be made up, the Administrator will assign the time to be made up and the method to be used.

If the Administrator denies a student credit for a class, the student may appeal to the full Board. The decision of the Board is final.

## Tardiness

Being late to class is disruptive and disrespectful to other students and the classroom teacher. A student is tardy unless the student is in the appropriate room and seat by 8:30 a.m. If a student is tardy, he must secure a tardy slip from the office. If the student can convince administration that being late was due to circumstances beyond their control, he may be admitted with an excused tardy slip. Weather, traffic, and car-pooling are not acceptable reasons for tardiness, except for unusual circumstances. If a student is unjustifiably late, he will receive an unexcused tardy. A student who has been tardy three (3) times in a grading period will count as an absence. For purposes of using tardy combinations to count as an absence, when two of the three tardies are excused the absence will be counted as excused, otherwise the absence will be counted as unexcused.

## Truancy

Truancy is the absence from school for any reasons without the knowledge and consent of parents and/or school officials. Truancy is a violation of state law and, therefore, is considered to be a most severe violation of school policy. Class work and/or assignments missed as a result of truancy will not be accepted for credit and a grade of 0 will be given during a truancy period. Additionally, parents will be notified, and the student shall be subject to disciplinary action. Upon a second incident of truancy, that student shall be subject to expulsion.

# Academics

## Textbooks

Textbooks are the property of Heritage Christian Academy and are issued to students on loan. They should be treated with respect, cared for properly and returned at the end of the year. Students will be charged the full price of a textbook if it is lost or excessively damaged.

## Amount of Homework

Homework will be assigned by each teacher and is designed to:

- Reinforce and enrich school learning by providing the necessary practice, integration, and application through related home activities,
- Stimulate voluntary effort, initiative, independence, responsibility, and self direction, and,
- Enrich the school experience through related home activities

The amount of time a student needs to do homework varies from day to day and from student to student. The faculty attempts to assign a reasonable amount of homework in light of the subject matter and the abilities and needs of the students.

The school faculty urges that each student plan out-of-school activities wisely so that adequate time is provided for homework assignments as well as for the development of personal responsibility. Teachers are also expected to give reasonable homework assignments.

## Penalties for Late Homework

All homework and assignments must be completed and turned in, even if the work is not on time and it is designated as “late”.

When daily work is not turned in on time the student will receive a grade of zero. When a student receives a grade of 0, he will be required to have a note signed by a parent and returned the following school day. The student may redo the assignment for a separate grade if completed and turned in within one school day of the original due date.

When a special assignment is turned in late, 10 points will be deducted from the student's grade on the assignment for each day the assignment is late.

## Make-Up Work

### Excused Absences Work

Students with excused absences will be allowed to make-up work within a reasonable length of time. As a general rule, students will be given the same number of days to make up the work as the number of days absent. Test dates and project due dates announced prior to an absence will not be delayed when the absence occurs on the day before the test or project due date. Special consideration, however, will be given to students missing several days in a row or those too ill to

prepare for school. If excused absences occur in such a way as to create an “incomplete” on the report card, the work must be completed within five (5) class days after returning to school. All special consideration requests must be given to the teacher prior to the expected due date for make-up work.

Teachers will assist students in making up work. However, it is the parent’s and student’s responsibility to work with the teacher(s) to determine what work has been missed and see that it is completed and turned in according to the guidelines above. When a student misses the due date for make-up without an approved delay, the teacher is no longer technically obligated to assist the student in making up the work and the penalties for late homework apply. Students are not permitted to miss regularly scheduled classes in order to make up work.

### **Unexcused Absences Work**

After three (3) unexcused absences in a six-week grading period, the letter grade of the course will be dropped one letter grade. After reaching this maximum of three, the grade will then be dropped one letter grade for each additional unexcused absence in the same six-week grading period.

### **Extra Work Requests**

General semester-end requests for extra work will not be accepted or approved. At their discretion, teachers may see the benefit of allowing a student to repeat an assignment, do an assignment in a different format, or otherwise individualize a previous assignment in order to replace a low grade. The repetition of an assignment, however, must be completed within a short time of the original assignment and at the approval of the teacher.

### **Cheating**

Cheating is a serious offense that involves taking information from another source and presenting it as one’s own, thus including the components of both stealing and lying. It is therefore very important that students come to understand the seriousness of any act of cheating and are continually reminded by teachers of the consequences of cheating. Teachers are also expected to take precautions in terms of test security and the structure of the classroom-testing environment in order to protect students from unnecessary temptation.

