



# Gateway

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

INTEGRITY  
RESPECT  
SAFETY  
RESPONSIBILITY  
HUMILITY



**Student Handbook**  
**Middle School and High School**  
last update 2/16/2021

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# I. Philosophy

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## ◆ Mission Statement

It is the mission of Gateway Christian Academy to educate the whole person under the authority of God's Word. We believe GCA can best achieve our mission by training young people spiritually, academically, socially, and physically. Gateway stands hand-in-hand with parents and the church in fulfilling this biblical mandate to train up children in the way they should go.

## ◆ Statement of Faith

We believe in the plenary, verbal inspiration of the Scriptures which guarantees their accuracy and establishes them as man's only authoritative source and guide for life and faith.

We believe in the One, True, Living and Eternal God Who exists equally in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We believe in the deity, virgin birth, vicarious atonement, bodily resurrection, and the imminent return of Jesus Christ for His bride, the Church.

We believe in the necessity of the new birth for all fallen men, which is a work of grace wrought by the Holy Spirit conditioned by a personal faith in Jesus Christ as one's own Lord and Savior.

We believe in the local church and the church universal. The local church is constituted of an assembly of born-again believers who assemble to preach the Gospel, administer the ordinances, and practice Christian discipline. The universal church is made of all born-again believers of all areas and ages.

## ◆ Objectives

Spiritual maturity and academic excellence are the objectives of Gateway Christian Academy. We believe that the Christian, everything else being equal, ought to do a better job than the non-Christian at any endeavor he undertakes for the glory of God. The following is a summary of the basic objectives of Gateway Christian Academy:

- **Bible Teaching** The objectives of our Bible program are to win students to Jesus Christ, to teach students the contents of the Scriptures, to apply the principles of Scripture to their lives, to develop a love and respect for the Word of God, to help them hide the Word in their hearts, and to make the Word of God the major rule of faith and practice when they become adults.
- **Academic Excellence** The curriculum stresses academic excellence and encourages the development of individual talents. Emphasis is placed on the basic fundamentals. We agree that a student's education, in the final analysis, must be measured largely in terms of his ability to read and interpret intelligently, communicate effectively, compute accurately, write legibly, and spell correctly.
- **Christian Americanism** We teach our students to appreciate and love America and its Christian heritage. We incorporate teaching principles of individuality, self government, conscience as property, and political union upon which our forefathers founded this great republic.
- **Character-building Discipline** The Bible teaches our goal for our youth is to see them "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:20). We are dedicated to the goal of turning out a special product—a young person with Christian character and self discipline, academically equipped to go out into a lost world and lift up Jesus Christ without fear or apology.
- **Leadership** It is our desire to instill within students the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, to take the responsibility to personally do right and to exercise initiative in leading others in the right direction. We feel that the greatest need of our nation and world today is well-trained Christian leaders.
- **Manners and Courtesies** - Unconsciously practicing good manners and etiquette is our goal for GCA students. Good manners and courtesy are the consideration of the rights and feeling of others and not drawing attention to oneself.

• **Dedicated Christian Teachers** - We believe that dedicated Christian teachers who follow Scriptural instructions to “train up a child in the way he should go” will have a far-reaching influence in the lives of youth. Gateway Christian Academy teachers consider their positions as a calling from God, not merely a job.

#### ◆ **Standards of Conduct**

*The following must be signed by all GCA students and parents:*

Gateway Christian Academy is first and foremost “Christian.” Our primary purpose is to join with parents in fulfilling the command from God to rear their children in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

To accomplish this task a number of factors must be present in the school. The staff, curriculum, and policies must be Christian. However, even when the above are present, we have found that our efforts are in vain if there is a contradiction of philosophy and practice between the school and home. We are unable to help the child who at home is allowed to indulge in some of the practices which are taught and preached against at school.

We, therefore, request that before a student is admitted to Gateway Christian Academy he or she must agree to adhere to the following:

1. GCA students will refrain from immoral behavior: use of indecent language (spoken or written), smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, abuse or distribution of illegal drugs, premarital sexual relationships, homosexuality or bisexuality (in practice or proclamation), transgenderism, gambling, cheating, fighting and any other actions specifically forbidden in God’s Word. Students are also expected to avoid locations where these actions are taking place.
2. GCA students will not be involved in corrupt entertainment: Intentional indulgence of media in any form (music, movies, television, books, magazines, internet, etc.) that is blatantly opposed to the teachings of God’s Word.
3. GCA students will also maintain a positive Christian testimony with regard to courtesy, kindness, decency, modesty and honesty.
4. GCA students will hold God and His Word in high regard, respecting the God-given authority of parents, church leaders, school faculty/administration, and government officials.

Students are expected to abide by these standards throughout their enrollment whether at home, school, or elsewhere. Students found to be out of harmony with the Gateway Christian Academy ideals of work and life may be invited to withdraw whenever the general welfare demands it, even though there may be no special breach of conduct.

#### ◆ **Church Attendance**

We desire that all Gateway Christian Academy students attend a Bible-preaching church and Sunday school each Sunday. If a student does not have a regular church home, we recommend the ministry of Gateway Free Will Baptist Church, located on the same property as the school. If you should have any questions about the church or need transportation, please call us at 499-6551.

## **II. Academic Policies**

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A Christian school is not merely a school with the proper environment for learning. The academic program must also be proper. At Gateway Christian Academy, we believe we have the proper Christian academic program. We believe our program is truly God centered in all areas.

### ◆ Curriculum

Using A BEKA BOOKS, Bob Jones University Press, and other traditional texts, GCA offers a full academic program. Your child will learn in a well-structured atmosphere designed to enable each student to concentrate on his studies and achieve his highest academic potential.

### ◆ Report Cards

Report cards are issued every nine weeks. All financial obligations must be current before report cards can be issued. Parents will receive a hard copy of the report card and may also access it on RenWeb.

### ◆ Progress Reports

Parents may keep track of academic progress through RenWeb ParentsWeb. If there are any questions concerning a student's progress, please make an appointment with the teacher.

