

The Gathering Place
Academy
and
The Gathering Place
Cooperative

STUDENT & PARENT

HANDBOOK

2010– 2011

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INTRODUCTION

MISSION

To collaborate with parents in “training their children according to their bent” by providing our students with opportunities to succeed in learning. We are dedicated to viewing every student as a unique creation of God with individual styles, abilities, talents and gifting. We are committed to a model that gives a strong, Bible-based educational foundation flexible enough to allow each student to flourish as an individual.

VISION

We want our students to become independent thinkers and lifelong learners. We will encourage them to learn at their own pace, pursue many of their own interests, while developing confidence and self-discipline. Therefore, using their own God-given talents, abilities and giftings they can fulfill their destinies. We will provide our students with models, opportunities, life skills, and the information necessary to become caretakers of God’s creation.

CORE VALUES

1. Spiritual formation, emotional/social nurturing, and academic learning are interlocking components of Christian education.
2. A school community should be characterized by diversity, compassion and honor among all its members – faculty, students and parents.
3. Every Christian is uniquely called and gifted to fulfill a significant role as a servant leader in extending God’s truth and grace.
4. The primary goal of Christian education is to inspire students to seek God’s kingdom, to become life-long learners, and to possess the habits of mind to conduct research and analysis, evaluate with wisdom, and communicate with clarity.
5. Who we are as individuals is as vital to our personal success as it is to our ability to be lights to the world. Character virtues should be a part of our identity, and the diligent pursuit of excellence should govern our actions.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

- The Bible is God's Word to us. Human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit wrote the Bible. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. We believe the Bible to contain truth without any mixture of error.
- God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three personalities: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.
- Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return someday to earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
- The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when he/she are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under His control daily.
- Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works, only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith, we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.
- The baptism of the Holy Spirit is subsequent to salvation.
- The Holy Spirit ministers in gifts of power including: divine healing, prophecy, signs and wonders, faith, speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, interpretations and discernment.

- The Bible teaches that every Christian is called to “full time” Christian service, regardless of his or her vocation. We practice the truth that every believer is a minister by encouraging every member to find a place of service and ministry.
- We believe in water baptism by immersion, baptizing believers in the name of the Father, the Son and of the Holy Spirit. This symbolic act identifies us with Christ’s burial and resurrection.
- We share in the Lord’s Supper as a family of believers, remembering Christ’s death as He commanded.
- In Tithing and Giving – we practice tithing for the support of Christ’s body, the church, as God commands.
- The Second Coming of Christ is our blessed hope.

FINANCES

FEES

It is our goal to offer the best programs, personnel, and services for our students while keeping the costs to our school families to a minimum. This is only possible if we receive prompt payments of tuition fees.

All fees are due prior to enrolling your child in school. Tuition is due on the first of each month and is late after the tenth (10th) of the month. If the tenth (10th) of the month falls on a Saturday or Sunday, then tuition is due by the Friday before the tenth (10th).

METHODS OF PAYMENT

Tuition and fees may be made in one of the following ways:

- Online at TGPAcademy.com
- By mail: PO Box 954148, Lake Mary, FL 32795-4148
- By phone: 407-324-0200, ext. 7601 (TGP Academy), ext. 7620 (TGP Cooperative)
- At the office during regular school hours

You may pay by credit card: Visa, MasterCard, or American Express.

Payments will be accepted in the school office from parents/legal guardians only.

OPTION CHANGE FEE

Changes may be made to a student's choice for course of study within the first two weeks of the school year. Should you decide to change your child's course of study option following the two week add/ drop period there will be a \$50 option change fee automatically applied to your account. This includes the Thursday elective schedule.

WITHDRAWALS & REFUNDS

If you must withdraw your child from The Gathering Place Cooperative at any time during the school year, the tuition will be assessed to the end of the month in which the withdrawal

occurs. You must officially withdraw through the admissions office and complete the "withdrawal form." Tuition and fees will continue to accrue until the official withdrawal date is established. Registration and family application fees are not refundable at any time. A student's records will not be released until the account is paid in full, including all late fees. No refunds will be given for curriculum or classroom supply fees, including any curriculum rental fees. This also applies to students who are requested by the school to withdraw.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

As a private institution, The Gathering Place Cooperative must rely on prompt tuition payment in order to operate efficiently. A \$25 late charge is automatically added to any account not paid by 4 PM on the tenth (10th) day of the month. If the tenth (10th) of the month falls on a Saturday or Sunday payment must be made the Friday before 4 PM. Accounts not paid by the end of the second month will be terminated and the student must be withdrawn from the Academy.