When a student is suspected of cheating, the teacher or staff member is responsible for verifying the accuracy of the alleged cheating and notifying the parent. The Biblical model (Deuteronomy 19:15 – 19) will be followed in determining if cheating has taken place:

- The teacher or staff member must have direct knowledge through observation or
- The student confesses or
- The testimony of at least two reliable witnesses confirms the suspicion.

Teachers and staff members are required to fully investigate any suspicion of cheating prior to determining if a student has cheated. Cheating is specifically defined as copying homework, handing in the work of another person, plagiarism and unauthorized assistance on tests, quizzes or other class work.

If it is determined that a student has indeed cheated, the following actions will be taken:

1. The student will receive a zero on the assignment.
2. The Administrator will be notified.
3. The student will confer with the Administrator.
4. The parents will be called.

## Tutorial Help

Students will sometimes need additional help in a subject. The first place to turn for help is to the teacher of the course. Most teachers at the school are willing to give extra time to students who are conscientiously trying to improve their understanding and grade in a particular course. This time is limited to before and after school or during a planning period and must be scheduled prior to the day on which the tutorial work is desired to begin.

If problems are slightly more severe or long-term, students may also be paired with our Resource teacher, who is a certified teacher. She will assess the long-term needs and formulate a more structured plan that can be accomplished during special sessions during class days.

For students with a greater need than can be met in the above time constraints, an outside tutor is usually recommended. The school faculty and office staff may be able to provide names of qualified tutors. Any outside tutor should confer with the teacher of the class in order to coordinate objectives and methods.

(Please follow the communication guidelines as stated on page of this handbook when scheduling a conference to discuss these issues or concerns with your student's teacher.)

## Academic Probation

Academic probation is invoked when a student has demonstrated a serious academic problem or deficiency. It is intended to give proper notice to the parent and student so a mutual effort to correct the academic deficiency may be made on the part of both school and home. The probation is given with the expectation that the deficiency will be recognized and decreased in order to improve the grade for the next grading period to a satisfactory or passing level. If this does not occur, the admission committee will be called upon to decide if the student will be able to continue at Heritage Christian Academy.

The procedure for academic probation is as follows:

1. A student who receives one "F" at the conclusion of a grading period will be placed on academic probation for one grading period. The student will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities for three weeks.
2. A letter of notification will be sent to the parents.
3. A conference will be held between the parents and the administration to give an explanation of the probation and suggestions for remediation.
4. At the end of the next grading period, the admission committee will review the academic status of the student and make appropriate decisions based on the following guidelines:



- A student who receives no “F” in the next grading period will be removed from probation.
- A student who receives one or more “F’s” in the next grading period will be considered for continued probation or removal from the school.

Following removal or withdrawal from the school for academic reasons, a student may later apply to be re-enrolled on academic probation if the following conditions are fulfilled: The student has attended another school for one full semester – completing a full academic load for that semester and receiving no grade lower than a "C" in any subject.

## Grading

### Grading System (Elementary grades)

A = 90-100      B = 80-89      C = 75-79      D = 70-74      F = 69 and lower

I = Incomplete (Given when all of the class work has not been completed for that grading period.)

### Grading System (Kindergarten)

Kindergarten students will continue to receive a Report Card designed specifically for their curriculum. They will use the following grading system:

E = Excellent  
 S+ = Slightly Above Average  
 S = Satisfactory  
 S - = Slightly Below Average  
 N = Needs Improvement  
 U = Unsatisfactory

### Grading/Reporting Periods (All Grades)

All students will follow the Nine Week Reporting Program, in which Report Cards will be issued three times each semester, and four times annually. In computing the final grade in a nine-week period, for elementary students, grades will be determined in the following manner:

Daily Work = 1/2  
 Test Grades and Special Projects = 1/2

### Conduct Marks

Parents will also be informed of their child's conduct by the nine-week report card that will have an evaluation of conduct for each of the courses in which the student is enrolled. The following marks will be used in all grades. All students start each grading period with an E.

E = Excellent – Student generally conducts himself or herself in a manner that contributes to the learning atmosphere in the class.

S = Satisfactory – Student continually contributes to the learning atmosphere in the classroom but occasionally interferes with the learning process.