### ◆ Testing and Grading

#### Grading Scale

A 92-100    B 84-91    C 76-83    D 70-76    F Below 70    I Incomplete\*

*\*Work must be finished within a time frame approved by the teacher and administration.*

#### Testing Policies

In most classes unit or chapter tests are given every 3 weeks. Quizzes will be given more frequently and may be unannounced. Homework or assignments that are graded are generally counted as quizzes unless specified otherwise.

#### Calculating Grades

Class grades for each quarter are generally weighted as follows: Test average- 67%, Quiz average- 33% Teachers and administration may decide that certain classes be weighted differently based upon relative numbers of tests and quizzes as well as importance of material.

Middle school semester grades are the average of the two quarter grades. High school semester grades are calculated according to the following weighting: Q1- 40%, Q2- 40%, semester exam- 20%

Final grades are the average of the two semester grades.

### ◆ Semester Exams

Cumulative semester exams will be given in most middle school and high school classes. 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade semester exams will be counted as a normal test. They will be given during the last days of each semester. The material of the entire semester is applicable to these exams and in some instances the material for the entire year will be required for the final exam. High school semester exams are counted as 20% of the semester grade.

A high school student may be exempted from his/her second semester exam in any class in which he/she has earned an A for the year.

The exam for any given course must be taken before a semester or yearly grade can be awarded. Make-up semester exams must be arranged with the appropriate teacher. A grade of incomplete will be the result of any course until the semester exams are made up.

### ◆ Requirements for Passing a Course

Courses will be judged as passed or failed for the entire year (or semester for those courses in the high school lasting only one half of one year). A grade of below 70 will result in failure for the course.

Students must not be absent from a class more than 20 times in a year (10 for one semester courses).

If a course is failed, the course must be made up before credit will be given in the high school grades (9 to 12).

◆ **Promotion Requirements**

**Middle School (grades 6-8)**

To be considered for promotion, the student must pass Bible, English and Mathematics. If all three of these subjects are failed, the student will not be promoted. Failure of one or two of these subjects will require the student to attend summer school successfully before promotion will be made. Failure of any other subject area will cause promotion to be conditional upon the recommendation of the teacher and administration who will typically require that the course be made up in summer school.

**High School (grades 9-12)**

To be considered for promotion, the student must meet the following criteria:

1. Both Bible and English grades must meet the requirements for passing a course.
2. If a student receives two failing grades in courses other than Bible and English, that student will not be promoted.

**General Promotion Policies**

- Proper credit will be given for passing a course no matter what else is failed that particular year. Credit is either given totally or not at all for each course. Exceptions to requirements for passing a course and requirements for promotion may be granted **ONLY** by the administration in exceptional circumstances.
- Any course failed that affects the student’s graduation requirements must be made up before graduation can be granted.
- In addition to the academic requirements for promotion, all accounts with the school must be paid in full through the end of the school year.

◆ **Graduation Requirements**

Course credits begin to count toward cumulative graduation credits in the 9th grade. A total of 24 credits must be gained in order to graduate. Requirements to graduate are listed below. Substitutions for specific credits may be permitted with prior approval in cases of transfer or scheduling conflicts.

Bible	4*	P.E.**	2
English	4	Foreign Language	2
Mathematics	4	Computers	1
History	3	Speech and Ethics	1
Science	3	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>

\*or at least one Bible credit for each year at GCA

\*\*Beginning in the fall of 2017, one-half P.E. credit will be given to high school students for participating on a GCA athletic squad. These courses will be graded pass/fail and will not affect GPA.

**Early Graduation**

Early graduation is unwise in most instances and is highly discouraged. Exceptions will be made only in extreme circumstances.

**Outside/Duel Credit**

The following criteria will govern courses taken at other schools while enrolled as a student at GCA:

1. All Bible classes must be taken at Gateway.
2. Credit will be accepted from other schools only with prior approval of the administration.

## ◆ Academic Honors

### Honor Roll

Gateway Christian Academy recognizes those who excel academically by placing them on the Honor Roll. To qualify, the student must earn an A or B in every subject. (Honor rolls for semester and year-end averages are based on those grades only and not upon any of the grades of the nine-weeks periods or semester exams.)

### Principal's Honor Roll

In addition to the Honor Roll, Gateway Christian Academy recognizes those students who show superior skills and application by placing them on the Principal's Honor Roll. To qualify, the student must have earned an A in all academic subjects.

### Christian Honor Society

All junior and senior students are evaluated in four areas (academics, leadership, character, service) by the faculty and administration. Usually two juniors and one senior are chosen to be inducted into this society.

### Honor Graduates

Graduates with a cumulative high school GPA of 3.25 or higher will be recognized as honor graduates.

### Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Each year the graduates with the highest and second highest cumulative high school GPA will be named the class Valedictorian and Salutatorian respectively. Any tie in GPA will be broken according to the criteria listed below. All students earning a cumulative GPA of 4.0 or higher will be considered tied.

- The student with the fewest grades lower than an A will receive the honor. If still tied...
- The student with the most honors credits will receive the honor. If still tied...
- The student with the most high school credits will receive the honor. If still tied...
- Both students will receive the honor.

## III. Classroom Policies

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### ◆ Daily Attendance

- Daily attendance will be reported on every student's report card and transcripts. Students will be marked Present, Absent (Excused), Absent (Unexcused), or Tardy in homeroom for each school day.
- To be marked Present, a student must be present for a minimum of three complete class periods.
- EXCUSED absences include sickness, death in the family, emergencies, pre-approved absences. In order to be excused, parents must send a note or email the homeroom teacher.
  1. Excuses for illnesses lasting three or more days must be accompanied by a note from a physician.
  2. Non-emergency absences must be approved by the administration in advance.
- All other absences are UNEXCUSED. Students will be responsible for all assignments, tests, and quizzes just as if they were present and may face further disciplinary action.
- As a general rule, excused students will have as many days to make up work as they were absent.
- No refunds on tuition or fees are made due to absences.
- Students will not be allowed to miss more than 20 days per year. A student missing more than 20 days in any year will not pass unless there are extenuating circumstances approved by administration.