RETURN CHECK POLICY

If the bank returns a check to the school, a \$25 service fee is added to your account.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE HOURS

Administrative Office hours are from 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM when school is in session. The Administrative Office is located in the student center building.

MORNING DROP OFF PROCEDURES

Elementary students are not allowed to arrive to class more than 10 minutes early. Class times are from 9:00 AM until 3:30 PM

REGULAR PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Elementary students who are not picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal will be taken to the Administrative Offices for 10 minutes and then the parents will be billed \$5 a minute after that time. For your child's safety, we cannot allow students to remain on school grounds unsupervised. Thank you for your understanding.

Note: Middle/High School students should be picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal unless prior arrangements have been made through the administration.

LUNCH TIME POLICIES

Because The Gathering Place Cooperative is not equipped with a cafeteria students will need to bring packed lunches. We encourage healthy snacks and request that you refrain from packing power drinks and/or beverages with high caffeine concentration.

VISITOR PROCEDURES

All visitors (everyone excluding students and employees) must sign in at the Administrative Office during school hours and receive a visitor's badge to wear while on campus.

Students from other schools are not allowed on campus before, during or immediately after school unless they are attending a school-sponsored event that is open to the public. Exceptions to this policy must be requested to the administration in advance.

Visitors during lunch are not permitted except for immediate family.

All campus visitors are guests and should uphold the standards of modesty and decorum in their appearance.

Parents who wish to observe a class need to make prior arrangements with the Principal. Unscheduled visits interfere with student learning.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

One of the major indicators of responsibility is the ability to fulfill one's obligations to be punctual and present. Not only is responsibility a character trait that we want to instill in every student, our ability to provide excellent academic instruction is dependent on every student being in the classroom on time. The Gathering Place Cooperative students must take this commitment seriously, and parents must do everything possible to support their efforts. Training students to be responsible is an important goal of our school, and it is better for them to bear their consequences now than later in life.

The Gathering Place Cooperative reserves the right to require documentation from health professionals for students who excessively request to be excused due to illness.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENT ABSENCE

If your son/daughter is absent from school, please do the following:

1. Call the Administration Office at (407)-324-0200 EXT: 7620. If you call before 8:30 AM please leave the message on the answering machine. When your child returns, he/she must bring a note explaining his/her absence.
2. Indicate your student's name, grade level, date of absence and the reason for the absence.

THE GATHERING PLACE COOPERATIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENT ABSENCE

The Administration Office will make every effort to communicate in writing with families at mid-term and report card time in regards to possible excessive absences and tardiness. Students will receive a letter at home to notify the family when a student has reached five absences in an individual class.

GENERAL ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITY

The Florida Compulsory Attendance Law requires that every school age child attends school for 180 days per year or the hourly equivalent. Parents are required to enforce this law. The Gathering Place Academy parents are required to submit quarterly attendance reports.

An absence is defined as a student who missed four or more class periods in a scheduled school day.

Final authority for judging the legitimacy of an absence rests with the Administrator.

The Gathering Place Cooperative requires that a student may not have more than ten (10) days of unexcused absences during each semester. When a student has missed ten (10) days in one or more class, a student must attend a mandatory parent and student conference with the Administrator to discuss ramifications that may include grade reduction for the current nine weeks or comprehensive final to assess content mastery.

Parents will be responsible for keeping attendance on the non-campus school days. This attendance will be turned in on a monthly basis.

GENERAL ATTENDANCE POLICIES

1) EXCUSED ABSENCES

- Personal illness or injury
- Serious illness or death in the family
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot possible be scheduled outside of school hours.
- Court related appearances
- Pre-Arranged*(see specifications below)

Work Missed For Excused Absences

Students with an excused absence will be given days equal to the absence to make up assignments and assessments missed during the absence with no point reduction.

Students must take the initiative to arrange for make-up work. This will take place either before or after school or at such a time prescribed by individual teachers.

As a general rule, students who are absent only on the day of a test must take the test on the day of their return.

2) UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences will be deemed unexcused when they occur either by student choice (truancy) or for absences not pre-arranged with the Administrator.

Note: Parents, we realize that sometimes absences are unavoidable even when children are not sick. We need to work together and agree when these absences are indeed necessary. Please refer to "pre-arranged absences" below.

Work Missed For Unexcused Absences

Students will receive grades no higher than a "D" on missed assessments and assignments.

PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES

When parents sincerely believe that an absence is necessary parents must submit to the Administrator, in writing, requests for pre-arranged absences because of vacation or personal family time in order to obtain, in advance, the class work that will be missed during the nonattendance. Please keep in mind the following:

1. Students who are struggling academically should not be missing school. Doing make-up work does not take the place of being in class, and future quizzes and tests will likely reflect the gaps in learning that takes place during any absences.
2. All work needs to be completed as directed by the Administrator or on the day of return.

Note for High School students: Because of the nature of high school credits in relation to our future accreditation and to college admissions, we must be stricter in considering pre-arranged absences as "excused." Each request will come before a faculty committee and be evaluated on the basis of educational value of the trip, the particular classes that will be missed, the student's academic standing, the number of previous absences and tardies, the length of the trip and the number of days in advance that the request is made. A conference with the Administrator will be required to evaluate what needs to be accomplished during the absence.

LONG-TERM ABSENCES

Long-Term absences because of hospitalization or other verified medical reasons will be handled on an individual basis.

LEAVING CAMPUS DURING SCHOOL HOURS

All students must report to the Administration Office and sign out anytime the student leaves campus during school hours, regardless if the parent has given prior permission. If returning to campus during the same school day, the student must report back to the Administration Office and present proper appointment documentation.

TARDY POLICY

A tardy is defined as a student not being in his/her assigned place at the time of the tardy bell. To help insure that students arrive to all classes punctually, the following procedures have been established:

TARDY PROCEDURES

Homeroom Tardiness

Students are required to be in assigned place no later than 9 AM. Failure to be in assigned place by 9 AM constitutes an unexcused tardy. The homeroom teacher will submit attendance forms with tardies and absences to the office to record.

- If a student arrives at school after 9 AM but prior to chapel dismissal the student must report to the homeroom teacher to enter homeroom.
- Students arriving after chapel dismissal must report to the office for "Admit to Class" pass.

A tardy student may be excused for the following reasons ONLY:

- returning from a dentist or doctor appointment with doctor's note
- involvement in a car accident
- illness related to a medical condition on file (physician's note required)

Classroom tardiness

Students are expected to be in their seats, ready to work when the tardy bell rings. Students who are not in their seats at the allotted time without a valid pass are tardy and subject to assigned detention.

A student's tardiness will be excused only if the student presents a valid excused pass from the Administration Office.

DRIVING PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student driving and parking on The Gathering Place Cooperative campus are privileges and not rights. Operating a motor vehicle is a serious responsibility, and even more so in an area where there are children present. Safety infractions cannot and will not be tolerated.

Speed must be kept under 10 MPH on school property, and students are not to quickly accelerate on public roads around campus. Spinning or squealing tires, or throwing dirt/gravel is not acceptable and is grounds for detention and/or suspension.

No students are allowed to loiter in the parking lot or around/in student's cars. The student parking lot is off-limits during the school day, and students must get permission from the office to retrieve books or items left in a vehicle.

HOW WE HANDLE CONFLICT

A successful school education requires intense and healthy relationships among parents, faculty, staff and volunteers. Needless to say, miscommunication, misunderstandings, and disagreements will occur from time to time. It is vital to the health of our school that we each commit ourselves to following Godly procedures to clarify intentions, communicate our feelings and restore relationships. Below are the biblical principles outlined in Matthew 18, with their application to our school family:

Everyone in our school family should follow these biblical steps:

1. Believe the best of the person, realizing that perhaps the story you heard is not complete or not entirely complete or not entirely accurate. A wise person does not judge until all facts are known.
2. Refrain from sharing hurt feelings with others. They will pick up your offenses but may not be around when the situation is resolved.
3. Be proactive and communicate to the person your understanding of the matter and how you feel. Give this person a chance to explain his/her understanding of the issue and/or ask your forgiveness.
4. When you need to address a concern to a teacher please schedule an appointment as opposed to catching him/her in the parking lot, between classes, etc., when there will not be time for a meaningful conversation.
5. If there is no resolution after this, go to the Administrator who will be responsive and sensitive to your concerns and will work with you to arrive at an agreed-upon solution.

SAFETY

Emergency Procedures

- *Storm Days:* The Gathering Place Cooperative will generally follow Seminole County Public School's decision about suspending school on storm days. However, we determine when we reopen which may not be the same as SCPS. For the return date following school closing, do one of the following: 1) Continue to call school answering machine at (407)-324-0200 EXT: 7620 until you get a recording with updated information; 2) Watch for an email to be sent with a reopen date. Keep in mind the email can only be sent if power has not been affected.
- *Fire Drills:* When the signal is given, all class activities must cease and everyone is to walk out of the building as quickly and quietly as possible to a designated area. Students are expected to walk silently in a single file line without playing or joking. No one may return to a building without permission.

