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# **Parent/Student Handbook 2025-2026**

## **Helena Christian School**

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## MESSAGE FROM ADMINISTRATOR

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

We have compiled this handbook to give full expression of our covenant with you as a Christian educational community. It covers everything from academics to dress codes. To be as thorough as possible and to clarify things that might be new to you, we may revise the handbook as needed. Although we make every effort to be precise and clear, there are times when mistakes or misprints happen. We will try to update or revise this handbook as soon as possible should such mistakes occur.

Since this handbook includes most of the general parameters of school life, it is important that every parent/guardian and student read through the entire handbook to become familiar with its content. Students and parents/guardians are responsible for following the procedures and rules outlined in this book. Since our students and parents/guardians will be held accountable to these standards, it is our hope that this handbook will be an invaluable tool to our parents/guardians and students as we partner to facilitate the growth of the students from adolescents into responsible, educated adults.

Information, rules, procedures, and the like are important to help the community operate smoothly and fairly within these boundaries. The spirit of this handbook is to allow HCS to operate in a way that gives glory and honor to Christ and dignity to His people. It is with that explicit and heartfelt sense that we offer this edition of the HCS Parent/Student Handbook, hoping that His name will be glorified in all we do.

In Christ,

Ted Clark, Superintendent

## HCS STUDENT COVENANT

This Student Covenant is a guide for while you are attending Helena Christian School (HCS). The responsibility lies with each student to read and become thoroughly acquainted with the Parent/Student Handbook.

Our prayer is that students will cultivate a love for Jesus Christ, His Word, prayer and all the qualities that should be the passion of each and every believer. We believe that the Scriptures establish certain principles which should guide and govern the conduct of every Christian through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

However, some of our standards are designed for the well-being of the school and our entire campus community and are not necessarily to be considered biblical. Your attendance states that while you may not agree with each of the standards of HCS, you will strive to maintain them while a student. Our intention is not to be legalistic but instead to promote a culture that honors God.

For example, we have expectations about things such as phone and computer usage, dress code, and social media. While none of these are bad in and of themselves, we have learned they can take away from focus on studies, personal devotional times, and interpersonal relationships along with inhibiting camaraderie among the student body and staff. We have not eliminated these areas entirely but we have reduced the use of them at times. Again, this is not a “legalistic fix-all.” We just hope this will help in the process of overcoming some of the cultural influences that devalue the Christian life and keep us from more fully knowing our God.

We are aware that the observance of regulations does not necessarily indicate that one is living a life of full commitment to Christ. However, the willingness to adhere to these regulations exhibits a maturity and spiritual concern for everyone and is generally characteristic of those diligently seeking to do God’s will.

We look forward to having you with us and embarking on this journey toward a more intimate and exciting life with Jesus Christ. **Our desire is to help you own your faith and build your life’s foundation on Jesus Christ.**

May the Lord richly bless you on this journey with Him,

HCS Administration and Staff

## **INTRODUCTION**

Helena Christian School (HCS) is a private, Christ-centered non-denominational Christian school with teacher-directed classes for preschool through twelfth grade. Helena Christian School, Inc. is a non-profit corporation that is governed by a board of directors made up of Christians from churches throughout the Helena community.

HCS exists to assist Christian parents in their God-given responsibility of training their children according to Biblical principles. We recognize that for Christian parents there is no greater responsibility than the consistent training of their children in the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Our Christ-centered school functions as an extension of the Christian home and church in helping to fulfill parental responsibilities, not only for success in this life but also for life everlasting.

The spiritual program is approached in a non-denominational manner through Bible classes, prayer in the classroom, teacher and administrative counseling, a positive discipline program and chapel services in which many Helena area pastors participate.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY**

Helena Christian School values each student as created in God's image. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. Helena Christian School, Inc. admits and does not discriminate against students of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin. Helena Christian School, Inc. does not discriminate in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial policies, or athletic policies.

## HELENA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative, inerrant Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21).
2. We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28:19, John 10:30).
3. We believe in the deity of Christ (John 10:33), His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:35), His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15, 7:26), His miracles (John 2:11), His vicarious and atoning death (I Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 2:9), His Resurrection (John 11:25, I Corinthians 15:4), His Ascension to the right hand of God (Mark 16:19), His personal return in power and glory (Acts 1:11, Revelation 9:11).
4. We believe in the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature and that men are justified on the single ground of faith in the shed blood of Christ and that only by God's grace and through faith alone are we saved (John 3:16-19, 5:24; Romans 3:23, 5:8-9; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:5)
5. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, and they that are lost unto the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:28- 29).
6. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9, I Corinthians 2:12-13, Galatians 3:26-28).
7. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life (Romans 8:13-14, I Corinthians 3:16, 6:19-20; Ephesians 4:30, 5:18).
8. We believe that the term *marriage* has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18, 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God's command is that there be no sexual intimacy outside of or apart from marriage between a man and a woman.
9. We believe that God wonderfully foreordained and immutably created each person as either male or female in conformity with their biological sex. These two distinct yet complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27).

Our Statement of Faith is not exhaustive of all our beliefs. The Bible, as the inspired and infallible Word of God, speaks with absolute authority regarding the proper conduct of mankind and is the unchanging foundation for all belief and behavior. The HCS Board of Directors holds the final interpretive authority on biblical meaning and application with regard to faith, doctrine, policy, practice, and discipline.



## **MOTTO/TAG LINE**

Educate • Build • Inspire

## **VISION STATEMENT**

Following Christ's call to impact the world.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Educate students with academic excellence and biblical training, build Godly character, and inspire them to a life of service to their Savior.

## **SCHOOL VERSE**

"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." - Micah 6:8

## **CORE VALUES "CLEAR"**

*Community* of Believers--Being led by God while partnering in unity to accomplish the school's mission. (Ephesians 4:3)

*Leadership* by Christ's Example--Encouraging others in their pursuit of Christ by reflecting Christ's character while fulfilling the roles in which I have been placed. (Hebrews 10:24)

*Excellence* in all things--Achieving my best in the school, the home, the church and the community; to do as unto the Lord. (Colossians 3:23)

*Accountability* on all levels--Answering to God & others for my speech, actions and attitude. (Romans 14:12)

*Respect* for everyone, everywhere--Being more like Jesus by exhibiting kindness, righteousness and humility. (John 13:34-35)

## **PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

The Christian Philosophy of Education is unique when contrasted to all other philosophies. Most educational philosophies place man at the center with a decidedly humanistic theme. The Christian school philosophy places God at the center and seeks to view life in every dimension from God's perspective. God is the Creator of all things. "In Him we live, move and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

We believe that God is the Creator of all things and is the author of all truth, and that all truth and life are traceable back to God. Hence the educational process must never remove the author of knowledge.

We believe that the Bible is very explicit in its establishment of the family unit. We further believe that parents are responsible to "bring up their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). It is our desire to assist parents in their God-given responsibilities to train their children. For the school to truly function in this capacity there must be continuous communication between the school and home in order that each student may receive maximum benefit.

We believe that man was created in God's own image but has had that image tainted through the sin of Adam. Man is basically sinful and needs to be re-born into a right relationship with God. We believe our primary goal through instruction and counsel is two-fold: to provide a positive atmosphere where academic excellence is expected and where Christ-centered growth is encouraged.

In keeping with these convictions, the educational program at Helena Christian seeks to keep Christ central. This, we believe, is accomplished by following guidelines set down for us in the Word and through the living revelation of His Son "in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3).