### Tardiness

- A tardy pass must be obtained in the office when a student is late to school and will not be in homeroom. Students arriving during homeroom will be checked in by their homeroom teacher.

- Tardies are not marked as excused on daily attendance except in extreme circumstances.
- Five tardies in a grading period will be considered an UNEXCUSED ABSENCE. The student will not qualify for perfect attendance and records will be marked accordingly.

#### ◆ **Class Attendance**

- Teachers will keep record of absences and tardies for individual classes.
- A student not in place at the beginning of class, chapel, study hall, or any other scheduled activity after the bell has rung (without a pass) will be considered tardy.
- Five tardies to an individual class in a grading period will be considered an ABSENCE.
- Students will not pass a class with more than 20 absences for the year in that class (10 for one semester classes) unless there are extenuating circumstances approved by administration.
- Students intentionally cutting class will be marked absent or tardy and face disciplinary action.

#### **Passes**

A student out of class during regular class hours must have a pass from the teacher of the class he is supposed to be in, from the teacher who delayed the student, or from the office.

#### **Chapel Attendance**

Every student must attend Chapel and will be excused only in extreme circumstances approved by the administration. Any student causing problems or not paying attention will be disciplined accordingly.

#### ◆ **Lockers**

Lockers will be assigned to students at the beginning of the school year. Locks will not be provided, but students are encouraged to keep valuable possessions secure. A student may bring a lock if his/her homeroom teacher is given the combination or a key. All lockers must be kept neat. The administration reserves the right to inspect any locker and its contents at any time.

#### ◆ **Class Officers**

In grades nine through twelve, the following class officers may be elected: President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, Chaplain.

Elections will be held in the first month of school. Candidates should be considered for their Christian testimony, leadership, service, loyalty, and academics.

The administration has the final approval of all elected class officers.

#### ◆ **Withdrawal from Class**

Withdrawals will be permitted only with the approval of the administration and will be granted only during the first week of class or in extreme circumstances.

## **IV. Discipline Policies**

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*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when is old, he will not depart from it. -Proverbs 22:6*

*Let all things be done decently and in order. -1 Corinthians 14:40*

#### ◆ **GCA's Foundations**

Gateway's classroom discipline is designed to encourage students to exemplify five foundational characteristics in order to develop Christlike character. Rather than focusing on the negative behavior that should be avoided, typical behavioral and institutional issues will be addressed in the context of how to actively exemplify these foundations:

- **INTEGRITY- Do what is right simply because it is right**

*Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure. Do not swerve to the right or to the left; turn your foot away from evil. Proverbs 4:26-27*

We should each strive to live an honest life of the highest character regardless of consequences. We should take special care to ensure that we are doing what is right in all circumstances no matter how important or trivial they may seem.

- **RESPECT- Genuinely value others and their property**

*Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them. -Matthew 7:12*

We can live out the golden rule by building others up, giving them the benefit of the doubt, and seeking to resolve conflict privately and efficiently.

- **SAFETY- Look out for the well-being of yourself and those around you**

*Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. -Philippians 2:3-4*

One of the primary purposes of the body of Christ is to meet the physical needs of others. Our own comfort or convenience should never be more important to us than the well-being of others. Everyone has a responsibility to promote a safe environment while actively avoiding actions that could cause harm.

- **RESPONSIBILITY- Be accountable to yourself and others for what you can control**

*But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load. -Galatians 6:4-5*

Maturity is marked by the ability to make wise decisions regarding use of time and resources to accomplish specific goals. Only through self-sufficiency and hard work can one take pride in individual effort and the results of labor.

- **HUMILITY -Follow Christ's example of self-denial by being a servant to others**

*Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. -Philippians 2:5-7*

Jesus valued the salvation of man more than His own identity as God, His position in heaven, and His own physical life. Gratitude for His sacrifice should drive every Christian to think of others before self and live out this attitude through service of God and man.

**GOAL OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION** - GCA strives to instill godly character in each of our students, therefore, our disciplinary system is far more concerned with finding ways to replace poor behavior with good attitudes, actions, and words than punishment of the negative behavior. Gateway Christian Academy has a Christian faculty that has the best interest of your child at heart. They must have your confidence in the matter of discipline. However, if you are in disagreement, please voice it to the teacher or the administration and not to your child. Often a phone call or a conference can quickly resolve the difficulty. Be sure you know the facts before you act.

Corrective measures at GCA may take several forms, but most situations should be easily remedied with a verbal reprimand, removal from the situation, or encouragement to work toward GCA's foundations. Below are other corrective measures that may be taken by teachers or administrators:

### ◆ After School Detention

Teachers may assign after-school detention for minor classroom infractions according to their own classroom disciplinary policies. Students will be given a Discipline Notice that must be registered in the school office, signed by a parent, and returned to the assigning teacher the following day. The date and time of the detention will be assigned by the school office and will last from 3:25-4:20 on the specified school day. Students will not typically be permitted to reschedule detentions in order to participate in extracurricular activities.

### ◆ The Demerit System

The demerit system is a cumulative disciplinary system with correction of the problem student as its primary objective. A demerit will accompany each detention that is assigned. Demerits may be given in greater numbers by an administrator when a student is given a Referral or by the Disciplinary Committee for more serious offences.

The demerit system will be used to notify the administration when a student has accumulated more than the allowable number of demerits and thus has become a problem student. The allowable limits will be set at intervals of eight. Therefore, a student will be given a Referral at 8, 16, and 24 demerits.

The demerit system is operated on a semester-by-semester basis. Each student starts with a clean slate on day one of any given semester. The only exception to this would be a student who receives 16 or more demerits within a semester; in which case the student will be on disciplinary probation and begin the following semester with one-half of the number of demerits with which he ended the semester.

When a student receives 16 or more demerits within one semester, those demerits will become part of the permanent record.

Any student who is suspended for one week or more, or expelled, may be prohibited from participating in any extra-curricular activities or holding any class office or position of leadership for up to one full calendar year.