- *Tornado Precautions:* Tornado precautions are taken when a tornado warning is issued by the weather service. Students will assume the “duck and cover” position and wait for instructions from an administrator or teacher.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

As a childcare provider, it is our duty and legal responsibility according to s.415.504, F.S. to report any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect to the Florida Abuse Hotline.

LOST & FOUND

We strongly advise parents to label all items of clothing, school boxes, coats, lunch boxes, etc., with their child’s name. All unclaimed items are turned in to Administrations Office. Unclaimed items are given to charity.

ILLNESS PROCEDURE

If it appears that your child is unable to participate in classroom activities because of illness or injury, we will make every effort to contact you or those that you have designated as authorized to remove your child from school. **You, or your designee, are expected to arrange to pick up your child within 30 minutes of being contacted.**

You must fill out a new Emergency Information sheet if any information changes during the school year (i.e. home telephone, work telephone, address, etc.).

Illness

No child should ever be brought to school ill. Should your child become ill during the school day we will make every effort to assist him/her. However, **you will be required to pick up your child** if the school staff feels it is appropriate or observes the following:

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Runny nose (other than clear drainage caused by allergies)
- Rash of unknown origin
- Head lice or nits
- Pink teary, itchy, stinging or burning eye(s)

- General illness or excessive fatigue which makes it difficult for the child to participate in classroom activities.

Injuries

Should your child be injured while at school, other than minor scrapes or bumps, we will make every effort to contact you immediately. If the injury is serious enough to warrant a doctor's immediate care, the EMS (Emergency Medical System) will be activated as well.

Medication

Parents may provide prescription and/or non-prescription medications for their children. We are happy to assist our students with storing and dispensing the medications they may need while at school. **Please carefully read the following guidelines:**

General Guidelines

- A parent or guardian must bring in all medication to The Gathering Place Cooperative Office.
- All medication, both prescription and non-prescription, must be brought to school in their original containers.
- No medication, prescription or non-prescription, may be carried by any student at any time. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action (See exception under Prescription Medications.)
- The child's teacher must be informed in writing of the need for the student to take medication during the school day. Please include date to start, date to finish, and the approximate time the student needs to take his or her medication.
- No medicine will be sent home with a student.
- The Academy has the right to prohibit the administration of any medications or medical procedures that appear to be beyond the ability of the school personnel.

For Prescription Medications

- Before administration of any prescription medication by the school, both the “Physician Statement of Need” and the “Parental Request of Medical Administration” forms must be completed and filed in the office.
- A separate set of forms must be completed for each medication. In addition, new forms must be filled out whenever changes are made in medication, dose or possible side effects. It is the parent’s responsibility to assure that these forms are current and complete.
- Emergency medications may be carried by the student when both the “Physician Statement of Need” and “Parental Request for Medical Administration” have been completed and indicate the need for the students to have medication on his/her person at all time. This applies to metered dose inhalers for asthmatics and rescue injectates for those that have severe allergic reactions.
- Exception: Metered Dose Inhalers, for the use by asthmatics, may be carried and self administered by the student if both the “Physician Statement of Need” and ‘Parental Request for Medical Administration” have been completed and indicate the need for the student to have medication on his/her person at all times.

For Non-Prescription Medications

Before the administration of any non-prescription medication by the school, the “Parental Request for Medical Administration” must be completed and filed in the Administrative Office.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

We are thankful for our many volunteers who make our school program a success and who enrich the lives of our students. To help ensure the safety of our students and the success of their service, we ask our volunteers and chaperones to comply with the following guidelines:

1. **All volunteers must complete The Gathering Place Cooperative Release Authorization Form (background check form) two weeks prior to the date of the event for which you volunteer on campus. There a \$25 fee paid by the volunteer. Forms are available at school office.**
2. Please realize that you are representing the school and upholding its policies. While the school acknowledges that there are many different ways for families to express their

faith and live the Christian life, the school has policies that try to be non-offensive to the greatest number of individuals. All adults (from employees to volunteer) who are serving on behalf of the school must comply with school standards.

3. Please refrain from buying special treats for the students in your group unless all students will receive a treat. Children may have food allergies that you don't know about.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Preparing our students for service to others and to their community is a part of our educational program. Service is part of our calling and a mark of our character. To graduate from The Gathering Place Cooperative, a senior must have performed seventy-five (75) hours of community service. While middle school service hours are not required, they are beneficial to a student entering high school at The Gathering Place Cooperative, as ten (10) hours of community service performed in each middle school grade may carry over to the total required for high school. Thus, a high school student may enter 9th grade already having Twenty (20) hours of service.

