

# Faculty-Staff Handbook Capstone Classical Academy

**2023-2024**



Revised 08.26.23

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# First Principles for Capstone Classical Academy

## Definition of Classical Christian Education

Classical Christian education is the cultivation of virtue and wisdom by nourishing the soul on truth, goodness, and beauty according to God's Revelation using the classical liberal arts. Its purpose is to train the soul (which is the seat of the mind, will, and emotions) to love that which is worth loving.

This handbook contains information pertaining to school policies, regulations for student conduct, and a description of student services. Each student is to comply with the school policies and regulations. Parents and guardians should be fully aware of the guidelines. In enrolling a child in Capstone Classical Academy, parents and guardians agree to abide by the policies and regulations, recognizing the academy's right to govern student behavior and enforce those regulations. The parents are encouraged, moreover, to partner with the school in teaching Christian values that lie at the foundation of Capstone's disciplinary code. Students and parents are strongly encouraged to read this handbook carefully and to refer to it often.

The administration reserves the right to amend the rules, policies, expectations, or procedures outlined in this handbook whenever change is deemed necessary or desirable.

Each qualified student, with parental/guardian guidance, has the unquestioned right to decide whether to choose Capstone Classical Academy or not. Those whose decision is to apply for admission accept the standards, regulations, and requirements of the academy, and the parent/guardian signature on the enrollment contract is considered a binding agreement for families to abide by Capstone's handbook policies and procedures.

## Mission Statement

Capstone Classical Academy engages students to acquire wisdom, cultivate virtue, and pursue rigorous academic study within a Christian worldview through the study of the true, the good, and the beautiful for the glory of God and the benefit of community.

## Statement of Faith

We embrace and adopt the essential truths of orthodox Christianity as articulated in the doctrine expressed in the Nicene Creed:

We believe in one God, Father Almighty,  
Creator of Heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible,

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father through Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate and suffered and was buried; And He rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; And He will come again with glory to judge the living and dead. His Kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, Creator of Life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets.

In one holy, catholic, apostolic Church.

We confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come.

Amen.

At Capstone, the Bible is the final authority on all matters of faith, policy, and conduct.

## **Capstone Community Covenant**

Capstone's mission statement is premised upon a partnership between parents, staff, faculty, administration, and the board of directors. Every teacher, staff member, administrator, and board member at Capstone has entered into the following covenant and will treat it as a trust established between parents and every representative and designee of the school, from the board of directors to every support staff member. Capstone recognizes the parents' God-given role as the primary educators of their children and commits to serving parents with reverence for their God-given authority over their own children. The school does not take parents' trust lightly, and parents should expect nothing short of the mutual commitment outlined below. This document is a solemn mutual commitment — parent to school, and school to parent. All parents must sign the school's covenant in order to be considered for admission or re-enrollment. May God bless this partnership in Christ-centered classical education.

### ***Our Shared Mission (Philippians 4:8-9)***

We, the parents, will enthusiastically support the mission of Capstone Classical Academy.

### ***Christ-Centered Education (Colossians 3:15-19)***

We, the parents, will be supportive of Christ-centered education and the school's efforts to integrate the Christian faith with learning, discipline, and all school activities within an interdenominational framework that seeks unity in response to Jesus' prayer for believers (John 17:20-23). We understand that all Capstone employees affirm the Nicene Creed and are committed followers of Jesus Christ who are expected to express that commitment in word and deed, regarding the Bible as the authoritative guide for faith and practice. We expect the school will exercise discretion, charity, and grace in dealing with differences between students' religious experiences, and we are committed to a fruitful dialogue regarding differences of conviction.

We, the parents, are supportive of Capstone Classical Academy's commitment to teaching the True, Good, and Beautiful, particularly as exemplified in the life and teachings of Jesus, and we understand that the employees of the school believe that mankind is fully human and finds the Good Life only in fellowship with Jesus Christ. We understand that Capstone Classical Academy does not require that we or our child share this conviction and that the school respects that parents, churches, and other faith communities bear the primary responsibility for the moral and spiritual education of their children. We should expect to be treated with dignity and respect if we do not share Capstone's convictions about Jesus, but we understand and accept that our child's faith formation will be influenced by the curriculum, teachers and role models within the school community—all of which are intentionally and openly Christian.