### ◆ Referrals

While classroom disciplinary procedures, detentions, and demerits are proper responses to minor or typical classroom offenses, staff and faculty may refer certain discipline problems to school administration. This typically happens when a student's negative behavior is repeated, dangerous, especially disruptive, or might result in more than a single detention.

An administrator will meet with the student, contact parents, report back to the teacher regarding the situation, help the student to correct any ongoing discipline problems, and, if necessary, assign detentions and/or demerits. An administrator may assign a student to go before a Discipline Committee if the student is thought to be in continuous violation of the school's Minimum Standards of Conduct or needs to be questioned about a more serious offense. Generally, offenses that may result in more than 6 demerits will be handled by a Discipline Committee.

For Referrals regarding an accumulation of demerits, a suggested progression would be:

- 8 - 2000 word essay (disciplinary probation may be considered)
- 16 - One day of in-school suspension and place the student on disciplinary probation
- 24 - Three days suspension (either in or out of school)
- 26 - Brought before the expulsion board for possible and probable expulsion

### ◆ **Disciplinary Committee**

The Disciplinary Committee will be made up of an administrator, another faculty member, and, when possible, a school steering committee member or one of the pastoral staff. The specific members of each Committee are the sole discretion of the Principal or Supervisor. Calling for a Discipline Committee is not a declaration of guilt, but a process by which further investigation and thought can be given to the disciplinary matter at hand. In each instance, this committee will perform a number of duties:

1. Review the student's case and possibly interview teachers, other students, and the student in question.
2. Administer appropriate punishments (including assigning detentions and demerits or placing a student on probation) that will increase in severity with each successive visit by the student.
3. Develop other corrective measures including:
  - counseling with the student
  - informing the student's teachers of action taken with possible suggestions for handling the student in the future
  - informing the parents of the findings and action of the committee

### ◆ **Probation**

**Academic** A student is placed on academic probation when he is failing in all or nearly all of his academic classes, or when he is showing no tangible effort in assigned class work or tests. Continued academic probation may result in dismissal from GCA. Parents will be notified of the specific prohibitions for their student.

**Disciplinary** A student is placed on disciplinary probation when he repeatedly or flagrantly ignores, disobeys, or mocks school regulations or teacher instructions. If a student fails to respond to this action, suspension or expulsion may follow. Any student placed on disciplinary probation may be required to meet with a school counselor periodically.

### ◆ **Expulsion**

When 26 demerits are earned, a student will go before the expulsion board made up of at least one representative of the faculty, the administration, and the school steering committee.

Any student expelled from Gateway Christian Academy will be required to stay out the remainder of that semester and the following full semester. Then, and only then, will re-admission be considered. To be considered for re-admission a recommendation from the pastor or youth pastor of the church the student attends will be required.

Students who are expelled may not attend any GCA events or activities for the remainder of the school year. This includes, but is not limited to, athletic events, school programs, SACS competition, the Jr/Sr. banquet, fundraising events, and graduation.

Students who withdraw from GCA during the process of fulfilling disciplinary procedures (suspension, disciplinary probation, discipline committee activities, etc.) will be held to the same re-admission and probationary requirements as a student who was expelled.

### ◆ **Serious Offenses**

The following will not be tolerated on school property:

1. Intentional or malicious destruction of school or personal property
2. Possession of materials that serve no purpose but to disrupt (i.e. stink bombs, noisemakers, spray paint, etc.)

3. Weapons- knives or guns of any kind (real or toy) are never permitted
4. Explosive devices or fireworks
5. Tobacco, alcohol, or other controlled substances
6. Vulgarity or profanity in speech or action
7. Threatening actions or words directed to faculty, visitors, or other students

The following list of serious offenses that will not be tolerated on or off campus is not intended to be exhaustive, but is to serve as a basic guide in understanding of the principles and offenses which guide the Disciplinary Committee when considering disciplinary action:

1. A rebellious spirit which is unchanged after much effort put forth by the teacher and principal
2. A serious breach of conduct inside or outside of school which has an adverse effect upon the testimony of the school, its administration, or faculty
3. Conduct or attitude which reflects the student to be in open opposition to the basic principles and purposes of the school
4. Failure of the parents to comply with the disciplinary procedures of the school
5. Insufficient academic progress resulting from a refusal to apply oneself
6. Use, possession, or trafficking of alcohol, tobacco, or any other illegal drug
7. Drug abuse
8. Improper speech, vulgarity, profanity, lying, pornography, and obscene gestures
9. Regular use of entertainment (music, television, movies, etc.) that is blatantly opposed to the teachings of God's Word
10. Sexual activity of any kind

Although the school recognizes that it has no direct control of the student when away from school, any violation of accepted behavior for Gateway Christian Academy students will be considered serious. Gateway Christian Academy is judged by the testimony of its students before the public.

*Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. -1 Timothy 4:12*

GCA activity standards as a student who is expelled.

#### ◆ **Athletic Eligibility**

Any student desiring to be a member of any sports teams or cheerleading squads must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Maintain a C average with no F in any course. (See athletic handbook for further explanation)
2. Attend church faithfully.
3. Accumulate no more than 8 demerits within a semester.
4. Follow the guidelines listed in the athletic handbook and other regulations as the coach or sponsor sees fit to require with the approval of the administration.
5. Practice with the team at least 2 weeks before being allowed to play with the team in an official game.

We urge our students and parents to support our teams by attending school games. Good sportsmanship is expected of all those connected with our school.

#### ◆ **Sexual Conduct Statement**

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality,

bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, or pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex (Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 14:4). We also believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate functions for men and women in the home and the church. Because God created men and women different physically and for different roles, we consider transgenderism to be in opposition to God's design (Galatians 3:28, Colossians 3:18-19, Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:18-25).

### **Dating Relationships**

It is recognized that in some cases friendships developed during the school years will mature into life-long relationships; therefore, it is the policy of Gateway Christian Academy that dating shall be directed from the homes of the students. For school functions, such as banquets, double dates or chaperoned dates will be permitted.