N = Needs Improvement – Student usually contributes to the learning atmosphere in the classroom but interferes with that process at least several times per week.

U = Unsatisfactory - Student consistently interferes with the learning atmosphere, disrupting it anywhere from once every other day or more than once per day. Student's behavior is severe enough to send to the office for disciplinary action and the student is in danger of suspension or expulsion.

## Deficiency Reports

When a student receives a grade below 75 on an assignment, he will be asked to have the paper signed by a parent. This affords a daily and/or weekly opportunity to view the academic performance of the student. Failure on the student's part to have papers signed reflects lack of responsibility and often a disobedient spirit. Such recurring behavior will be treated as a disciplinary problem. Whenever a student shows strong signs of experiencing academic difficulty in a course, a deficiency report will be made by the teacher to inform the parents of the problem area. These reports may be hand-delivered or mailed at any time, but are usually sent out midway between regular reporting periods. Teachers may also notify parents of academic problems by phone at any time.

## Honor Roll System (Elementary)

“A” Honor Roll: A's in all academic areas

“A-B” Honor Roll: A's with no more than 2 B's in academic areas

Any student making an “N” or “U” in any class or conduct will not qualify for the Honor Roll.

To make the Yearly Honor Roll, a student must make the Honor Roll each grading period of the school year.

## Retention

Students must have an overall grade average of 70 in all work and have passed 3 of 4 major subject areas with an overall 70 average in each in order to be promoted. If a student fails two or more major subjects, he is automatically retained. The major subjects include Science, Social Studies, Math and Language Arts (English, Reading, and Spelling).

If there is a possibility that a student will be retained, parents will be notified well in advance of the end of the school year, and his/her teacher and the administration will work with the family to assist in arranging supplementary assistance. (See Tutorial Help, page 32) With good parent/teacher communication, there should be no instance of a parent being unaware of the student's lack of progress.

## **Health and Safety**

### **Immunizations**

All pupils must have current immunization information on file in the office by September 2nd, and parents or guardian are expected to keep immunizations current throughout the year. Tuberculin testing is not required in Brazoria County.

### **Communicable Diseases**

If a child is absent from school due to a communicable disease such as measles, mononucleosis, mumps, hand- foot- and mouth disease, he/she should present a doctor's certificate of recovery upon returning before being admitted to class.

Children will not be allowed to attend school if they are showing definite signs of illness, such as fever, nausea, vomiting, excessive head congestion not associated with known allergies, etc. Children having such symptoms will be immediately isolated and the parents or guardian will be contacted to pick them up. Children must be symptom free, including fever and vomiting, for twenty-four (24) hours BEFORE returning to school.

Students with contagious, life-threatening diseases, such as AIDS, shall not be admitted to the school. If already enrolled, such students would be asked to withdraw immediately.

### **Injuries Occurring During School**

Minor injuries occurring during school hours will be treated by staff members with the use of first-aid materials kept on hand. Students will continue to be monitored for signs of greater injury, when necessary.

Accident Forms are used in documenting and reporting minor injuries, such as a scratch or bruise. These reports include a description of the injury, the cause thereof, and any treatment given. They are filed in the school office and a copy is sent home to inform the parent/guardian, and ensure there is proper disclosure of student welfare.

In the case of serious injury or illness, procedures will be followed to obtain emergency medical care and parents or guardian will be immediately notified.

### **Medication Release Forms**

Students taking medication for a non-communicable disease, condition, or severe allergy (i.e. Ritalin, asthma inhalers, Epi-Pen etc.), must have an Authorization for Dispensing Medication form for that medication on file with the school office. Prescriptions and Epi-Pens sent to school must be in the original container or box with the student's name, prescribing physician, prescription number, dosage and how often.

All medications must be kept in the school office and administered by office personnel.

## **Insect Repellant and Sunscreen**

Insect and/or sunscreen may be sent to school with your child. It must be labeled with their name, and placed in their backpack. When these items are properly labeled and supplied, you are giving permission for your child's teacher to utilize these items on your child. Other children will not be allowed to share. Additionally, we recommend that you inform your child's teacher of these items in their backpack to ensure application.

## **Vision and Hearing Screening**

This screening is required for all new students as well as all students in first grade. This screening is to be completed by the parent with the student's health care practitioner during the first semester. A copy of the results needs to be kept in the student's permanent file in the school office.