### ***Civics (Jeremiah 29:7)***

We, the parents, are committed to supporting a civic education which embraces America's virtues while also grappling with America's vices. We understand that Capstone Classical Academy regards man as both a religious and a political creature; therefore an education must be not only Christian but also civic.

“Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind” (Northwest Ordinance), we will support Capstone Classical Academy’s work to form virtuous and neighborly citizens who are committed to the principles of America’s founding as elucidated in the Declaration of Independence and given effect in the United States Constitution. We understand that such an education requires teachers and students to discuss perennially difficult and contested issues, such as the nature of man and man’s obligations to his neighbor, his city, and his country. We will encourage our students to approach such discussions with charity and grace, and we will endeavor to model such charity and grace in our own discourse.

### ***The Dignity of All People (Genesis 1:27)***

We, the parents, respect that Capstone Classical Academy believes that all people are made in God’s image, are worthy of love and respect, and must be treated with dignity. Thus, we expect that in word and deed the members of the school community will strive to build a culture that is characterized by love of God and neighbor, and by joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, purity, truthfulness, gentleness and self-control (cf. Gal. 5:22; 2 Cor. 6:6-7). In partnership with the school, we are committed to affirming the God-given dignity of all people, regardless of belief. Not all people will agree with our views nor the school’s, but we commit with the school to treat those with whom we disagree with respect and love even when we cannot personally endorse their beliefs. (1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Cor. 4:3-4).

We, the parents, expressly reject any form of harassment, bullying, verbal abuse or intimidation by any member of the Capstone community towards any other member for any reason. This includes harassment based upon a student’s sex, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or perceived sexuality. These are antithetical to the spirit of Christian relationships and to our fundamental commitment to human dignity. Such behaviors are considered major violations of our code of conduct for students and faculty alike.

We, the parents, understand that Capstone takes reports of abuse very seriously, and if we ever have reason to believe that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred, we will immediately contact the [North Dakota Child Protection Program](#).

### ***Human Sexuality (Genesis 1:26-27)***

We, the parents, understand that Capstone Classical Academy believes and will teach that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female and that these two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Additionally, we understand that the school curriculum will teach that marriage has only one meaning: the uniting of a man and a woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture, (Genesis 2:18-25) and that through this divine union, man is expected to be fruitful and multiply, (Genesis 1:28), demanding that we cherish and nurture all life, from conception to natural death. (Exodus 20:13; Proverbs 31:9-9). We will treat with respect the school’s biblical teaching that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 8:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4) and that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We understand that Capstone Classical Academy does not require families to subscribe to this position, but we understand that students will encounter the school’s beliefs on these matters as normative in the school curriculum and codes of conduct. We should expect that open and respectful dialogue is welcomed regarding these matters should we wish to discuss with the leadership of the school any questions or concerns we may have.

We, the parents, support the school’s aim to provide a culture in which all students can learn and thrive in peace and freedom. Young men and women in their teenage years experience a great deal of change, sometimes volatile emotions, and a growing sexual maturity. Though it is natural and consistent with human development that students experience sexual attraction, we understand that the school discourages the formation of exclusive relationships. Though the decision whether to allow our child to date is left to us, we will direct our child that at school they are not to be exclusive or to draw attention to their dating relationships.

Though at this age, some students may experience same-sex attraction, we, the parents, support the school's belief that it is unwise for children and adolescents to interpret any particular emotional experience as identity-defining because such self-identification can lead to students being labeled based solely upon sexuality, generate distraction, create confusion, and prevent students from experiencing true freedom within the culture of the school. We support the school's discouragement of students openly discussing matters of their personal sexuality or that of others and agree with the school that teasing, ridicule or mistreatment based upon a student's sexuality or perceived sexuality are unacceptable and subject to disciplinary action.

We should expect that when challenging issues of sexuality arise for a student, the school will make every effort to handle them with sensitivity, discretion, and care for the student.

### ***Integrity (Proverbs 20:7)***

We, the parents, will conduct ourselves with integrity and honor in a manner consistent with the school's biblical foundation for morality. We will report to the school administration and to the responsible parents any rumors or confirmed cases of student behavior that violate the well being of students, the school's code of conduct as outlined in the handbook, or its reputation in the community. We will do so out of love and concern for the individual student and for the well being of the school community.

### ***Encouraging Words (Ephesians 4:29)***

We, the parents, are committed to the pursuit of wholesome speech as outlined in Ephesians 4:29, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." We will hold other members of the school community to this standard.