To avoid unbecoming behavior and life-long regrets, students shall not come to school or leave after school in mixed groups unless accompanied by an adult or previously approved by the administration. Couples should not be in unchaperoned situations or places such as otherwise empty buildings or rooms, behind buildings, or in any parking lot other than the one in front of the high school building without a teacher, staff member, or one of their parents accompanying.

Outward show of affection in public, such as holding hands, having arms around one another, and the like is unbecoming to a Christian young man or young woman, and will be prohibited in the school or on the school grounds. A genuine Christian behavior toward the opposite sex is manifested in a discreet manner. No physical contact is permitted on campus or at any school functions.

## **V. Dress Code**

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While recognizing that Christianity is a matter of the heart, it is nevertheless true that one's outward appearance is reflective of his inward spiritual condition. It is true that God looks on the heart, but it is also true that the same verse says that man looks on the outward appearance (I Samuel 16:7). Men cannot see one's heart and therefore, to some extent, judge the intentions of the heart by appearance.

I Corinthians 10:31 says, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." That includes how one dresses. It is impossible to glorify God and self at the same time. Questionable attire should always be measured by this criteria: Does it glorify God, or does it glorify me?

We recognize that conformity does not necessarily mean conviction. However, it is the desire of the administration of Gateway Christian Academy that our students develop some strong personal convictions and common-sense practices of their own. In the meantime, it will be necessary for the school and parents together to point them toward what is right or wrong according to Biblical principles.

The administration reserves the right to determine if particular styles and fashions are within the guidelines listed below.

### **◆ General Guidelines for Middle School Dress (Grades 6-8)**

- GCA middle school students must wear school uniforms obtained through Flynn O'Hara Uniforms Inc. **NOTE-** Only the styles currently for sale are permitted. Several colors and styles of clothing (blue pants, unbranded shirts, etc.), were discontinued following the 2014-2015 school year and, although they were permitted during the transition year of 2015-2016, those items are no longer permitted.
- Uniforms should fit modestly and be neat in appearance.

- Students often grow quickly. Please be aware of the changing needs of your student and mindful that GCA teachers may contact parents if a particular uniform becomes too tight or short.

**NOTE-** Please be aware that only the uniforms currently for sale through Flynn O’Hara will be permitted. These items are listed below. Please visit <http://flynnohara.com> to set up an account for online purchasing options. We highly recommend visiting the Flynn O’Hara retail store where you may try on the styles for proper sizing before purchase:

Flynn O’Hara Uniforms  
 Woods Corner Shopping Center  
 1920 Centerville Tpke #113  
 Virginia Beach, VA 23464  
 (757) 479-2100

### ◆ Middle School Boys’ Dress Code (Grades 6-8)

#### **Pants**

- Flynn O’Hara flat front khaki pants are to be worn. (Alternative pants may be acceptable. A supplemental uniform guide with a list of alternatives is available in the school office.)
- Pants must fit modestly and should not be form-revealing.
- Belts should be worn with all uniform pants.

#### **Shirts**

- Flynn O’Hara Green or White polo shirts (short or long sleeve) with the GCA shield logo may be worn.
- Flynn O’Hara Black Performance Polo shirts with the GCA shield logo may be worn.
- Shirts should remain tucked in at all times.

#### **Shoes**

- Shoes and socks must be worn at all times.
- Open toed shoes, sandals, flip-flops, foam shoes, and ragged tennis shoes are not permitted.

#### **Hair**

- Hair must be neat, clean, and present a groomed and conservative appearance. Hair styles that are associated with worldly forms of entertainment should be avoided.
- Distinct lines or shaved patterns will not be permitted.
- Length
  1. Hair should be off the ears, collar, and eyebrows.
  2. Sideburns should be neatly trimmed and should not extend below the lower opening of the ear.
- Hair should not be dyed any unnatural colors.
- Facial hair of any kind is not permitted.

#### **Accessories**

- No jewelry may be worn other than watches.
- Visible tattoos or any other markings on the skin (temporary or permanent) are not permitted.

### ◆ Middle School Girls’ Dress Code (Grades 6-8)

#### **Skirts and Pants**

- Flynn O’Hara khaki pleated skirts may be worn. Skirts must come to the bottom of the knee at all times.
- Flynn O’Hara khaki flat front girls’ slacks may be worn. (Alternative pants may be acceptable. A supplemental uniform guide with a list of alternatives is available in the school office.)
- Skirts and pants must fit modestly and should not be form-revealing.

#### **Shirts**

- Flynn O’Hara Green or White polo shirts (short or long sleeve) with the GCA shield logo may be worn.
- Flynn O’Hara Green or White Ladies Fitted Shirt with the GCA shield logo may be worn.
- Flynn O’Hara Black Performance Polo shirts with the GCA shield logo may be worn.

**Hair**

- Hair is to be styled neatly, conservatively, and in good taste. Styles that are associated with worldly forms of entertainment should be avoided.
- Hair should not be dyed unnatural colors.
- Girls should not wear their hair extremely short or in a boy’s style.

**Accessories**

- Makeup and jewelry should be conservative and in good taste.
- Piercing jewelry is permitted only in ear lobes.
- Visible tattoos or any other markings on the skin (temporary or permanent) are not permitted.

**Shoes**

- Girls may wear tennis shoes or casual shoes with socks.
- Sandals and flip flops will be permitted as long as they are not of an “athletic” or “beach” nature. Avoid an extremely casual or relaxed look. Foam shoes are not permitted.
- Heels may be no higher than 2 ½ inches as measured from the front of the heel on the sole of the shoe.

**◆ Outerwear for Middle School Students (Grades 6-8)**

Jackets and coats may be worn to school as needed but should be removed for class and indoor school activities. Because students have different levels of comfort regarding temperature, the following forms of outerwear will be permitted in class:

- A solid-colored sweater or fleece may be worn in class.
- GCA-branded sweatshirts, hoodies, jackets, fleeces, and pullovers may be worn in class. These items may be purchased from Flynn O’Hara and in the school office as available.
- Outerwear should be worn over an appropriate classroom top, not as a top or shirt.