## **Abuse and Neglect**

The teachers and staff of Heritage Christian Academy take child abuse and neglect very seriously. All teacher and staff members are trained annually to assist in protecting children from abuse and neglect. Any suspected forms of child abuse will be reported to the proper authorities.

Child abuse comes in many forms and includes not just sexual molestation and physical abuses – such as shaking, biting, hitting, etc. – but also neglect like not bathing for a number of days, unclean garments, an unclean living environment, etc. It also includes malnutrition.

There are different agencies in the community to lean on for help in cases of child abuse and neglect. You can always contact the Texas Dept. of Childcare services for help in abuse and neglect cases.

Others areas of help:

1. Local churches offer counseling to parents/guardians of abused children
2. [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov) offers strategies for malnutrition, abuse and neglect.
3. [www.childadvocates.org](http://www.childadvocates.org)
4. Local shelters offer help

## **Contacting DFPS**

You, as a parent or guardian, have a right to contact the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services for any reason you see fit, such as but not limited to; the school being unclean, disorderly conduct with a student by staff or a parent/guardian, abuse seen done to a child. DFPS can be reached at 713-940-3009.

## **Gang Free Zones**

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1,000 feet of a child-care facility or school is a gang free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized activity are subject to harsher penalty. HCA is a Gang Free Zone.

## Emergencies and Drills

### School Closing

In times of emergency, parents/guardians will be notified of school closing or other emergency measures through announcements on our school blog and other social media venues (accessible through the Community page on the HCA website: [www.hcapatriots.com](http://www.hcapatriots.com)). Parents/guardians may also call the Heritage Christian Academy office for a recorded message regarding school closings. In addition, teachers will contact parents/guardians via text messages or phone calls.

### Evacuation Process

When the decision is made to evacuate Heritage Christian Academy, the Administrator will make an announcement in the most expeditious way possible. All persons are to evacuate to their assigned assembly area and await further instruction. The building is to be evacuated completely. The Administrator will notify the appropriate personnel and communicate what type of emergency is present.

**In the event of an actual fire, the fire security system will automatically notify 9-1-1 of the emergency. For any other type of an emergency, the administrator or another administrative representative will call 9-1-1, detail the emergency and if possible remain on the line to receive farther instruction as necessary.**

Heritage Christian Academy staff will evacuate their children as follows:

#### **Elementary Children:**

The **Elementary Teachers** shall be responsible to gather their respected classes in-group and supervise in an orderly evacuation to the designated assembly area. The teachers are also responsible to bring all attendance sheets, child rosters, and information sheets. Upon arriving at the designated area, all children must be physically accounted for against the attendance log and reported to the Administration immediately. For inclement weather, if possible, take appropriate supplies to protect the children.

**\*\*NOTE: Under NO circumstances is staff to stop for children's belongings, including jackets, shoes, backpacks, etc.**

### Weather Related Plans

There are a variety of weather-related emergencies that could occur near a school, including floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, and thunderstorms. During potential bad weather, local weather alerts will be monitored by administration. Because weather poses a variety of threats, the response must be appropriate to the emergency. Listed below are the weather emergency plans by type.

## **Floods, Hurricanes, and Thunderstorms**

From time to time, classes may be in session when a major thunderstorm arrives, capable of producing large amounts of rain, which will cause the surrounding areas and streets to flood. HCA will determine through local weather alerts if this event is to be long-term or quickly resolved. If it is expected to be short-lived, we will shelter in place. If the weather event is determined to be a long-term situation, the school will begin calling all parents or guardian to quickly and safely pick up their students from school.

If classes are not in session, for example during the night, or on a weekend (Sunday), and flooding becomes an issue due to a major thunderstorm, HCA may choose to close. It is HCA's policy to follow Pearland and/or Alvin ISD. The local news stations will post school closings and if Pearland and/or Alvin are listed HCA will follow.

## **Tornados**

In the event of the threat of tornado or actual tornado, students will be evacuated to previously assigned interior areas of the building and remain there until tornado warnings are lifted.

## **Emergency Drills**

### **Fire Evacuation Drill Policy**

As required by the State, fire drills will be held monthly at various times during the school day. The teachers and staff will acquaint the students with the proper procedures to be followed during an emergency or fire drill. A map of the evacuation plan will be posted in each classroom, and each teacher will see that the students fully understand the route.