When conflicts arise we will believe the best about each other and will speak directly with the party involved in the conflict to resolve it and to nurture our partnership. (Matthew 18:15-17) We will not resort to gossip or to spreading feelings of discontent to other members of our community. The administration exists to help resolve conflicts productively when initial efforts prove unproductive, and we will ask for assistance when necessary.

### ***The Free and Disciplined Exchange of Ideas (James 1:19; Colossians 4:6)***

We, the parents, are committed with the employees of Capstone Classical Academy to promoting, modeling, and cultivating within the school community and within our family a free and disciplined exchange of ideas. We can expect faculty to model the art of this kind of dialogue with their students. We support the school's desire for students to discuss the ideas they encounter in their courses without a spirit of faction or partisanship and expect teachers will model this ideal. We are also committed with Capstone to students giving a good account of their own perspectives, asking good questions of each other and of their teachers, and engaging in rational discourse together about challenging topics.

### ***Mutual Respect (Romans 12:10; Philippians 2:1-11)***

We, the parents, expect the school to respect our sovereign role and good intentions as the primary educators of our child, and we will respect the committed Christian educators who serve our children. We expect that the faculty and administration will treat us as allies, not as adversaries, even when they disagree with us, just as we will do for them.

### ***The Joy of Learning (Matt. 22:37)***

We, the parents, will teach and model the joyful pursuit of learning for its own inherent good. We respect that the school will teach our child to love God with his or her mind and that the goal of education is to know God and his creation so that we can serve and glorify him in service to others. We will teach our child that there is intrinsic reason and incentive for hard work and learning. We will nurture in them the



joy of using their mind, time, and energy to acquire knowledge and wisdom because they are desirable and empowering for service to God, not for A's and accolades. We can expect the faculty of Capstone will model learning as a lifelong joyful pursuit and a way of being rather than a hoop to jump through.

### ***The Celebration of Discipline (Hebrews 12:11)***

We, the parents, believe that discipline is a blessing for our children so that they may live good lives, learning to use their freedom for the good of their own soul and their community. We will support the faculty and administration when they discipline our child, just as we expect teachers and administrators to honor and support the discipline and expectations that we have for our child. We support the notion that our child is free and responsible for his or her own choices and that they should be treated in a way that respects their fundamental freedom.

### ***The Gift of Freedom, Responsibility, and Work (Proverbs 4:1-23)***

We, the parents, support Capstone's conviction that our child is the agent of their own learning and expect they will be treated as free and responsible for their own choices within the school community. Still, the pursuit of wisdom is a joint venture between our child and us. Like all worthy pursuits, it requires work. We believe it is a responsibility, a joy, and a blessing to engage in work with our child. We understand that learning will at times extend beyond the classroom and is intended to be enjoyed as quality time for us with our child. We welcome this opportunity to enjoy the gift of work and the pursuit of wisdom with our child, and we expect that the faculty will also respect our need for time with our child apart from schoolwork and will provide helpful feedback to the school when a proper balance is not being achieved.

### ***The Call to Honor (Philippians 2:15)***

We will teach our child to live by the school honor code:

I will conduct myself in a manner that honors the mission of our school:

- I will respect my parents, teachers, and other adults within our community.
- I will treat my classmates as I wish to be treated.
- I will be honest and hardworking.
- I will report to a parent, teacher, or the headmaster any behavior that threatens the safety and integrity of our school community.

We are excited to enter into this covenant with Capstone Classical Academy, believing that the success of our partnership will be premised upon our mutual commitment to it.

## **Employee Faith Perspective**

Capstone Classical Academy is more than a school. We are a board, faculty and staff united by a common faith. Our faith does not make us immune from the influences of the larger culture, or the weaknesses of the human condition, but it gives us a vision, confronts us when we are wrong, holds us accountable, demands that we change and grow, comforts us with forgiveness and loving encouragement, and motivates us always to improve – and to make every effort to instill the same faith in our students. Ours is a story of living for God. We do not seek to be renowned for greatness by some cultural standard. We seek only to serve God humbly and with a whole heart. If anything that we accomplish or any students that we graduate are considered excellent or exemplary, Soli Deo Gloria.