**◆ General Guidelines for High School Dress (Grades 9-12)**

**Education-** Gateway Christian Academy does not require 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students to wear a specific uniform. Instead, we hope that by following a dress code, students will be able to learn to choose clothing that speaks to the type of person they, and the institution to which they belong, desire them to become.

**Modesty-** GCA students should dress in a manner that does not draw unnecessary attention to oneself. Fashion should not specifically highlight or draw attention to the body, but rather the face.

**Appropriateness-** It is the desire of GCA that high school students learn to dress in an appropriate manner for the activity in which they are participating.

**Professionalism-** We want the “look” of Gateway students to be neat, orderly, and clean. While societal norms should not dictate our actions or choices, Christians should certainly rise above expectations in all areas including appearance. For this reason, extreme styles of clothing, accessories, makeup, and hairstyle will not be permitted. Visible tattoos, body or facial piercings, or any other markings on the skin will not be permitted.

**◆ High School Boys’ Dress Code (Grades 9-12)**

**Pants**

- Dress pants or casual pants (khaki or Dockers style) should be worn to all classes except P.E.
  1. Blue jeans are not permitted.
  2. Pants with external pockets (cargo pants) are not permitted.

- Pants should fit modestly.
- Pants should be worn with a belt.

#### **Shirts**

- Dress or polo shirts (shirts that have a fold-down collar) should be worn to all classes.
- Shirts with writing, pictures, or slogans should not be worn. (Small logos are permitted)
- Shirts should remain tucked in at all times.

#### **Shoes**

- Shoes and socks must be worn at all times.
- Open toed shoes, sandals, flip-flops, foam clogs, and ragged shoes are not permitted.

#### **Hair**

- Hair must be neat, clean, and present a groomed and conservative appearance. Hair styles that are associated with worldly forms of entertainment should be avoided.
- Distinct lines or shaved patterns will not be permitted.
- Length
  1. Hair should be off the ears, collar, and eyebrows.
  2. Sideburns should be neatly trimmed and should not extend below the lower opening of the ear.
- Hair should not be dyed any unnatural colors.
- Facial hair of any kind is not permitted.

#### **Accessories**

- No jewelry may be worn other than watches and class rings.
- Visible tattoos or any other markings on the skin (temporary or permanent) are not permitted.

### ◆ **High School Girls' Dress Code (Grades 9-12)**

#### **General Guidelines**

- Dresses, skirts, or full-length pants with an appropriate top must be worn to all classes except P.E.
- Tight-fitting (form-revealing) clothing will not be permitted.
- Sheer material, see-through material, or material thin enough to give the illusion of such will be not permitted unless it is over clothing that is obviously within dress code.

#### **Skirts and Dresses**

- All skirts and dresses should fit modestly. Tight or form-revealing clothing will not be permitted.
- Skirts must come to the middle of the knee (center of the patella in the front, bend of the knee in the back) at all times (standing or sitting).
- Slits will be permitted only in the back of the skirt and may not extend any higher than the bend of the knee.
- Specific styles and materials
  1. Button-up skirts will be permitted only if there is sufficient overlap so that the skirt will not part. The bottom button must be close enough to the hemline so as not to open as a slit when sitting or standing.
  2. Jean skirts or pants will not be permitted.
  3. Wrap-around skirts are not permitted.

#### **Pants**

- Pants should fit modestly. Tight or form-revealing clothing will not be permitted.
- Pants should be full-length and of a dress casual (Dockers-style khakis, chinos, etc.) or dress style.
- Pants should be of a boot-cut or wide-leg appearance (not skinny cut or tight against the leg).
- Jeans, capris, sweats, and athletic-styled pants are not permitted.

#### **Tops**

- All tops must have a modest neckline.

1. The general guideline is that the top should be no lower than three finger-widths beneath the top of the sternum.

2. Cleavage should never be seen from any position.

- Tops should be long enough that skin is never visible between the skirt or pant and top.
- Sleeves should cover the shoulders at all times.
- Shirts with writing, pictures, or slogans should not be worn. (Small logos are permitted)
- T-shirts should only be worn as undershirts, not as the primary top.

#### **Shoes**

- Shoes should be in good taste and not overly-casual. Girls may wear tennis shoes or casual shoes with socks.
- Sandals and flip flops will be permitted as long as they are not of an “athletic” or “beach” nature. Avoid an extremely casual or relaxed look. Foam clogs are not permitted.
- Heels may be no higher than 2 ½ inches as measured from the front of the heel on the sole of the shoe.

#### **Hair**

- Hair is to be styled neatly, conservatively, and in good taste. Styles that are associated with worldly forms of entertainment should be avoided.
- Hair should not be dyed unnatural colors.
- Girls should not wear their hair extremely short or in a boy’s style.

#### **Accessories**

- Makeup and jewelry should be conservative and in good taste.
- Piercing jewelry (including clip-on earrings) is permitted only in ear lobes.
- Visible tattoos or any other markings on the skin (temporary or permanent) are not permitted.

#### **◆ Outerwear for High School Students (Grades 9-12)**

Jackets and coats may be worn to school as needed but should be removed for class and indoor school activities. Because students have different levels of comfort regarding temperature, the following forms of outerwear will be permitted in class:

- A solid-colored sweater or fleece may be worn in class.
- GCA-branded sweatshirts, hoodies, jackets, fleeces, and pullovers may be worn in class. These items may be purchased from Flynn O’Hara and in the school office as available.
- Outerwear should be worn over an appropriate classroom top, not as a top or shirt.

#### **◆ Athletic Dress Code (Grades 6-12)**

- The specified P.E. shirt and shorts or pants should be worn during P.E. classes.
- Shorts worn during P.E. and all other athletic events (practices, games, etc.) should reach the knee.
- Shirts should cover the shoulders and fit modestly beneath the arm.
- Shirts worn during athletic events should not contain messages that are opposed to God’s Word or promote worldly ideas, entertainment, or philosophies.
- Students may remain in their P.E. uniforms for any classes, meetings, or study halls after their P.E. class.