Community service forms are available in the Administrations Office. The Gathering Place Cooperative reserves the right to determine the validity of community service hours.

COMMUNITY SERVICE EXAMPLES

Neighborhood Service – Lawn Care, babysitting, and house cleaning for the elderly, ill or home bound

Church – Working in the church nursery, Sunday School, VBS, mission work or your work in the community

Community – Habitat for Humanity, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Humane Society, etc.

*Not accepted: Service to family or relatives, or any service that receives compensation

***The Florida Academic Scholarship requires seventy-five (75) hours of community service, all of which must be performed during the time a student is enrolled in grades 9-12.*

Academics

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of The Gathering Place Cooperative is to collaborate with parents in “training their children according to their bent” by providing our students with opportunities to succeed in learning. We are dedicated to viewing every student as a unique creation of God with individual styles, abilities, talents and giftings. We are committed to a model that gives a strong, Bible-based educational foundation flexible enough to allow each student to flourish as an individual.

The Gathering Place Cooperative’s biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christlike. On occasion, the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home may be counter or in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the Christian school teaches. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, sexual immorality, homosexual orientation, or inability to support the moral principles of the school. In such cases, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student. (Leviticus 20: 13, Romans 1:27)

Policy

The administration of The Gathering Place Cooperative is committed to having students succeed. Therefore we may request a conference with parents to discuss their child’s development.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The Gathering Place Cooperative students are expected to do their own work and give credit when citing the work of others. It is dishonest to:

- copy someone’s homework or allow others to copy yours
- give or receive test answers
- turn in another person’s work as your own
- copy material from another source without using quotation marks and citing the source
- rewording specific ideas from another source and not citing the source

Penalties for dishonesty may range from failing that assignment to dismissal from TGPC.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT

AP courses are available through Florida Virtual Online.

GRADING SCALE

Letter Grade	Number/Description
A+	98-100
A	94-97
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	< 60

Any assignment receiving a grade of D or below must be re-done. However, this does not include semester/final exams.

V	Very Good
S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory
M	Making Progress

N Needs Improvement
I Incomplete

GRADE POINT AVERAGES

	<u>Remedial</u>	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Honors</u>	<u>Advanced Placement*</u>
A	3.5	4	4.5	5.0
B	2.5	3	3.5	4.0
C	1.5	2	2.5	3.0
D	0.5	1	1	1
F	0	0	0	0

**Advanced placement weighting is only given to students who take the class and the AP exam in May.*

HONOR ROLL

Principal's Honor Roll

Middle/High School students who earn a 3.75 GPA or higher for the nine weeks without a grade of D or F will be placed on the Principal's Honor Roll. Students who earn Principal's Honor Roll for the first three terms will receive the President's Gold Academic Award.

Academic Honor Roll

Middle/High School students who earn between 3.5 and 3.74 GPA for the nine weeks without a grade of D or F will be placed on the Academic Honor Roll. Students who earn Academic Honor Roll for the first three terms will receive the President's Silver Academic Award.

Superior Honor Roll

Students in grades 2-5 who earn A's in all subjects will be placed on the Superior Honor Roll.

Meritorious Honor Roll

Students in grades 2-5 who earn A's and B's in all subjects will be placed on the Meritorious Honor Roll.

A student who receives a suspension, either in-school or out of school, will not be eligible to receive Honor Roll recognition for that quarter.

ACADEMIC GRADING POLICIES

Academic Policies

Progress reports with grade averages are sent home at the mid-point in each nine-week grading period. Parents are always encouraged to contact their child's teacher with questions pertaining to academics.

Academic Agreement

When a student receives a D or an F on an assignment or project, he/she will be required to repeat that assignment or project to improve their grade. If the child fails to improve, a conference will be scheduled with his/her parents to discuss the student's difficulties and to develop and implement a plan of action to ensure the student has mastery of the content. Should the child continue to be noncompliant, then The Gathering Place Cooperative reserves the right to expel that child from the school.

HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC POLICY

Standard College Prep Diploma

Traditional college preparatory

Meets basic academic requirements of most four (4) year colleges

Twenty-four (24) credits

3.0 (or higher) cumulative GPA

SAT minimum score of 880

ACT minimum score of 18

Honors Diploma

Traditional college preparatory

Expected to apply and enter a four (4) year college or university

Twenty-six (26) credits

3.5 (or higher) cumulative GPA

Two (2) four-year sequences in math, science or foreign language

Minimum six (6) credits of honors courses

May also qualify student for Florida Medallion Scholar Award

SAT minimum score of 1075

ACT minimum score of 23

High Honors Diploma

Highest academic preparation for most difficult and demanding college admissions criteria

Twenty-eight (28) credits

3.5 (or higher) cumulative GPA

Two (2) four-year sequences in math, science or foreign language

Minimum six (6) credits of honors courses

May also qualify student for Florida Academic Scholar Award

SAT minimum score of 1270

ACT minimum score of 28

As a general policy, we do not accept credits from other school after the student has enrolled at The Gathering Place Cooperative. Exceptions may be made for approved on-line courses, Drivers Education, and Personal Fitness and dual enrollment classes.

Graduation requirements of transfer students may be slightly modified.

REMEDIAL SUMMER SCHOOL

According to Florida Law, a student may only repeat a course for credit if a final grade of D or F is earned. High school students who fail a required course must retake the course at The Gathering Place Cooperative or an approved program. Off campus summer school classes need to be approved by Administration. Transcripts of a student who retakes a course approved by the Administration will reflect the higher grade.

MID-TERM PROGRESS REPORTS

Mid-Term Progress Reports with grade averages are issued at the 4-5 week point for students how are receiving a "D" or lower; or whose grade has dropped significantly.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of each nine-week period.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

You have the option of requesting a conference with a teacher whenever you choose. Unscheduled conferences at the start or end of the school day must be avoided, for they interfere with the teacher's daily responsibility and result in incomplete communication.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

We evaluate student's progress by administering the Stanford Achievement Test during the spring of each school year. Other tests and tools may be utilized if appropriate or if learning difficulties are noted. The SAT is a series of comprehensive achievement tests designed to measure the outcomes of learning at different levels in the educational process. These tests provide dependable measures for use concerning the improvement of instruction and evaluation of progress. The parents will receive the results of this test during the summer. The OLSAT ability test may also be administered in order to develop an educational growth index for each student.

OFF CAMPUS CLASS WORK

The Gathering Place Cooperative believes that off campus class work is an integral part of education and reinforcing lessons learned at school and by helping children learn the character and skills necessary for independent work. We will make every effort to make off campus class work assignments meaningful and not excessive. High school students in honors level classes should expect significantly more off campus class work. Off campus class work will be given on weekends or over extended holidays at the discretion of the teacher.

If your child spends too much time on off campus class work, or if the assignments only frustrate your child, please schedule an appointment with your child's teacher. Our teachers need to know how their assignments affect their students, and parents need to know their child's behavior at school (i.e., not paying attention, misuse of work time) may be contributing to their child's frustration at home.

One of the factors frustrating many students is lack of organization. All of our teachers are trying to help their students learn organization skills that will help them with their school work

and with the added responsibilities that come with maturity. You can help your child with off campus class work by:

- scheduling a consistent time for class work each day
- providing a quiet place in the house where your child can work uninterrupted
- giving supervision and limited help if needed
- checking to see the assignments are completed and neatly done
- seeing that your child returns the assignment to school by the due date
- providing oral drill practice (math facts, memory work)
- reviewing material for a test
- ensuring that your child is successfully using organization tools (list of assignments, completed work put into particular place, etc.)

DISCIPLINE

PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE

The Gathering Place Cooperative establishes its standards of discipline to help train its students to strive for excellence in all they say, think, and do. Some of our standards are based on morality and manners, some support current civil laws and others reflect what may be considered the common standards of our diverse school community. We want our students to realize that there is a time and place for individuals to express diversity and uniqueness, but that is not the main objective of The Gathering Place Cooperative. In other words, what may be suitable for us to do in our homes or wear at the mall may not be suitable for The Gathering Place Cooperative. It is often not a question of right or wrong, but of purpose and priorities. We trust that all those who are members of our school community will understand and fully support our school standards.

Consequences for inappropriate actions will follow the guidelines below. However, we will always seek to treat each child as an individual and to choose consequences that will accomplish our goals of showing love and forgiveness, teaching that wrong actions have negative results, ensuring that the misbehavior is not repeated, and securing the safety of other students. Nevertheless, The Gathering Place Cooperative reserves the right to discontinue a student's enrollment at the discretion of the school administration. Our goal is to work

ourselves out of a job by encouraging every student to adopt standards of excellence and develop self-discipline. In order to achieve this goal, we are guided by the following principles:

1. Work with each student individually – recognizing differences in maturity levels, distinguishing between an impulsive act and a motive to hurt, and treating first-time offenders more leniently than those who have already been corrected for the same offense. In all cases we want to understand and train the child's heart and not just to fix the behavior.
2. Form a partnership with the home – to develop mutual understanding and a common plan to address any academic, behavioral, or emotional need their child is experiencing.
3. Never giving up on a child.
4. Administration reserves the right to enforce consequences deemed appropriate including but not limited to expulsion from school, however, corporal punishment is not an acceptable form of discipline.