Capstone requires that all employees subscribe unequivocally to the foundational truths of the Nicene Creed, which has provided doctrinal unity to the Church for centuries:

We believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
begotten from the Father before all ages,  
God from God,  
Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made;  
of the same essence as the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven;  
he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,  
and was made human.  
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered and was buried.  
The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures.  
He ascended to heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again with glory  
to judge the living and the dead.  
His kingdom will never end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life.  
He proceeds from the Father,  
and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.  
He spoke through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,  
and to life in the world to come. Amen.

We use biblical names to refer to God, but recognize that anything we say is an analogy or a figure of speech referring to a being who is beyond our comprehension. We use the term God to refer to a being whose existence is not dependent upon anyone or anything else, and upon whom everything else depends. God is spirit, unbound by time, space, or corporeal limitation. God is ineffable, and the only appropriate response when contemplating God is awe.

And yet, we do understand God to some extent. We understand God because he has mercifully chosen to reveal himself to us through his creation, the prophets, the Bible, and ultimately in the divine person of Jesus. Jesus is both the ultimate revelation and the ultimate paradox. We embrace the mysteries of the incarnation and virgin birth. Even so, there is much that we cannot explain. We cannot explain how God remained God the Father while simultaneously emptying himself to become God the Son. We cannot explain how Jesus was simultaneously divine and human. Even God's greatest revelation is not entirely within our grasp. Ours is not a story of understanding leading to faith, but of faith leading to understanding.

At the very heart of who we are, without which our hope would be despair, is the fact that God did not simply become one of us but sacrificed himself so that our sinfulness would not separate us forever from his holiness, and that Jesus demonstrated God's power over death by his bodily resurrection and ascension. In a sterile, disenchanted world that in the end offers only oblivion, we embrace this act of supreme love and supernatural power that allows the finite to approach the Infinite, allows the sinful to stand before the Holy, and gives the weak the forgiveness, strength, and purpose to live abundant, eternal life.

Capstone is a place of struggle. When we put on Christ, we accept the Spirit of God into our hearts, resolve to be guided by the Spirit, to die to sin, and to live in righteousness. Yet we do not live in righteousness. We continue to fall short of the glory of God. Our story is one of repeated falling, then by the grace of a loving God, helping one another back to our feet and continuing the journey of faith together. Our ministry confronts us with an extraordinary tension. Any pretense that Capstone employees are always righteous is not simply hypocritical, but denies the purpose of Christ's sacrifice. We must never set up a Pharisaical system of righteousness that condemns any employee who is struggling with sin. Capstone would have no employees. Even so, Capstone serves children and teenagers, ages when people are especially vulnerable. This ministry entails extraordinary responsibilities to protect and nurture. For this reason our handbooks, contracts and Employee Covenant spell out in further detail the standards of attitude and conduct required of those who are employed by Capstone.

At Capstone we believe that people are whole, and that we are wholly religious. Our culture tells us that a distinction can be made between the religious and the non-religious, that individuals and schools can choose whether or not to be religious, and that individuals can be religious while the school remains religiously neutral. We deny that religious neutrality is possible, or that being non-religious is possible. When one probes the alternatives carefully, it becomes apparent that, while not everyone believes in God as we know him, all humans find it necessary to put some entity into the place from which they have removed God. All humans worship something (in the literal sense of ascribing ultimate worth to something). All humans deify something. All schools take a position on deity. The notion that the universe-creating, death-shattering Almighty God can be constrained to the realm of private opinion, and that academic, economic, public, and professional activities can legitimately be carried on without reference to him is itself a provocative religious position. Public schools and Secular private schools, while not Christian, are no less religious than Capstone. God can be at the center, some other deity or deities can be at the center, an impersonal spiritual force can be at the center, human reason (individually or collectively) or some societal process can be at the center, or individual human pride or pleasure can be at the center. But one way or another, there will be a center that is functionally divine. Like Capstone, all schools are religious. At Capstone, we recognize it, and are unambiguously Christian.

All truth is God's truth. We are all created in the image of God and live in God's world. Even those who do not share our faith share a common experience of creation and a craving to know God, even though they may not express their faith in the same way. People are at different places on their journey to God. God loves them all, and so do we. We have deep respect for people from other traditions, recognize that we can learn from them, and are eager to share our faith with them. Even so, Capstone is not pluralistic. We believe that God has revealed himself exclusively in the person of Jesus, and that only through Jesus is God truly known and human purpose fully realized. The foremost mission of Capstone is to educate students to see that the fullness of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty is found in Jesus Christ.