We further believe that this Biblio-centric view should extend to all areas of the student's educational experience; therefore, every attempt is made to integrate the principles of faith and learning so that each child will truly develop a Christian world-view and will live a life that brings glory and honor to God.

## COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In Matthew 18:15-17 we are admonished by the Lord to follow certain procedures when we have a disagreement with our brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ. Consequently, we expect parents and students to communicate forthrightly about problems or concerns regarding policies established at Helena Christian. Please follow the proper line of authority in all dealings:

Parent/Student  
Teacher/Coach  
Principal/Athletic Director  
Superintendent/Administrator  
Board of Directors

Let us not be sowers of discord or ministers of suspicion and criticism, but rather let us follow the Biblical pattern shown us in Philippians 4:8-9, “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are pure...”

## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Complete immunization records shall be required for all preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students unless an exemption has been filed (Section 20-5-403, MCA). New students entering HCS at any grade level are required to present evidence of up-to-date immunizations before they will be admitted to HCS. In the event of a community outbreak, non-immunized children may be required to remain at home until the outbreak has ceased or until they have received proper immunizations (i.e. Chicken pox, etc.).

## SCHOOL HOURS

School begins at 8:10am and releases no later than 3:15pm. Early releases or adjusted hours will be communicated via weekly emailed newsletters. Students will **not** be supervised and the school building is not open before 7:30am. Students need to be picked up from the school by 3:20pm unless enrolled in the after-school care program or attending a team meeting or school function. Parents/guardians must make arrangements for timely drop-off and pick-up of their students. Students not picked up will automatically be placed in after-school care and related fees will be billed.

School personnel and HCS **are not liable** for students waiting for rides home after classes have concluded for the day. Students are not allowed to wait unsupervised on school property unless permitted by the administrator to do so.

## ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Because parents are primarily responsible for the training and education of their children, we at HCS expect parents to daily review any homework assignments that, in some cases, may require a parental signature. Completion of homework assignments is the responsibility of both

the parent(s) and the student.

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND: A parent's attitude towards school can directly affect their student's attitude toward school and their schoolwork.

We feel that it is vitally important for parents to take an active role in the education of their children, particularly in helping them develop a sense of responsibility and good work habits at home.

The following guidelines for daily homework are intended to achieve a balance between family, church commitments, and student academic growth. Teachers will attempt to assign homework in a judicious manner with consideration given to Wednesday night church meetings and special family times such as long weekends and holidays. (**Please note:** This does not mean a total prohibition on homework.)

The times below are an average total daily amount of homework for an average student and vary by individual teacher and student ability.

- **Kindergarten:** 5-10 minutes daily
- **1st Grade:** 5-10 minutes daily
- **2nd Grade:** 10-20 minutes daily
- **3rd Grade:** 20-30 minutes daily
- **4th Grade:** 30-40 minutes daily
- **5th Grade:** 40-50 minutes daily
- **6th Grade:** 50-60 minutes daily
- **7-8th Grades:** 60-90 minutes daily
- **9-12th Grades:** 90-120 minutes daily

In addition to keeping up with their student's academic progress at home, parents are encouraged to attend all offered meetings and conferences scheduled during the year.

Your participation will indicate to your child the value you place on their education. One of the best ways to show your involvement is to visit the school, volunteer for events, or classroom activities at the school.

In order to further enhance your child's academic success at HCS, we encourage parents to have a reasonable bedtime for their children. We also suggest you daily spend time with your children, read to them, pray with them, and encourage them. Please inform your child's teacher of any problems or changes at home that may affect your child's performance.

Since the academics at HCS are designed for college preparation, parents/guardians can be of help to their students by providing an atmosphere conducive to study in the evenings and on weekends. It is also important that the students possess a teachable spirit and a desire to learn. Each student needs to cultivate a sense of ownership concerning the learning process, doing all his or her work as unto the Lord. Self-motivation, self-discipline, and responsibility are essential ingredients in the learning process. Mutual respect between teachers, students and

parents/guardians will create an atmosphere in which learning will flourish. Parental/guardian support concerning the purpose of the school is essential. An important part of education is developing the study habits that will allow students to be successful. At HCS all students will be afforded that opportunity.

## **Grading**

The standard of excellence for a Christian should be to continually strive toward conforming to the image that God has set for us. His standard is to be our sole measuring stick. Since scholastic achievement must be measured, the following grading system will be used:

Preschool does not receive grades and are assessed on milestones and development issues which will be discussed with parents at parent/teacher meetings as needed.

### K–2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

O	=	Outstanding
S	=	Satisfactory
P	=	Passing
N	=	Needs Improvement
U	=	Unsatisfactory

### 3<sup>rd</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> Grades

Students will be graded employing the following numerical scale:

Letter Grade	Grade point average	Numerical Average
A	4.0	93–100
A-	4.0	90-92
B+	3.0	87-89
B	3.0	83–86
B-	3.0	80-82
C+	2.0	77-79
C	2.0	73-76
C-	2.0	70-72
D+	1.0	67-69
D	1.0	63-66
D-	1.0	60-62*
F	0.0	Below 60

\*60 and above is passing

Students who do not maintain a GPA of 2.0 may be placed on academic probation and/or expelled from HCS at the discretion of the principal and/or superintendent. Parents will be notified by the FACTS SIS system by email of any failing grades or concerns.

## **Late Assignment Policy (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

One of the purposes of homework is to help students develop a personal habit of meeting deadlines and personal responsibility. Missing work refers to assignments that have not been turned in by their clearly-stated deadline. The following academic penalties shall be applied (but are not applicable to missing work that is late due to excused absence, whose procedures are explained in the Parent/Student Handbook):

- 1 day late – 10% of corresponding points deducted
- 2 days late – 20% of corresponding points deducted
- 3 days late – 30% of corresponding points deducted
- 4 or more days late – grade becomes a zero

## **Honor Roll (6-12 Grades)**

To encourage academic excellence, HCS recognizes 6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade students who have performed well academically and received the following grade point average (GPA) standards:

High Honor Roll: 3.7 or higher GPA

Honor Roll: 3.20-3.69 GPA

## **Graduation Honors**

Valedictorian and salutatorian graduate honors are selected by an administrative committee. Grade point average (GPA) is the primary factor in determining honors, however, other factors may be considered such as class choices, community involvement, involvement in school programs, character, etc. Students must have earned a majority of their high school credits from HCS to be eligible for honors.

## **Graduation Requirements**

Total graduation credits required: **twenty-four (24)**

Bible_____	4 credits*
History_____	4 credits
English/Literature _____	4 credits
Mathematics_____	3 credits
Science_____	3 credits
Physical Education/Health_____	1 credit
Fine Arts_____	1 credits
Electives_____	4 credits

\* Bible credit is based on the number of years that a student attends high school at HCS. A student who does not attend HCS all four years of high school only needs one Bible credit for each year of attendance at HCS.

**Note:** For students who elect to take additional core subjects, those credits will count toward a student's required elective credits.

As a practice, Helena Christian School does not offer early graduation. For clarification or questions, see the Principal or Superintendent.

### **Transfer Credits**

Students with high school credits that transfer into HCS will have their transcripts and records reviewed by the administrative team. HCS reserves the right to refuse transfer credits or exclude them from eligibility for consideration in GPA and honors selection.