CODE OF CONDUCT

DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND EXPLANATION

Teacher-Student Conference - The teacher will discuss the situation with the student and work with that student to develop positive behavior. During this step, teachers and students correct and prevent many problems.

Student-Parent-Administrator Conference - Everyone involved works together to develop a solution to the problem. The conference often results in a behavior contract, which outlines specific rewards and consequences designed to change the student's behavior.

In-School Suspension - The student will remain after school on the day of the offense with the parent's notification, or will be scheduled the next school day. The action is recorded in the student's file. After three In-School Suspensions the student will receive Out-of-School Suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension - The student will be removed from school for three days or more to a maximum of nine days. After an Out-of-School suspension, any further offenses may result in Expulsion.

Expulsion - The student will be expelled from the school for the balance of the year. To return the following year, re-admission will be subject to administrative review.

The following table lists a few examples of acts of misconduct and disciplinary action for each level.

GROUP 1 – ACTS OF MISCONDUCT

- Cheating
- Persistent tardiness

Disciplinary Action – First Violation

- Minimum: Teacher-Student Conference
- Maximum: Teacher-Student-Parent Conference

Disciplinary Action – Repeated/Flagrant Violations

- Minimum: Student-Parent-Administrator Conference
- Maximum: In-School Suspension

GROUP 2 – ACTS OF MISCONDUCT

- Leaving school without permission
- Use or possession of tobacco products
- Failing to abide by school rules and regulations

DISCIPLINARY ACTION – FIRST VIOLATION

- Minimum: Teacher-Student Conference
- Maximum: Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrator Conference

Disciplinary Action – Repeated/Flagrant Violations

- Minimum: In-School Suspension
- Maximum: Out-of-School Suspension (one to three days)

GROUP 3 – ACTS OF MISCONDUCT

Any Behavior That Is Seriously Disruptive

- Fighting – two people, no injuries
- Persisting in serious acts of disobedience or misconduct

Disciplinary Action – First Violation

- Minimum: Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrator Conference
- Maximum: Out-of-School Suspension (one to three days)

Disciplinary Action – Repeated/Flagrant Violations

- Minimum: Out-of-School Suspension (one to three days)
- Maximum: Out-of-School Suspension (three to six days)

GROUP 4 – ACTS OF MISCONDUCT

- False activation of a fire alarm
- Assault
- Vandalism or criminal damage to property

Disciplinary Action

- Minimum: Student-Parent-Administrator Conference
- Maximum: Expulsion and Police Notification

GROUP 5 – ACTS OF MISCONDUCT

- Aggravated assault
- Disorderly Conduct

Disciplinary Action

Suspension (six to nine days) and/or Police Notification. Both arrest by the Police and expulsion.

GROUP 6 – ACTS OF MISCONDUCT

- Use, possession, and/or concealment of a firearm/destructive device or other weapon

Disciplinary Action

Police Notification and/or arrest and expulsion.

CHARACTER AND EXPECTATIONS

At The Gathering Place Cooperative, we believe that a quality education can only be provided in an atmosphere of faith, respect, and responsibility. Thus, all faculty, parents and students are expected to:

- **Respect the Mission and Purpose of the School**
- **Respect Staff, Parents, and other Students**
- **Respect The Gathering Place Cooperative Campus and the property of others**
- **Be Honest and truthful in Word and Deed**
- **Use Appropriate Oral, Written, and Body Language**
- **Obey the Civil Laws and School Policies Pertaining to Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol, and Weapons**
- **Avoid Engaging in Inappropriate Sexual Behavior**
- **Honor the Dress Code Policy**
- **Be Punctual to Class/School**

DRESS CODE

Philosophy

Our commitment at The Gathering Place Cooperative is to do all things in a way that is pleasing to the Lord and that will bring honor and glory to Him. Accordingly, what we wear should direct subtle attention to the inner person, not to the physical body. The essence of our dress code is expressed in I Peter 3: 3-4, which states that our attractiveness should not be based on what we wear, but on our hidden inner self, "the unfailing beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit."

God has given parents the responsibility for the nurture and admonition of their children. Therefore, we expect parents to teach and enforce God-pleasing dress and appearance.