Although we believe that the church is critical to the survival of the individual Christian, that no one makes the walk of faith alone, and we expect every employee of Capstone to be part of a local fellowship, Capstone is not church-centered. Capstone was founded by members of a collection of different Christian denominations who desired as the Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians, "To maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. For there is one body and one Spirit." The founding team of Capstone sought to establish a school where Christians from different traditions and denominations could study the Scriptures in unity as they learn to practice their own faith tradition more fully while appreciating the good that other Christian traditions bring to the universal Church. Capstone embraces this perspective, with a focus upon the word of God, an emphasis upon spiritual and ethical formation, and a commitment to service and mission under the banner of Jesus Christ as Lord. No specific temporal movement is lord. Capstone seeks to be godly only, biblical only, and relevant to the students we serve.

Capstone seeks to strengthen its relationships with all Christian fellowships who share the faith described in the Nicene Creed, that we may build one another up and work collectively for the growth of God's

kingdom in our region. It is our desire to be an institution that intentionally serves our community as a source of restoration, reconciliation, and reformation. We embrace our Kingdom obligation to be a source of hope in the Fargo-Moorhead region.

Whatever else we teach them, however highly educated our students may be according to conventional standards, the highest calling is to have the mind of Christ, the God who emptied himself and took the form of a servant. Fargo-Moorhead is growing more and more diverse, and as we strive to build a school that is representative of our community, Capstone will be an ideal environment for students to learn how to express their faith cross-culturally and to build friendships that bridge socio-economic, ethnic, and religious boundaries— the very skills and attitudes that they will need in order to thrive in a globally connected world. Capstone believes that God is powerfully present and at work in Fargo-Moorhead. We wish to be a part of his work, and are committed to serving our community to the glory of God. We invite anyone who shares our faith to join with us in this exciting ministry.

## **Capstone Employee Covenant**

This Employee Covenant, a companion document to the Capstone Faith Perspective, reaffirms the reality that Capstone is a place of struggle. As directors, employees, and parents, we constantly experience the tension between being broken sinners saved by the grace of God, while also being called upon to model Christian living for the good of our students. This tension is compounded by the need to demonstrate to our students the profound love and forgiveness provided by God, while simultaneously protecting them from influences that will undermine their relationships with God during their most vulnerable years. We have no desire to establish a legalistic, Pharisaical system by which we judge ourselves or others. However, any Christian community must take seriously God's word and the sins about which we are warned in scripture. For this reason, while we are sensitive to the fact that forgiveness is at the core of the Christian faith, this tension compels us to discipline and in some cases to dismiss those whose words or conduct pose a threat to the formation of the students entrusted to us. Therefore, the Headmaster, administration, faculty, staff, and all other individuals serving in positions of authority or influence within our school community must accept and abide by these standards as a condition for their employment or position. This includes non-employee coaches, parents serving as chaperones, and other volunteers. All must agree to abide by this covenant for the duration of their service.

The Capstone faculty and staff recognize and respect that there is diversity within the body of Christ on some issues and behaviors. We do not assert that every principle within the Employee Covenant is necessarily the rule of conduct for all believers in all places at all times, even though some principles based on scripture are universal truths for all disciples. However, this Employee Covenant fosters common cause and direction for Capstone in our collective ministry to children, young adults, and their families, guiding us all toward deeper discipleship.

The purposes of this Employee Covenant are as follows:

- to cultivate a school community that encourages spiritual, moral, and intellectual growth.
- to foster the modeling of lives before our students that are grounded in Christian principles and devotion to Jesus Christ, rather than a passive acceptance of prevailing practices.
- to pledge our commitment to teach and mentor Christian virtues through our words and deeds.