### **Additional Academic Opportunities**

Students who have shown great motivation, faithfully attend school, hold high academic standards, and maintain good time management skills may request to take advantage of additional academic opportunities. Each request will be evaluated individually and solutions provided based on the student's unique circumstances, abilities, and skills.

Students seeking additional opportunity classes during school hours and/or receive high school credit on their transcript from Helena Christian School, must receive approval from the administrator before they enroll in any classes.

If you have any questions about the processes or opportunities discussed below, please reach out to the principal.

The following are additional opportunities for student advancement:

#### **Math Advancement**

Parents may request their student be tested by the school for consideration to advance in math. Once testing is completed, the HCS committee will determine student's acceptance based on testing results, attendance, and academic commitment.

#### **PE Credit**

High School students at HCS can earn physical education credit in four different ways. Students are invited to participate in our athletic opportunities during the two different sports seasons (fall and winter), HCS PE class, or HCS health class. A health class, sports officiating, or similar PE based class may be taken through the MTDA or other approved online educational institution. Students may also request to complete their required 1 credit of Physical Education by completing an approved outside activity. Approval must be requested prior to moving forward with a formal plan.

#### **Online Academic Core Classes and Elective Options**

Prior to going forward with your plans for your student, the school requires parents to get approval for any Montana Digital Academy (MTDA), dual-credit, college, university or

outside credits from the administration. Students and parents must sign a contract that allows us to know that you and your student understand that the work in these classes may be outside of our curriculum and religious guidelines, as well as, potentially require more work, different deadlines, and may result in lower grades. If a student chooses to take a high school or dual-credit course outside of HCS, the grade for that course will be applied to our transcript at Helena Christian School following HCS's grading scale.

Be aware, this may affect a student's GPA and academic standing. These opportunities offer a great supplement to our curriculum at Helena Christian School. Students interested in taking advantage of this program understand that these credits must be earned on-site (at HCS) but through an online platform.

Students are allowed to complete one (1) required core class per year from an outside educational institution with prior approval from the HCS administration. Seniors who are taking a dual-credit class after the first three periods, have the latitude to leave and attend an in-person class at a local college.

### **Academic Eligibility (5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

HCS desires for each student to do well academically. Therefore, when a student's grades indicate a need for greater study time, the eligibility system assists the student in keeping a healthy balance between schoolwork and extracurricular activities. Student grades will be reviewed weekly. If a student has below a 2.0 grade point average, one F, or two Ds, they are academically ineligible to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities until grades are improved and administrative approval is received to resume activities. Ineligible students are not allowed to participate in athletic events, worship team, student council, or any other activity deemed by the administration to be extracurricular for the specified time (i.e. 1 week). Students will be notified in person and the parents, Athletic Director, and coaches will be notified by email. The administration will work with students in the SSP (Student Services Program) on guidelines for their specific requirements for eligibility.

### **Academic Probation (5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

The principal and superintendent regularly review student grades. Students are put on Academic Warning if they finish a quarter or a semester with an F as their final grade. If a student finishes a quarter with an F, they will be required to improve that grade by completing a second quarter in that semester that will average their semester grade to a D or above. If a student finishes a semester with an F, they will be required to make up work/credits via HCS Summer School (if offered) or an agreed-upon program with administrative approval.

### **Report Card**

Student's current grades are available online at <https://factsmgt.com/>. Parents can request a report of their student's grades from the HCS office as well.



The purpose of report cards at each quarter helps to indicate to the student and parents areas of academic strength and weakness shown during the most recent grading period.

Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents will receive a report card at Parent/Teacher Conferences in the fall. They may request one to be sent home in the spring.

Students in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade will also receive a report card at their Parent/Teacher Conference if their parent elects to have a conference.

Report cards for students in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades are a checkpoint for students to see how they are doing at a halfway point through the semester. Students will only receive semester grades as final grades on their transcript. Students in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> may also receive a report card at a Parent/Teacher Conference, however, they must request a transcript from the office by filling out the Transcript Request Form.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held twice per academic year. It is vital to the success of our students that the parents and teachers are on the same page and working toward the same goals for their student(s). Fall conferences for elementary students will be required. Middle school and high school parents may elect to have a fall conference. Spring conferences are reserved for ineligible students, Student Services Program (SSP) students, or anyone on academic probation. If you cannot attend at your scheduled date/time, please email the teacher(s) and/or the office and schedule an alternate date/time.

In an effort to partner with parents, a conference may be requested and scheduled at any time during the year. Parents can request conferences for academic, behavior, or social concerns.

## **ATTENDANCE / TARDIES**

**Attending school is a critical component of any student's education. Missing class means that a student misses the important instruction given by the teacher and the discussion between other students and the teacher. Therefore, an attendance policy has been established which determines whether credit is earned for coursework.**

*Any elementary student who is absent more than **ten (10) days** during a semester may not be eligible to be promoted to the next grade level. A review process with the HCS administration will need to be initiated to make an exception to the policy.*

*Any middle school/high school student who is absent more than **ten (10) class meetings** or **10% of a course** during a semester will not receive points for their daily participation grades and their in-class work/participation assignments.*

*In the event a student is absent more than **twenty (20) class meetings** or **20% of the semester***

*they will automatically lose credit in that course. Parents may petition the administration if there are extenuating circumstances.*

*When a student exceeds the absences listed above, their parents will need to meet with the appropriate administrative personnel. This may result in students being required to attend HCS Summer School, complete online credit recovery or other comparable approved credit avenues.*

## **Absences**

- If your child is too sick to come to school, please take him or her to a physician or keep your child home for the day.
  - Students should not be sent to school if they have had a fever or vomited in the 24 hours prior to arriving at school.
- When a student is absent from school, the parent/guardian must call or email the office before 8:30 a.m. to verify the absence.
  - If a call is not received, the office will contact the parent/guardian to confirm their student is absent.
  - Upon returning to school on the same day he or she is reported absent, the student must sign in at the office.
  - When a student returns to school from a medical appointment or medical absence the student must bring a note from the health care provider.
  - Students who drive themselves to appointments must have written or verbal permission from their parents prior to leaving.
  - We request that, if possible, all medical appointments be made during study hall or after school hours.
  - To communicate effectively, it is important that parents and guardians provide HCS with up-to-date phone numbers and other contact information.
  - **Make-up work**
    - Make-Up work with credit will be given for allowed absences, sickness and pre-planned trips.
    - Unplanned Absences
      - A student has the same number of days (consecutive) to make up an assignment as the number of days he or she was absent in a row (consecutive), to a maximum of five (5) days due to illness or injury.
        - For example, if a student misses a Monday, then returns for Tuesday, their work is due on Wednesday. If the student is then absent again that Wednesday, their work still needs to be submitted by their parents or siblings that Wednesday.
      - It is the **student's responsibility** to ask for and make up missed work.
      - When a student is absent, they can and should check FACTS SIS/Google Classroom to find assignments and communicate with their teachers as needed.
    - Planned Absences