#### **◆ Extra-curricular Activities**

Students should be mindful of school dress policies at all school functions (sporting events, school programs, fundraisers, etc.) whether these events are on the campus of GCA or elsewhere. While middle school students are not required to wear their school uniforms and high school students are not required to be in classroom attire, both groups should abide by the following modesty guidelines while attending extra-curricular activities:

- Clothing should be in good taste and appropriate to the event.
- All garments should reach the knees (shorts, skirts, dresses, etc.) and cover the shoulders.
- Tight-fitting or form-revealing apparel will not be permitted.
- There should be sufficient overlap between top and bottom garments that skin will never be visible between them.
- Ladies should not wear low-cut tops. Visible cleavage is never acceptable.
- Messages and images on apparel should not be negative, unbiblical, or promote immoral entertainment.
- Students who, in the discretion of school administration or their representatives, are not in conformity with these guidelines may be asked to leave the event or change clothing and may face disciplinary action.

#### ◆ Dress Code Violations

The following procedures are not intended to punish students who do not comply, but to teach them to abide within the specified dress guidelines and notify them when they are not. When students are deemed to be out of dress code they may be verbally instructed to fix the issue by a teacher. When this is possible and not a recurring issue, a simple verbal warning will be issued. If this is not possible the student may be issued a dress code offense. If the violation is a modesty concern or an obvious violation of the dress code, the student may also be asked to change clothing in order to remain in class. Dress code violations carry the following repercussions:

1<sup>st</sup> offense written warning

2<sup>nd</sup> offense detention

3<sup>rd</sup> offense detention and conference with the parent

4<sup>th</sup> offense High school students will be required to wear the middle school uniform for the remainder of the school year. Middle school students will continue to receive detentions for each subsequent offense.

## VI. Enrollment/Withdrawal Policies

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#### ◆ Admissions Process

1. **INTERVIEW.** Before we ever accept an application or take any enrollment fees, we would love to talk with you about what GCA offers and make sure our school is a good fit for your family. We would like to meet at least one parent and the student. Call the school office at (757) 499-6551 or email [pwerner@gatewaycrusaders.com](mailto:pwerner@gatewaycrusaders.com) to schedule your interview.
2. **APPLY.** Fill out an application and turn it into the office or submit it via email. You may do this when you arrive for your interview or ahead of time if you wish, but we will not enroll students until after the interview. Enrollment fees are due with your application. We will also send for records from previous schools at this time.
3. **ENROLL.** Once we review your application and academic records, we will notify you of our decision via phone call and written notification if requested.

• **Statement of Nondiscrimination-** GCA admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin. In addition, ACA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color and national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, sponsorships/fees/waivers/educational programs and athletic/extra-curricular activities. Gateway Christian Academy does reserve the right to not admit students that we feel we are unable to meet their special educational needs.

This nondiscriminatory Policy of GCA also includes the hiring of faculty or administrative staff.

### ◆ Financial Information

Gateway Christian Academy depends upon tuition for nearly the entire operating budget. Tuition is paid in ten monthly payments beginning in August and continuing through May.

1. Make all tuition, lunch, gift, and other checks payable to Gateway Christian Academy.
2. Tuition may be paid in full prior to the school year or a monthly FACTS automated draft must be authorized.
3. Report cards will be withheld if an account is delinquent.
4. No cumulative records will be released to another school unless all tuition and fees are current.
5. No reduction in charges will be made for absences for any reason.
6. If a FACTS automated draft is unsuccessful after three attempts, the child(ren) will not be able to attend classes until payment is made.
7. There will be a \$25.00 fee charged on all returned checks.
8. If a child is withdrawn from the school, the account will be charged with two additional payments.
9. Before a child can begin a new school year:
  - a. Contract must be turned in.
  - b. Registration and one month tuition must be paid.
  - c. Previous accounts must be paid in full.
10. Students transferring to another school and having attended one or more days of the month will owe the entire month's tuition.

#### **Class Fees**

Some of our high school subjects may require a fee over and above tuition costs. These fees are used to help maintain the equipment and purchase supplies needed to teach the subject.

#### **Textbook Fee**

In order to reduce the cost of school expenses, Gateway Christian Academy will rent the textbooks used at the school. Consumable books (workbooks and other selected books) will be purchased by the student. The book fee is included in the tuition price. Rental books must be returned at the end of the year.

The cost of replacing a lost or damaged book will be added to a student's account. Please do not forget that all rented textbooks must be covered.

### ◆ Withdrawals

A completed withdrawal form must be submitted to the school office by the parent who wishes to withdraw his child(ren). Withdrawals from GCA will incur an additional fee equal to two monthly payments. This will be charged to the current account. In cases of extenuating circumstances, arrangements may be made with the school administration.

## **VII. General Policies**

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### ◆ Office Information

#### **Lost and Found**

Personal articles, clothing, books, etc. will be kept in "lost and found" and may be retrieved in the office. After adequate notice, unclaimed lost and found items will be periodically donated to charity.

#### **Delivering items**

Any book, lunch, or other item that is brought to a student during the day should be left in the school office.

### **Phone Calls**

1. All calls made by students during school hours must be pre-approved by the office.
2. Students should not ask to use the school phone unless it is absolutely necessary.
3. Phone calls will be limited to a maximum of three minutes.
4. Students are not allowed to use cell phones or any other personal communication device during school hours.

### **Digital Technology Resources**

GCA allows students to use the school's computer lab, iPads, and other digital technology when it is beneficial for academic purposes. These resources will generally be available during specified class periods and study halls. They may only be used for academic purposes with specific permission and supervision by a staff member. Students violating these guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action. GCA's computer lab will not typically be available outside of school hours.

Students are encouraged to store academic projects in cloud-based storage (Dropbox, Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive, Box, etc.) for easy retrieval from all school devices.

Students are encouraged to bring their own headphones/earbuds for use with GCA's devices.

### **Personal Electronic Devices**

Students will not be allowed to have personal electronic devices capable of connecting to Wi-Fi or cellular services on their person while in the school buildings from 7:55-3:30. This includes, but is not limited to: cell phones, tablets, personal computers, and smart watches. All personal electronic devices should be powered down and left in a locker. Personal electronic devices will also not be permitted in before or after care.