## ***Affirming Biblical Standards***

We believe that the biblical foundation of Christian community is found in Jesus' two great commandments: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," and, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:37-40). We desire to build our community on the principle of Christ's Lordship over all actions and thoughts, and to adhere to all biblical standards for

godly Christian character and behavior. However, given the ministry of Capstone to children, young adults, and their families, we specifically commit to the following:

- honoring and revering God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by refraining from the use of their names in any irreverent manner;
- viewing the Bible as the revealed and authoritative word of God;
- being a people of love and humility, who treat others with dignity and respect;
- being a faithful, active member of a congregation of Christian believers that recognizes the Bible as the God-inspired guide for life;
- understanding and respecting the interdenominational spirit of unity at Capstone;
- abstaining from sexual immorality, including the use of pornography, pre-marital sex, adultery, homosexual behavior, and all other sexual relationships outside the bounds of a monogamous marriage between a man and woman;
- embracing ethnic diversity as part of God's design for humanity and offering humility, love, respect and compassion toward all individuals and people groups while seeking righteousness, mercy, and justice for all people;
- being a people of integrity whose word can be fully trusted and whose language is not vulgar or obscene;
- valuing the sanctity of life from conception to death;
- maintaining humility, modesty, generosity, and wisdom in our community with respect to money and material possessions;
- maintaining appropriate relationships with children and adults and avoiding all behaviors and situations that could give the appearance of impropriety;
- protecting ourselves and our students from sins that scripture condemns that are often overlooked, including pride, dishonesty, injustice, prejudice, immodesty, slander, gossip, obscene language, blasphemy, hypocrisy, self-righteousness, legalism, impurity, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, jealousy, selfishness, gluttony, and sexual immorality.

### ***Exercising Responsible Freedom***

Beyond explicit biblical issues, the Capstone faculty and staff seek to foster the practice of responsible Christian freedom. Responsible Christian freedom requires thoughtful, biblically-guided choices in matters of behavior, entertainment, and interpersonal relationships.

In addition to the principles listed above, of particular concern in a school environment where we serve children, young adults, and their families are those issues related to alcohol, illegal drugs, and tobacco. The use of tobacco has been shown to be harmful to the health of those using it as well as those who are exposed to it. The use of illegal drugs, the abuse of prescription drugs, and the providing of alcohol to minors are by definition illegal and therefore prohibited within the Capstone community.

However, the situation regarding the consumption of alcohol and use of tobacco by adults is more complex. The Bible requires moderation in the use of alcohol, not abstinence. Yet the fact that alcohol is addictive to many, coupled with the biblical warnings against its dangers, suggests the need for caution. Thus the question of alcohol consumption represents a prime opportunity for Christians to exercise their freedom responsibly, carefully, and in Christ-like love.

The Capstone faculty and staff encourage responsible freedom in matters of entertainment, including the places where members of the Capstone community may seek it. Capstone expects that its members will exercise Godly wisdom in their entertainment choices. To foster a school atmosphere that is most conducive to becoming the Christian community of living, learning, and serving that Capstone seeks to be, we commit to upholding the following institutional standards:

- Capstone's campus and all events sponsored (hosted, funded, or marketed by employees in fulfillment of their official duties for the school) will be alcohol-free and tobacco-free. This means that the

possession or consumption of alcohol or the use of tobacco in any form will be prohibited in, on, or around all campus properties, owned or leased. The same prohibition applies to all Capstone vehicles, whether on or off campus, and to all Capstone-sponsored (hosted, funded, or marketed by employees in fulfillment of their official duties for the school) events or programs, wherever they are held.

- In personal activities, adult members of the Capstone faculty and staff will live within an ethic of high responsibility and unquestionable moderation in any private use of alcohol. Abstinence when with students who are non-family members is the mutually shared and expected norm unless the parents of those students are also present. No one who has consumed alcohol in the hours prior to a school event should attend that event. Likewise, sharing or posting any images that depict serving or consuming alcohol will be avoided, especially when Capstone students are able or likely to view these images.
- Public statements, including those made within the scope of an individual's role with Capstone as well as those posted online, should not be in conflict with the principles contained within Capstone's Community Covenant and Statement of Faith.

## Virtues

The Capstone Classical Academy core virtues, also known as The Gryphon's Weapons, are integrity, humility, temperance, fortitude, charity, reverence, and prudence. The cultivation of these virtues is a central focus of all that we do at Capstone. A Gryphon has integrity; he tells the truth and does what is right, even when no one is watching. He is humble; he serves others before he serves himself. He is temperate; he does not let his feelings control his thoughts or actions. He practices fortitude; he does hard things, even when they are difficult or scary. He is charitable; he is kind and helpful to everyone. He is reverent; he shows respect for those older and wiser than him. He knows his place in the world; he is prudent; he makes wise choices to believe what is True, to do what is Good, and to admire what is Beautiful.