- If a student's work was clearly assigned before the absence (i.e. planned family vacation) the student should be prepared to turn in homework and/or take tests the day he or she returns.
  - **Work assigned before the absence which falls due on the date of absence or the following day should be turned in the day the student returns to school. Tests assigned before the absence which fall due on the date of absence should be taken the day the student returns to school.** This may be done during class or during study hall at the teacher's discretion.
  - Students are responsible for turning in all assignments missed because of absence from class. This requirement also applies when students are in school, but have missed class because of a special activity.
  - In either case, the student should confer with the teacher and clearly understand the due date of each assignment.
- **Late Arrivals**
    - K-5 students who arrive after 10:30 a.m. will be considered absent for a half day.
      - Arrival after 12:00 p.m. will be considered a full day's absence at the discretion of the office.
    - Students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> who miss 4 periods will be considered absent for a half day.
      - Missing 5 or more periods will be considered a full day absence. (12<sup>th</sup> grade or part time students' attendance will run on a scale based on their individual schedules)
    - Students must be signed in and out of the office by a parent or approved adult or have written or verbal permission from their parents if they drive themselves.
      - The time, reason, and signature on the Check In/Out sheet is required to avoid misunderstandings or miscommunications with the school.
    - Senior students who have completed their required classes for the day may sign themselves out at the office without parent signatures.
      - If they choose to return, they must sign back in at the office.
- Approved Absences *not counted toward the semester attendance policy stated above*
    - Medical appointments (*for the student being seen only*)
    - Medically necessary absences (*With a doctor's note of a specific time frame*)
    - Death in the family
    - School Approved Events/Sports (*for the participating athlete*)
    - College Visits (up to 3 school days/year)
    - Car Accident
  - Unapproved Absences *count toward the semester attendance policy stated above (not an exhaustive list)*
    - Sickness
      - Extenuating circumstances: If a student is hospitalized or exceptionally

sick for a sufficient duration, the parents/guardians must make an appointment with the school administration to discuss their student receiving credit after an extended absence.

- Sibling's sports/appointments
- Vacations/Family Trips
- Bad Roads (*unless approved by school administration*)
- Oversleeping/Tiredness
- Etc.

### **Medication and At-School Illness Requirements**

Any student under medical care which requires the student to receive special care while in school, i.e. change in activity, observation of signs and symptoms of worsening condition, special medications or treatments, etc., must bring to school a written letter from their doctor informing the school of the student's condition and instructions for the care of that student while at school. Distribution of over the counter medications (i.e. Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc.) will not be given to students unless in a medical emergency; such as Benadryl or EpiPens.

If, in the judgment of the school, a student should be sent home because of illness or injury, parents/guardians are expected to pick up the student as soon as possible. Students may drive themselves home if they are able to do so and their parents/guardians have given the school permission to release them.

### **Early Releases/Appointments**

The school may grant an early dismissal for emergencies and for appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours. All other activities should be scheduled after school hours. Please note:

1. All parents must sign their student out at the office. Parents should notify the office in advance of an upcoming appointment or need to take their student early.
2. Students who have their own transportation and need an early dismissal must report to the office and sign out before leaving. Those students also need parental permission to sign themselves out.
3. Students excused for a medical or dental appointment are expected to return to school at the end of the appointment, if time permits, and are to check in at the office **immediately** upon returning to campus.

### **Tardies**

Arriving to class late disrupts the classroom. Every effort should be made to be at school on time.

1. Tardies to school – Students that are not in their required classroom when the first bell rings, apart from approved medical or emergency reasons (*listed above*), will be

recorded as a tardy when they arrive during that period.

- a. Parents/guardians should not allow students to sleep in and come to school later in the morning as they miss important instruction.
  - b. If a student arrives late due to an appointment, only that student will be marked as an approved tardy. Siblings will receive an unapproved tardy.
2. Tardies to class (other than 1<sup>st</sup> period) – Class tardiness and consequences are handled by the teacher.
3. Students in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>:
  - a. A fourth tardy to school/1<sup>st</sup> period in the same quarter will result in an automatic after school detention, as will each subsequent tardy.
4. Students in K-5<sup>th</sup> grades:
  - a. Excessive tardy consequences will be handled in cooperation with the principal and parent.
5. For any excessive tardiness, the administrator may intervene. This may include a meeting with the student and parent/guardians to rectify the problem.

## **BEHAVIOR POLICY**

### **Bullying**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious and lasting problems.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

1. An Imbalance of Power: kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
2. Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying will not be tolerated. This includes cyber or other electronic bullying or harassment.

### **Gambling**

Gambling of any kind at HCS is not to be tolerated. This is a violation of state law for a minor.

## **Illegal Substances**

Students are prohibited from using, possessing, distributing, purchasing or selling alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, marijuana, vaping products and like substances/devices. This includes on campus, off campus, at school-sponsored events and outside the school parameters (as outlined in the Student Covenant). Students at HCS represent the school and the Lord. Usage of these substances/devices is grounds for dismissal from school. The school reserves the right to search lockers, backpacks, purses, clothing, cars, etc. if the situation warrants.

## **Plagiarism Defined and Explained**

Everyone who submits work to the school must be the author of his/her own work. When a student uses facts, content, or ideas originating with others, he/she must make it clear what is his or her work and what is not.

Failure to make such a distinction is to be guilty of offering as one's own what is in fact someone else's (plagiarism). To misrepresent one's own work knowingly is to defraud the school and, more seriously, the Lord. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and will be dealt with accordingly. All students in grades 6th-12th are required to sign that they read and agree to abide by the Parent/Student Handbook which includes the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) to include an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Plagiarism policy. However, these policies are applicable to all HCS students.

Any and all plagiarism will result in an automatic "0" score on the assignment the student plagiarized. Additionally, due to the severity of this issue, the student may also receive further disciplinary action. If the behavior continues the consequences will escalate at the discretion of the school administration.

## **Cheating**

On the first offense for cheating on homework, quiz, test, and/or paper, etc. the student will meet with the school administration and at a minimum, may receive a zero on the assignment.

On subsequent offenses, students will meet with the administration to decide consequences.

Cheating offenses apply to any cheating incident before, during or after school in any class and on any assignment. Cheating offenses are cumulative throughout the academic year. This policy will apply to any student who cheats or enables another student to cheat.

## **Public Displays of Affection (PDA) or Physical Touch**

The administration and faculty at HCS recognizes the importance of relationships within the student body. We also recognize that in the teenage years, physical touch can become very hard to interpret for the participants. With that realization, we ask that there be no excessive physical contact between students that could be misconstrued. We are not seeking to eliminate a quick hug of appreciation or a pat on the back for a job well done. We are, however, seeking

to eliminate the hand-holding and the type of physical touch that would be inappropriate in the school environment. PDA/Physical Touch will result in a request to stop the activity. If the behavior persists it may result in further disciplinary action.

### **Weapons**

NO weapons of any kind—including handguns, rifles, knives or any martial arts weaponry—may be brought onto HCS school grounds unless preauthorization from the administration is granted for a special reason, such as for an assignment or speaker’s visual aid.

## **BEHAVIORAL CONSEQUENCES**

### **Detention**

For all detentions, parents will be notified via email and the student will serve a detention. Detentions will take precedence over other activities (including sports). Multiple detentions may result in further disciplinary action up to and including removal from the school.

### **Suspensions**

If the administration determines that a student’s infraction(s) is serious enough to warrant a more severe consequence than detention, the student may be given an in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension. In-school suspension means that the student will be required to be at school, in a predetermined location, and will work on school work while being removed from the student body. Sleeping and laziness will not be permitted. Suspension out-of-school means that the student will not be permitted on campus during the assigned days, however, their school work will be due as if they were in attendance. Duration of suspension will be determined by the administration.