Personal electronic devices in a student's possession will be taken to the school office and will be returned only to a parent. The student will also be subject to disciplinary action. Headphones and earbuds should not be used on campus or school-provided transportation at any time except for specific academic purposes as permitted by a teacher.

### **Illness**

If a student is ill enough to be out of class he/she is ill enough to be at home resting quietly, or if needed, taken to a doctor. For this reason, we will contact the parent to come to pick up the child. A child should never be sent to school with a fever or a known communicable illness.

## **◆ School Programs and Resources**

### **Library**

A library is provided for the Gateway Christian Academy students where they will find reference books as well as other wholesome books for their reading enjoyment. Books may be checked out for two weeks at a time. Overdue books will incur a charge of \$.25 per day.

### **Music Classes**

1. We are pleased to be able to offer choir classes to both junior high and high school students.
2. Piano and other private instrument lessons are offered, as available, to junior high and high school students. Many times there is a waiting list for these classes. There is an extra charge which is billed each month. Class work missed during these lessons must be made up. Lessons missed because of snow days or any reason attributed to the school or teacher (except scheduled off days) will be made up. However, any days missed by the student for any other reason will not necessarily be made up. Students who frequently miss their lessons because of forgotten books or those who consistently fail to do the required work may be dropped.

### **Lunch Program**

A well-balanced and nutritious lunch program supplied by our own ably-staffed kitchen is made available to our students and staff. Meals may be bought on a day-to-day basis using MySchoolAccount. A price list and menu is provided each year. If a student forgets his/her lunch, one will be provided and will be charged to his/her MySchoolAccount.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are taken at various grade levels to enhance the academic program during the school year. These trips will be announced as planned and will require a permission slip from the parent. Field trip fees will be added to monthly FACTS payments with parental permission.

### **Parent-Teacher Meetings**

Each parent is urged to attend Parent-Teacher meetings and school programs. Check the school schedule for the dates and times.

## **◆ Property Regulations**

### **Hours of Operation**

Students are only allowed in school buildings from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on school days unless accompanied by a faculty member. Any student still on campus after 3:30 must be under the supervision of a staff member or in aftercare. Students in aftercare must be signed out in the school office. Aftercare charges will apply.

### **Leaving School Property**

Permission must be granted through the school office and students must sign the register in the school office before leaving the school property during the school day.

### **Visitors**

Parents and visitors are welcome to visit Gateway Christian Academy. We do request that an appointment be made first. All visitors must register in the school office and wear the issued identification while on campus.

Our teachers are always willing to discuss your child's progress or problems before and after school. We ask that you do not disturb them during class.

A student wishing to bring a visitor to the school must first obtain permission of the administration as well as the teacher.

### **Automobiles**

It is a privilege for students to be able to bring a car to school. The following regulations apply:

1. Cars are not to be occupied during school hours; students are not to sit in parked cars while waiting for school to begin. These regulations also apply for cars parked on campus during after-school activities, sports events, etc.
2. Each driver should practice courteous driving habits.
3. Reckless driving on school grounds may result in disciplinary action and ultimately the loss of the privilege to drive to school.
4. Student drivers are not to drive other students without parental permission and approval of the administration.
5. Students are to park their cars in the parking lot in front of the church building.



## VIII. Contact Information

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Location/Mailing Address

Gateway Christian Academy  
5473 Virginia Beach Blvd.  
Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Phone (757) 499-6551  
Fax (757) 519-9824  
Email [pwerner@gatewaycrusaders.com](mailto:pwerner@gatewaycrusaders.com)  
Website [www.GatewayCrusaders.com](http://www.GatewayCrusaders.com)  
RenWeb [www.renweb.com](http://www.renweb.com)

## IX. Administration and Leadership

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Gateway FWB Church Pastor ..... Brent Patrick  
GCA Head of School ..... Jeff Postlewaite  
GCA Steering Committee ..... Oscar Bernal  
Arnie Bulaski III  
Dawn Freeman  
Greg Holestin  
Craig Pace

## Appendix

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### ◆ Chronological List of Recent Updates to this Handbook

#### 2017-2018

- ◆ Graduation Requirements (pg. 6)
  - P.E. credit for athletic participation beginning in the fall of 2017
- ◆ Academic Honors (pg. 7)
  - Valedictorian and Salutatorian tiebreakers clarified
- ◆ Office Information (pg. 17)
  - Lost and found policy clarified
  - Cell Phone policy to repeat the same consequence for each offence after the second

#### 2018-2019

- ◆ GCA's Foundations added (pg. 9)
- ◆ Parking, Pick Up and Drop Off Traffic Pattern (pg. 22)
  - New pattern explained and illustrated

#### 2019-2020

- ◆ Academic Honors- Valedictorian and Salutatorian tie allowed (pg. 7)
- ◆ Tardy policy updated (pg. 7-8)
- ◆ Section on class attendance policies added (pg. 8)
- ◆ References to the Student Council removed from Class Officers section (pg. 8)
- ◆ Referral procedure added to discipline section (pg. 10)
- ◆ Shoe guidelines clarified for all parties (pg. 14-17)

#### 2020-2021

- ◆ Dress Code- Alternative pants option added (pg. 14)
- ◆ Dress Code- Outerwear options expanded (pg. 15 and 17)
- ◆ Excused tardies clarified (pg. 8)
- ◆ Digital Technology Resources and Personal Electronic Devices policy updated (pg. 19-20)
- ◆ Lunch Program updated to include MySchoolAccount (pg. 20)
- ◆ Field Trips- fees added to FACTS account (pg. 20)
- ◆ Afternoon Pickup- wording clarified to reflect best practices

#### 2021-2022

- ◆ Admissions Processes clarified (pg. 18)
- ◆ Administrative Discretion Clarified (pg. 22)



# Gateway

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

5473 Virginia Beach Blvd  
Virginia Beach, VA 23462

757.499.6551

[www.gatewaycrusaders.com](http://www.gatewaycrusaders.com)