### **Procedures for Conducting a Fire Drill**

1. Inform the staff in advance – The administrator informs the staff that there will be a fire drill later that day/week.
2. Familiarize the children with the fire drill – Teachers talk to their children in the classrooms about the alarm, rules and procedures for vacating the building.
3. Evacuate – When the administration sounds the alarm, the center will be evacuated.
  - a. Infants will be evacuated as previously stated in the EVACUATION PROCESS to the designated assembly area.
  - b. Toddlers and Preschoolers will be evacuated as previous stated in the EVACUATION PROCESS to the designated assembly area.
  - c. Teachers will take their attendance sheets, cell phones, emergency information and car keys with them, as well as their children.

- d. The administrator or a designee checks all the bathrooms, closets, and other “hiding places” for children and for the possible source of smoke during a real fire alarm.
- e. The administrator retrieves and brings to the designated assembly area the Student Information Book, cell phone and car keys.
4. Time the drill – The administrator will time how long it took to vacate the building.
5. Verify accurate recount of all persons – The administrator will check with each age group to verify an accurate count of all persons.
6. Return to the building – The administrator gives approval to re-enter the building. The administrator or the designee will help with infants and toddlers.
7. Document the completed fire drill – The administrator completes written documentation that contains the specifics of the drill: date, time and location of fire and the length of time to vacate the building.

## Severe Weather Drill Policy

As required by the State, severe weather drills will be held quarterly at various times during the school day. The teachers and staff will acquaint the students with the proper procedures to be followed during a severe weather drill.

### Procedures for Conducting a Severe Weather / Tornado Drill

1. Inform the staff in advance – The administrator informs the staff that there will be a tornado drill later that day/week.
2. Familiarize the children with the tornado drill – Teachers talk to their children in the classrooms about the alarm, rules and procedures.
3. Evacuate – When the administration sounds the alarm, (blows a whistle) the school will be go into tornado drill mode. In a tornado drill, each teacher will be responsible for taking their class to the designated area in the hall or alternate classroom and assume the Tornado Drill Position.
  - a. Tornado Drill Position: Students and Staff must sit facing the wall with legs crossed. Bend head down into lap and cover head with both hands.
  - b. Infants will be taken to their designated area (Teacher Workroom) by their teachers. Place infants in your lap and lean over them to protect.
  - c. Toddlers and Preschoolers will be taken to their designated area in the hall or classroom. It may be necessary for teachers and available staff members to lean in on the students, especially the younger ones, to help keep their heads down,
  - d. Teachers will take their attendance sheets, cell phones, and emergency information with them, as well as their children.
  - e. The administrator or a designee checks all the bathrooms, closets, and other “hiding places” for children.
  - f. The administrator retrieves and brings to the designated assembly area the Student Information Book and cell phone.
4. Time the drill – The administrator will time how long it took to assume the tornado drill position.

5. Verify accurate count of all persons – The administrator will check with each age group to verify an accurate count of all persons.
6. Return to the classrooms – The administrator gives approval to dismiss back to individual classrooms. The administrator or the designee will help with infants and toddlers.
7. Document the completed tornado drill – The administrator completes written documentation that contains the specifics of the drill: date, time and the length of the required time to get into place.

## **Criminal Acts of Violence**

Criminal acts of violence may include bomb threats, riots, and weapons in the school. Because criminal acts can be so unpredictable, emergency plans for these types of events must be changed to fit the emergency and may even be changed in the midst of the emergency. The main goal of HCA is to get the students away from the threat and to a safe area. Students do regularly perform bomb drills or weapons drills, but school administrators and teachers do have escape routes and prepared lockdown plans to get students away from the threat or to contain and isolate the threat. Criminal acts of violence will always involve calling the police.

In the event of a criminal act of violence, a lockdown may be initiated to isolate students and staff from the immediate dangers, which may include armed intruders, violent behaviors, suspicious trespassers, on-campus shootings, bomb threat, or nearby police activity.



## **Pledges**

### **United States Flag**

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### **Christian Flag**

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands, one Savior, crucified, risen and coming again with life and liberty for all who believe.

### **Bible**

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word, and will make it a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path, and will hide its words in my heart that I may not sin against God.

### **Texas Flag**

Honor the Texas Flag; I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one state under God , one and indivisible.