### **Disciplinary Probation**

If a student has had several disciplinary issues (i.e. multiple detentions), the administration may place them on disciplinary probation. This simply means that should the student let his/her grades drop (in the case of academic warning) or should he/she be involved in a serious rule infraction (in the case of suspension) during their probation, his/her actions may result in dismissal from the school.

### **Dismissals**

When the administration determines that a student may need to be dismissed from HCS, every effort will be made to work with the parents and the student to resolve the issue at hand. If a dismissal is enforced, the parent will meet with the administrator and be informed of that action. Final determination in the matter of dismissal lies with the administrator.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Electronic Devices

*The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) applies to cell phones, tablets, smart watches, computers, and any similar electronic devices. See Appendix A.*

There will be no personal electronic devices permitted in before school care, during class time or in after-school care for elementary students.

**\*\*6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>** students are allowed to be on their school managed devices prior to the beginning of school, but are only to be used for school work. The 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students may use their phones during lunch (except on no-phone days as determined by administration).

At the start of the school day, students must **turn off** and keep their cell phones in their locker. Cell phones must remain off until lunch, may be used at lunch, then be turned off again until the end of the school day. If they ring during class time, the phone may be removed by an administrator or teacher from the locker, turned off and held until the student picks it up. If a student needs to make a phone call at any time during the day, he/she may go to the office and, with permission, use the school phone to make a call.

**Phone Free Fridays:** Phone Free Fridays have been implemented to encourage student interaction and socialization during lunch. On Fridays, students will not be allowed to use their phones or other devices during the lunch period.

Use of computers during school hours or on school WiFi are for purposes of school work ONLY. All student devices (personal or school provided) and the activity on them will be monitored for academic focus and student safety.

Grades K-5<sup>th</sup>: May use school devices only and with the permission of teachers.

Grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>: Will be issued a school-monitored device. These will be used during class as the teacher permits.

Grades 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>: May bring a personal computer (no tablets) to class. These will be used during class as the teacher permits.

If a student is caught using an electronic device inappropriately in class or out of class during the school day, the administrator will keep the device for the rest of the school day; the student can pick it up at the end of the school day. Repeated offenses will result in additional disciplinary actions and parent notification.

**\*\*All 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>** Grade students are required to sign that they read and agree to the Parent/Student Handbook which includes the Acceptable Use Policy each year.

### Student Emails

Every HCS 5th-12th grade student will be assigned a school email as appropriate. Students are required to use their school provided email. If a student is found to be using another



email without permission, the administrator will provide the appropriate correction/discipline. Also, students must also use their school email to work on school work, access FACTS SIS and any other school related tasks. Students may contact their teachers via email to ask questions or discuss school work, however, they must use their school email for that contact.

## **ATHLETICS**

*See Helena Christian School Athletic Handbook*

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

Student activities, like all other programs, are governed by the overall philosophy of our school: the result of everything we do should honor our Lord Jesus Christ. Although specific student activities can change from year to year, for the 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades they generally include student council, leadership teams, class officers, worship team, retreats, and community service.

### **Middle School Leadership Team (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades)-when offered**

When offered, students in the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades are invited to submit an application to be part of the MS Leadership Team. This team will spend time learning leadership skills as well as planning MS activities. This team is overseen by a MS teacher and the principal.

The goal of the MS Leadership Team is to prepare our students for leadership in high school whether it is on Student Council or just as a general leadership with their peers.

### **Student Council (9<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

At HCS, the student government centers on the Student Council, its representatives and officers. The Student Council is a multipurpose organization that attempts to:

1. develop leadership within the student body;
2. serve as a liaison between the students and the administration and faculty;
3. cooperate with the administration, parents/guardians, and faculty in planning student activities;
4. give the students representation in the decision-making process of the school;
5. provide the students with an officially recognized medium for giving suggestions to HCS and registering their concerns with administrators and faculty; and
6. promote spiritual growth among the students.

Students that apply to Student Council must meet the eligibility criteria for attendance,

academics, attitude, etc.

**Note:** HCS believes that God has given adults the responsibility to raise and nurture children. As such, we want to know what the students feel and think. However, a student representative will not have a vote in any administrative decision.

### **National Honor Society (11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

The Helena Christian School Chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) is composed of eligible juniors and seniors in good standing who meet the following criteria:

- 1) Maintenance of a 3.7 or higher cumulative GPA;
- 2) Showing leadership qualities;
- 3) Having outstanding moral character;
- 4) Performing regular community service.

Once these criteria are met, names are submitted by faculty members to the HCS faculty council (composed of teachers/administrators, but not the principal or chapter advisor) for selection based on proof of the candidate's activities. Students must be full-time status at HCS and, if transferring during high school from another school, show a cumulative GPA that meets the NHS standards. Selection and induction of new members will occur during the first quarter of each school year.

NHS members will perform both individual and group community service projects over and above the time required for attendance at HCS. They will regularly attend monthly meetings and maintain their cumulative GPA. Any action that goes against the tenets of the NHS, including failure to maintain scholastic standards, egregious social behavior, or lack of service completion, are cause for disciplinary action and/or removal from the chapter. Details on the disciplinary process are available in the NHS handbook kept by the chapter faculty advisor.

### **School Competitions and Extracurricular Academic Events**

There are many opportunities for students to be involved in school competitions as well as extracurricular academic events. Those may include, but are not limited to, the Spelling Bee, the Economics Challenge, Science Fairs, Speech Meet, Creative Arts Showcase, Math Counts, and the State Music Festival. Students may be mandated to participate in specific events as part of their class requirements.

## **CHAPEL**

Encouraging our students to draw closer to God is the most important thing we do. Christian education is defined by our desire and ability to apply biblical precepts to everything we teach. Our goal is to give every student the foundation of a biblical worldview. If we can accomplish that, our students will make a meaningful difference in a desperately needy world. One avenue of accomplishing this goal is chapel services for our elementary, middle school, and high school students.

Since HCS is a Christ-centered, non-denominational Christian school that admits students from diverse denominations, as well as non-Christians who agree to abide by the standards of the school, we attempt to exclude from our chapels and assemblies:

1. The criticism against specific denominations, Christian traditions, para-church ministries, or Christian leaders
2. Infomercials which use chapels to promote organizations, programs, camps, or other ministries unless HCS has invited an organization to do so because it fits our mission and programs
3. Emphasis on doctrinal issues or systems that go beyond our own doctrinal statement and which tend to divide rather than unite evangelical believers.

## **STUDENT CONCERNS**

### **Attitude**

Philippians 2:3 instructs us to esteem others as better than ourselves. With this in mind, all students and parents are expected to manifest an attitude of respect towards all administrators, faculty, coaches, support staff, and volunteers, as well as to their fellow parents/students. Boys will be expected to act like young men and girls will be expected to act as young women. All students will address all adults with their appropriate title (i.e., Mr., Mrs., etc.). Students will not be allowed to show disrespect for their fellow students regardless of the age or behavior of the other student. HCS will always stress the importance of acting toward others as we would act toward our Lord Jesus Christ; for he has instructed us to do all things as unto Him.