The Gathering Place Cooperative dress code has been established to provide minimum standards of dress and appearance that will assist parents and students in choosing appropriate clothing to be worn to classes and school functions. We realize that clothing styles are cultural and cultural standards are not always right or wrong. However, student attire needs to be **safe, conservative, modest, neat and appropriate**; also, it should not be a distraction, express an ungodly lifestyle, nor tempt others to stumble.

Policy

Students need to adhere to the following dress code standards which will be strictly enforced. Unless otherwise designated, these standards apply at all times . Since the following standards/guidelines are not intended to cover every possibility, the administration will make the final decision regarding dress code compliance or any questionable clothing or style that is not specifically addressed in the current dress code. We wish to assure both students and parents that while standards of dress and conduct will be strictly enforced, students will be dealt with in Christian love and fairness, with concern for the individual involved.

Any student in violation of the dress code may be sent home and/or held out of class or an activity until the infraction is corrected. This may result in an unexcused absence. Since parents are responsible for the dress and appearance of their children, they will be notified of any dress code violations, and held responsible to bring in an appropriate change of clothing as needed.

Depending on circumstances, obvious and repeated dress code violations will result in disciplinary action. For the third and every subsequent dress code violation in a semester, the student must serve one detention.

Dress Code Standards/Guidelines

Please note that the dress code has been prayerfully designed to reflect modesty, attractiveness, appropriateness, inoffensiveness, and avoidance of world/sensual connotation, while allowing for much individual expression. Student need to have any questionable clothing/styles specifically approved by the administration prior to wearing such clothing/styles.

Guidelines for All Students -

1. **All clothing** must be **modest** and **neither tight nor oversized**. Hair, clothing or other fads which are representative of non-Christian subculture lifestyles or which draw undue attention to a student are not permitted.
2. For blouses/shirts/tops with the top button starting at the collar, the top two buttons may be left unbuttoned, as long as modesty is maintained. Otherwise, only the top button may be left unbuttoned. The maintenance of modesty will always be the final determining factor.
3. Clothing must be free of any inappropriate slogans, advertisements, or pictures. Bible verses on clothing are acceptable.
4. Appropriate outer garments may be worn, but the basic acceptable attire must also be worn under the outer garment.
5. Novelty shoes with wheels are NOT to be worn.
6. The administration will rule on any questionable dress or hair issues or styles.

Specific Dress Code Standards for Young Men

1. The basic acceptable attire for **BOYS** is a collared, sleeved shirt, turtleneck or T-shirt, appropriate-fitting full-length slacks, jeans, or shorts; socks and shoes or flip-flops.

2. Pants, jeans, or shorts

-must be traditional, plain, straight-leg or boot cut, regular/classic or relaxed fit, and sized to

the waist

- must be in good repair, without holes or fringed hems.

- Multicolored or embellished jeans, oversize pockets, slit legs, or rolled up legs are NOT permitted

- the length must be such that the pant legs do not extend more than one inch beneath the heel with the shoe off.

- Shorts may not be shorter than 2 inches above the mid-point of the knee when standing

3. Hair must be kept neat and clean, reflecting proper grooming and regular trimming. NO bleached, odd-colored, or multi-colored hair. No shaved heads. No spiked hair.

Specific Dress Code Standards for Young Ladies

1. The basic acceptable attire for **GIRLS** is a collared, sleeved shirt/blouse/turtleneck or T-shirts; appropriate fitting slacks, jeans, skirts, shorts or dresses, a belt if a loop is present, and shoes or flip-flops.

2. **Girls** are permitted but are not required to tuck in their shirt/blouse/top. However, to maintain the appropriate level of modesty, tops must be sufficiently long enough to ensure that no part of the midriff is ever exposed, whether sitting, raising the arms, or bending over. It is also highly suggested that consideration be given to wearing a long tucked-in article of clothing under the shirt/blouse/top, which will further preclude the exposure of the midriff, whether the shirt/blouse/top is untucked or tucked.

3. **Shirts/blouses/tops** - No low-cut V-neck, spaghetti straps, tank tops or other sleeveless tops that reveal undergarments, midriff or cropped-top styles are to be worn.

4. Dresses, Skirts and Shorts

- may not be shorter than 2 inches above the mid-point of the knee when standing

- slits must meet the same standard

- for modesty, especially when seated, dresses or skirts must NOT be tight or form-fitted

5. Slacks, Jeans and Shorts

- must be within The Gathering Place Cooperative standards of modesty (e.g. not tight jeans/slacks). The administration will make the final determination in any questionable matters.

- must be in good repair, without holes or fringed hems

- backless dress shoes are permitted.

6. **Hair** styles and colors should NOT present a distraction.