### **Announcements/Communication**

Communications between HCS employees and HCS students and parents/guardians will be made via the following outlets:

1. Morning announcements
2. A general announcement time at each weekly chapel
3. For 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades, further announcements may be made during class, on the Student Resource page or via email
4. Announcements posted on the bulletin boards throughout the school. Flyers from students and/or parents/guardians may not be posted without permission from the office
5. Google Calendar on the school website ([www.helenachristian.org](http://www.helenachristian.org))
6. Weekly newsletters that are emailed to parents/guardians, students, and extended family
7. Through our Learning Software (FACTS SIS)
8. Emails to parents directly
9. Facebook/social media outlets
10. Parent Alerts (via email or text message)

## **Automobiles (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

Student drivers must adhere to the following:

1. Student drivers are to park their cars in the designated parking area.
2. The speed limit for the school parking lot is **5 miles per hour**. HCS reserves the right to suspend the privilege of driving to and from school if a student violates the speed limit, drives in a careless or reckless manner, or consistently parks in improper places on school property. This will be done even if the student being disciplined is a carpool driver.
3. Parking spaces designated as “visitor” or “handicap” are off limits to students.
4. With teacher or staff permission, students are permitted to go to their cars; however, they are expected to return immediately; checking out and in with the office.

## **Visitors**

HCS is a closed campus, therefore, **ALL** visitors to, including volunteers and parents/guardians, upon entering the building must check in with the office. Parents/guardians who wish to observe classes must schedule a time and receive administrative approval prior to their arrival. Visitors with scheduled meetings must still check in at the office.

## **MISSION/MINISTRY AND CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICE**

### **Required Serving Your Community (SYC) Hours for 6th-12th Grade Students**

HCS students are mature enough to begin taking leadership in activities. SYC hours are a way of getting the students to explore on their own the service opportunities in their church and in the community. The hours will be counted as 10% of their quarter grade in the respective Bible class. Hours may begin to be counted/tracked as of August 1st of the applicable school year and end on the last day of school that same school year.

#### **6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>:**

1. Required to complete 3 hours per quarter.
2. Up to 1 1/2 hours may be completed as a class within the school hours, serving on the HCS worship team unless it is a class, completing hours as a class at approved events, or completing projects for the administration.

#### **9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>:**

1. Required to complete 6 hours per **quarter**.
2. Up to 3 hours may be completed as a class within the school hours, serving on the HCS worship team unless it is a class, completing hours as a class at approved events, or completing projects for the administration.

### **Service Ideas:**

- Complete a project in class and then go out to complete service portion

- Choir – singing at a nursing home, holiday specials, church performances
- Toys for Tots
- Make cards as a class for a nursing home

### **Serving Your Community (SYC) Hours Specifications:**

1. No work done for pay is acceptable.
2. No hours may be counted for overnight camps or overnight childcare.
3. The service must be approved and supervised by an adult or school staff member.
4. Students may **NOT** work for parents or parents' companies or relatives.
5. Parents or any family members **CANNOT** sign off on the forms this includes in-laws, grandparents or anyone related to the student.
6. Any service done to help a business does not qualify as community service unless it is a non-profit business.
7. All Christian community service hours must be turned in during the individual quarter and tracked by the student. Completed SYC sheets are to be turned into their Bible teacher at the completion of or prior to the end quarter.
8. Any exception to this policy must be requested by the student in writing. The principal may authorize exceptions and must sign their approval.
9. Babysitting, house work, yard work, etc. for a private family will not be counted toward community service unless pre-approved by administration. (This does not apply to church nursery or church activity.)

*Hours can and may be denied if the students do not follow the guidelines above and/or if the administration finds the hours to be dishonest or unapproved.*

In addition, all students are encouraged to double their required service hours each year (these can include service done from June-July the preceding summer). Students reaching this challenge goal will be recognized at the spring award ceremony.

## **DRESS CODE**

As we seek to represent Christ Jesus to others, our dress and grooming standards should reflect that responsibility. Proper attire and general appearance should be above reproach in all areas of modesty. Let us bring glory to God through our appearance and character as we are set apart for Him (2 Corinthians 5:20; Leviticus 20:26; 1 Timothy 3:2)

***While we require dress code during school hours, modesty rules still apply at ALL school events and functions. It is very important that parents support and enforce the dress code rules for their student(s).***

### **Girls:**

- Tank tops may be worn but must not be gapping or low cut. They must have at least 2

inch wide, over the shoulder straps with solid fabric (no see-through or lace straps). This rule also applies to sports.

- Shirts, tops, and blouses may not be low cut, sheer (unless a dress code appropriate tank top is underneath) or show midriff or bra/bralette straps while performing everyday movements. This rule also applies to sports.
- Jeans may not have rips (this includes rips with a backing material), tears or holes in them. Jeans/pants may be mended to repair rips/tears due to wear and tear, however, the rips/tears may not be visible.
- Jeans and pants may not be excessively tight or low cut (showing off the backside).
- Sweatpants, athletic, tear away warm-ups, and pajama/flannel pants will not be permitted.
- Dresses and skirts must be no more than 2 inches above the knee, all the way around the hem. This length must remain while performing everyday movements. If there is a sheer overlay to the dress or skirt, the underneath material must be within dress code parameters. Slits on skirts must also fall within dress code length and be no more than 2 inches above the knee.
- Leggings may not be worn unless they are under dress code appropriate length dresses or skirts. Other excessively tight pants fall under this rule.
- Elementary students in Pre-K through 3rd grade may wear loose cotton pants as long as they are not tight fitting.
- Regular shorts with belt loops and within 2 inches of the knee are allowed. Cut off shorts are not permitted.
- Athletic shorts (must be at least mid-thigh length) are only to be worn for P.E. and sports (games and practices), not during the school day.
- Our PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade students may not wear flip flops or sandals without backs (this is a playground safety issue).
- See through or sleeveless athletic jerseys will not be allowed unless a t-shirt is worn underneath.
- Shirts, jackets and/or accessories (hats, scarves, water bottles, etc.) must not have offensive logos, images or messages on them.
- Hair color must be a natural color with a modest and conservative haircut. No unnatural coloring of hair (to include extreme color variations), not even on special activities days, is allowed. (i.e. Dying your hair for Spirit Days)
- Girls may wear earrings and jewelry, however, piercings other than ears or excessive piercings on their ears (more than 2) are not allowed. No ear plug piercings will be allowed.
- Tattoos will not be allowed.
- Hats, stocking caps and other headgear (ie. costume style headbands) may not be worn inside the school building.
- We require all students to keep to a healthy personal hygiene regimen. This means that students are required to come to school with clean hair, clothes, and have an appearance of cleanliness.

- For game day dress please see the *Athletic Handbook*.
- There is no chapel day dress code however, students are encouraged to dress up for chapel days which are on Wednesdays.

### **Boys:**

- Tank tops may be worn but must not be gapping or made of see-through/mesh material.
- Jeans may not have rips (this includes rips with a backing material), tears or holes in them. Jeans/pants may be mended to repair rips/tears due to wear and tear, however, the rips/tears may not be visible. Jeans and pants may not be excessively tight or low cut (showing off the backside).
- Sweatpants, athletic, tear away warm-ups, and pajama/flannel pants will not be permitted.
- Regular shorts with belt loops, back pocket, no draw string and within 2 inches of the knee are allowed. Cut off shorts are not permitted.
- Athletic shorts (must be at least mid-thigh length) are only to be worn for P.E. and sports (games and practices), not during the school day.
- Our PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade students may not wear flip flops or sandals without backs (this is a playground safety issue).
- See through or sleeveless athletic jerseys will not be allowed unless a t-shirt is worn underneath.
- Shirts, jackets and/or accessories (hats, scarves, water bottles, etc.) must not have offensive logos, images or messages on them.
- Hair must be off the eyebrows, off the collar, and off the top of the ears. Hair may not be styled in a way that is extreme (i.e. Mohawk, dreadlocks). No unnatural coloring of hair (to include extreme color variations), not even on special activities days, is allowed. (ie. Dying your hair for Spirit Days)
- All facial hair must be shaved, however, senior boys do have the privilege of growing facial hair as long as it is kept neat, clean, and trimmed.
- Tattoos and piercings will not be allowed.
- Hats, stocking caps and other headgear may not be worn inside the school building.
- We require all students to keep to a healthy personal hygiene regimen. This means that students are required to come to school with clean hair, clothes and have an appearance of cleanliness.
- For game day dress please see the *Athletic Handbook*.
- There is no chapel day dress code, however, students are encouraged to dress up for chapel days which are on Wednesdays.

On approved school day activities (i.e. Spirit Days), dress code may be relaxed, however, modesty rules will still apply. (This means, no tight, low cut, or inappropriate clothing should be worn)

*HCS Employees reserve the right to dress code a student for any extreme choices related to hygiene, hair, or clothing choices. The student may be sent home or be required to have*

*additional/new clothing brought to school.*

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

Helena Christian School's billing is connected to the FACTS Advanced Accounting program. At the time of enrollment/reenrollment, families enter into a Contract for Services for tuition, fees/incidentals and assessments for the school year. With the Contract for Services, families select a payment plan and set up automatic withdrawals from a checking account, savings account or credit card. Credit card payments have a processing fee attached.

Tuition payments start in August and will withdraw the amount per the plan selected and on the date you selected. Per the FACTS Financial Agreement, if a change to the plan needs to be modified (example – payment date change, amount change, etc.), you must provide 3 working days prior to the change. Contact FACTS Customer Service at 866-441-4637.

Tuition will continue to be billed pursuant to the Contract. Once a written withdrawal form is executed by the responsible party identified in the agreement, tuition is prorated, and a final amount will be withdrawn. Withdrawal forms are available upon request from the school office.

To ensure a payment reminder email, please be sure your email is current and accurate, and notify the school office with any changes.

### **Delinquent Payments**

If the payment is pulled on the date you selected and the monies are not there, you will be charged a return fee and FACTS Financial will attempt to pull up to two additional times 15 days apart.

Please refer to the Delinquent Policy for more information and fees. The Delinquent Policy is part of the Enrollment/Re-Enrollment packet. Students may not be allowed to re-enroll for the following school year if there are outstanding fees or tuition from the previous school year. Transcripts or school records will not be released until all financial obligations are fulfilled.

### **Financial Assistance**

Families needing financial assistance for the school year need to reach out to the Financial Director prior to August 1st (if the family is a current enrolled family). Financial Assistance is not ongoing and must be requested every year.

### **Fundraising**

**All** proposed fundraising activities by student organizations or parent support organizations must be submitted to the financial director in writing for approval **before implementation**. The



school's fundraising policy has been established by the HCS board of directors and is administered by the HCS administration.

### **Annual Poinsettia Sales**

Parents are required to participate in our Poinsettia fundraiser at a rate dependent upon the number of children enrolled. You may elect to opt out of the poinsettia sales by paying a fee of one half of the sales amount. There is no obligation to participate in the Poinsettia fundraiser on behalf of preschool enrolled children. You are responsible to pick the orders up and deliver them to whom you sold them to.

**Families on Financial Assistance may not opt out of poinsettia sales with the additional payment.** They must sell their required amount based on the number of enrolled students to remain on financial assistance.

### **Parent Involvement Program (PIP)**

Helena Christian School receives no definite income from any church denomination or tax-based government department. The school depends upon the parents/guardians of its students volunteering time and helping raise the funds necessary for each year's operation.

Volunteer hours are vital to the school. Each family of K–12<sup>th</sup> grade students is required to volunteer a minimum of 20 hours per year, per family. Volunteer hours must be activities or tasks that benefit the school. The school recognizes that there may be seasons of life where you are unable to complete the 20 hours. If you are unable to fulfill this requirement, you will be billed \$20 per unfulfilled hour, on your July statement, up to \$400 for all 20 hours. Parents must record their PIP hours in the FACTS Family Portal. Hours for the current school year can be completed between August 1<sup>st</sup> and July 15<sup>th</sup> of that year. Poinsettia Sales during the fall season is a separate fundraiser, and sales or delivery on behalf of your families' required sales do not count toward PIP hours, whereas poinsettia sorting and distribution on behalf of the school will count toward PIP hours.

**Families on Financial Assistance may not opt out of volunteer hours and must complete their 20 PIP hours in order to remain on assistance.**

### **School Year Student Withdrawals**

Once enrolled, students will remain enrolled at Helena Christian School until they graduate or a parent gives the proper paperwork of withdrawal. If a parent chooses to withdraw a student, the prorated tuition will be due upon the withdrawal date. If an enrolled student withdraws in August of the school year, it will result in a fee equal to one month's tuition. No adjustments or refunds of tuition, fees, or assessments will be made for withdrawals or dismissals without board approval. Re-enrollment fees are not refundable if students are withdrawn before the beginning of the school year.

## **Release of Records**

For withdrawn students, records will not be released until all accounts are paid in full. For students not re-enrolling for the next school year, payment for June and July are still due, and must be paid before your current year obligations are complete and records are released.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Cooperation with the School**

As stated in the contract of enrollment, HCS believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and a student's parents/guardians is essential to the accomplishment of the school's educational mission. HCS accordingly reserves the right to terminate or not renew a student's enrollment contract if the school reasonably concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make such a positive and constructive relationship impossible or otherwise seriously interferes with HCS in the accomplishment of its educational purposes.

By placing students in the HCS program parents/guardians agree to cooperate with the administration of HCS in seeing that students attend classes regularly. They agree to have their student(s) on the school premises at the beginning of the school day and to provide transportation from the school premises at the close of the school day. Parents/guardians agree to assist the school in encouraging students to learn and advance in the educational process, to solve school-related problems, and to aid the teachers in providing the student with a Christian education.

### **Disaster Drills**

Fire drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown (intruder) drills are held at various times during the school year. Instructions and directions for how and when students are to leave each room and the building will be given during orientation at the beginning of each school year.

### **Inclement Weather**

In the event that school is closed because of hazardous traveling conditions, the announcement will be made via the Parent Alert system.

### **Change of Address/Phone/Email**

Any change of address or telephone number for parents/guardians of HCS students should be made by the parent/guardian in FACTS SIS or by letting the office know as soon as the change is made. It is important that the office records contain the correct information at all times.

## Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the parties involved in any complaint. However, the school reserves the right to fully investigate every complaint and to notify a student's parent/guardian.

May God bless us as together we strive for excellence in the education of His children.

## APPENDIX A

### Acceptable Use Policy

#### Introduction:

This Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines the guidelines and expectations for the responsible and appropriate use of Google Workspace for Education, online resources and personal or school-provided devices for HCS students. These guidelines aim to ensure a safe, respectful, and productive digital environment for all students. By using these resources, students agree to comply with the following rules and regulations.

By agreeing to the AUP, Parents understand that their student (of any age) will be using the HCS approved "Google Workspace for Education" apps and software, as well as various educational softwares and programs for their learning needs.

#### 1. Responsible Use:

- a. Students are expected to use all technology including, but not limited to, Google Workspace for Education and school devices, for educational purposes and in a manner consistent with the school's academic goals.
  - i. This includes logging in properly to Google Chrome and allowing the GoGuardian extensions to run at all times
  - ii. Students must be responsible for the proper care and maintenance of school devices, keeping them in good condition and reporting any technical issues to their teachers or designated school personnel.
    1. Identification tags/labels may not be removed. This includes the name on the case or device itself for school devices (lost or damaged tags/labels may result in a replacement fee)
- b. Students must adhere to copyright laws and intellectual property rights when using digital content, ensuring that they do not plagiarize or infringe upon the rights of others. Please see the **Anti-Plagiarism** Policy for details.

#### 2. Privacy and Security:

- a. The Helena Christian School networks are intended for educational purposes only. All activity over the networks and use of the school technologies will be monitored and retained.
  - i. Students are not permitted to connect to the internet using a detected hotspot or 3G/4G/5G/etc. account while at school.

- b. Students should respect the privacy of others and not attempt to access, modify, or delete other students' or staff members' data, files, or accounts without explicit permission.
  - c. Students should not share their personal account information or passwords with others, and they must promptly report any unauthorized access to their accounts or suspicious activities to their teachers or designated school personnel.
    - i. Students should alert a teacher or other staff member if threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts, etc.) is seen online
  - d. Students must not attempt to bypass or circumvent any security measures, content filters, or restrictions imposed by the school or internet service providers.
  - e. Students may be required to provide their technology for inspection at any time, even their personal devices they bring to school.
- 3. Online Communication and Etiquette:
  - a. Students are expected to communicate online in a respectful, responsible, and appropriate manner, adhering to the same standards of behavior expected in face-to-face interactions.
  - b. Students should not use offensive, discriminatory, harassing, or threatening language when communicating through email, chat, or any other digital platform.
  - c. Students should refrain from sharing personal or sensitive information about themselves or others, such as addresses, phone numbers, social security numbers, or financial information.
- 4. Digital Citizenship:
  - a. Students should be responsible digital citizens by demonstrating ethical behavior, integrity, and respect for others' opinions and ideas.
  - b. Students should be aware of and follow established guidelines for appropriate online behavior, including responsible social media usage, avoiding cyberbullying, and understanding the consequences of their actions in the digital world.
  - c. Students should critically evaluate online sources and strive to produce and share accurate and reliable information.
- 5. Filtering and Content Restrictions:
  - a. Students must comply with content filtering and restrictions implemented by the school or internet service providers, including accessing only appropriate websites and refraining from attempting to bypass or disable these safeguards.
  - b. Students should not download or install unauthorized software, applications, or extensions on school devices without explicit permission from their teachers or designated school personnel.
- 6. Consequences of Misuse:
  - a. Violation of this AUP may result in disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to temporary or permanent loss of access to Google Workspace for Education, school software/programs, and school devices, educational interventions, or involvement of parents/legal guardians.
  - b. In cases of illegal activities or serious violations, appropriate legal action may be taken.
- 7. Additional Items

- a. Headphones/earbuds may only be worn by the individual owner.

### Limitation of Liability

Helena Christian School will not be responsible for damage, harm, or theft to student-owned electronic devices. While Helena Christian School employs filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness.

Helena Christian School will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

\*\*HCS reserves the right to edit, add and change these policies when appropriate for school needs.

## Anti-Plagiarism Policy

### Introduction

Helena Christian School is committed to maintaining academic integrity and ensuring that students develop critical thinking and knowledge acquisition skills through their own efforts.

#### 1. Student Responsibilities

- a. Originality of Work: Students must ensure that all work submitted for evaluation is their own original creation, completed without the use of AI or any other unauthorized assistance.
- b. Citation and References: When incorporating external sources or references into their work, students must provide proper citation and follow established academic conventions (e.g., APA, MLA).
- c. Collaboration Guidelines: Students must adhere to collaboration guidelines provided by instructors and seek permission when engaging in group work or cooperative learning.

#### 2. Faculty Responsibilities

- a. Awareness and Education: Faculty members should inform students about this policy, its rationale, and the potential consequences of violating it. They should explain the importance of academic integrity and promote ethical behavior in the academic environment.
- b. Diverse Assessment Methods: Faculty members should design assignments and assessments that discourage or minimize the effectiveness of AI-based plagiarism. This may involve using creative tasks, problem-solving exercises, in-class discussions, or oral presentations that focus on critical thinking and personal expression.
- c. Detection and Investigation: Faculty members should use plagiarism detection software or other appropriate methods to identify instances of potential AI-based plagiarism. Suspected cases should be investigated thoroughly to determine the level of misconduct.

### 3. Artificial Intelligence

To prevent the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies for completing assignments and promoting plagiarism, we have implemented the following policy:

- a. Definition of AI
  - i. For the purposes of this policy, AI refers to any computer program, algorithm, or software that can generate human-like responses or perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence. This includes but is not limited to language models, chatbots, and content generators.
- b. Prohibited Use of AI for Homework
  - i. Students are strictly prohibited from using AI to complete any portion of their homework assignments unless explicitly authorized by the instructor. However, AI may be used in the research or development of a student's project.
  - ii. This policy applies to all forms of AI, including online platforms, third-party services, and personal AI programs or devices.
- 4. Consequences of Violation
  - a. Academic Penalties: Any student found in violation of this policy will face academic penalties, which may include but are not limited to receiving a failing grade on the assignment, failing the course, or facing disciplinary action.
  - b. Policy Implementation
    - i. This policy will be implemented across all courses and departments within Helena Christian School. It is the responsibility of faculty members to enforce and uphold the policy, and students are expected to comply with its provisions.
  - c. Policy Review
    - i. This policy will be periodically reviewed and revised as necessary to address emerging technologies and ensure its effectiveness in combating AI-based plagiarism.

By adhering to this policy, students, faculty, and Helena Christian School as a whole can maintain the integrity of academic work, foster genuine learning experiences, and cultivate a culture of originality and knowledge acquisition.

\*\*HCS reserves the right to edit, add, and change these policies when appropriate for school needs.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**Students:**

By signing this policy, you agree to adhere to this HCS Parent/Student Handbook, including the Acceptable Use Policy. You acknowledge your commitment to responsible and appropriate use of Google Workspace for Education and school devices. Additionally, students commit to upholding and abiding by all policies located herein.

Students Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parents:**

It is strongly suggested that parents communicate with students about values and the standards they should follow regarding the use of the Internet and all media information sources such as television, cell phones, electronic devices, videos, movies, and music.

Parents should regularly check their student's devices and hold students accountable for the content found. We encourage discussion about internet safety and best online practices between students and parents.

*By signing this Acceptable Use Policy, we consent to having our student be part of the Google Workspace for Education and all associated applications and extensions as approved by Helena Christian School. Additionally, we acknowledge and consent to having our student be part of the GoGuardian software and all associated monitoring, data collection, and associated applications. We agree to uphold and abide by all policies located in the Parent/Student Handbook to include the Acceptable Use Policy and Anti-Plagiarism Policy.*

Names of Parent(s)/Guardian(s) (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*Please return this back portion to the principal by the required date. Failure to do so may result in limited or loss of computer, internet or network privileges.*

*Signature Pages are kept on file for the applicable school year.*