Virtues will be recited in chapel services and referenced by faculty and staff when teaching and shepherding student hearts.

## Heart-Shaping Habits

We use heart-shaping habits to help students to have rightly ordered loves and to practice virtues. These habits are modeled and coached by Capstone employees and are expected to be practiced by all students at all grade levels.

Heart-shaping habits will be reviewed during Grammar School morning exercises in the first period/homeroom and recited in House meetings.

### ***We use names. . .to make certain every person feels known and loved.***

We salute every person by their chosen name, especially at the beginning or end of the day or when passing in lonely spaces.

### ***We use our manners. . .to honor the image of God in one another.***

We say please, thank you, may I, and excuse me, and we use them with the chosen name of the person we are addressing.

### ***We use titles of respect. . .to cultivate humility and reverence.***

When speaking with teachers and other adults on campus, students say Mr., Mrs., ma'am, or sir in response to or before:

Using manners

Teacher checks for understanding and compliance

Salutations

***We speak purpose and blessing when we address our students. . .to call them into higher learning.***

In Pre-K, we call our students “friends.”

In K-6, we call our students “learners”

In 7-9, we call our students “scholars”

In 10-12, we call our students “philosophers”

***We practice and model reconciliation. . .to teach students that relationships are the heart and soul of human flourishing.***

We repent out loud.

We are specific when we say we are sorry.

We say, “I forgive you.”

We commit acts of grace after reconciliation.

***We are obedient the first time. . .to show that we are humbly listening and ready to learn.***

Adults raise their hands to ask learners, scholars, and philosophers to be quiet and get ready to participate. Students raise their hands to show they are ready to participate.

## **Secondary Doctrine and Principles Policy**

Primary doctrine and principles are the substance of the statements expressed in the Nicene Creed above and in the Capstone Community Covenant. Secondary doctrines and principles are those issues which are not addressed in our creed nor in our covenant. Secondary doctrines and issues pertaining to Christian liberty will not be presented as being fundamental to the Christian faith. When these types of issues arise, they will be discussed on an informative, non-partisan level and will be referred back to the family and local church for final authority. Teachers are expected to present all sides of an issue, yet are permitted to state their personal beliefs without advocating for them.

In school tradition, cultural liturgies (intentional formational habits), chapel programs, co-curriculars, and classroom expressions of faith, the goal of Capstone Classical Academy is to bring together the tapestry of spiritually formative practices that come from the Church’s rich and varied history and that are compatible with the primary doctrine and principles expressed in Capstone’s founding documents provided in this handbook. Students of all Christian traditions should find elements of their own faith and practice throughout school life, and their families are encouraged to bring to the teacher or Headmaster opportunities to share and practice their traditions more fully and meaningfully within school life.

## **Controversial Subjects**

It is Capstone Classical Academy’s desire to discuss all controversial topics with grace, civility, and mutual respect not out of a desire to win or to be right but rather out of a desire to better understand and to wrestle with challenging topics together as a community, setting an example for our students and children.

This is a core value of the classical model. A controversial subject is one which families and churches commonly consider divisive, which is not included in Capstone’s statement of faith or community covenant, and regarding which the school has not taken an official position, whether or not the introduction of the topic was planned by the teacher or brought up by a student. Contemporary controversial issues will not be discussed in the Lower School without Headmaster approval.

1. If in the course of teaching a class, a teacher sees that a subject has arisen which he has good reason to believe is controversial, and discussion of that subject will not help him to achieve the goals set for that class in the curriculum guide, then the teacher will not allow class time for discussion of the topic;
2. If a subject arises which the teacher has reason to believe is controversial and the discussion of that topic will help achieve the goals set out in the curriculum guide for that subject, then the teacher will do the following:
  - a. As necessary, instruct the class on the responsibility of Christians to be charitable in debate;
  - b. Instruct the class on their responsibility to honor the teaching they have received from their parents on this subject and encourage further discussion with their parents and clergy.
  - c. As appropriate (that is, pertinent to the stated goals of the class), direct the students' attention to informed sources on each side of the subject concerned. This may be done in a variety of forms, such as a research paper, guest speakers, reading different authors, etc. The students shall be strongly encouraged to become knowledgeable of the most widely held views on the topic;
  - d. Refrain from pursuing tangents or other unplanned subject matter that will lead to a possible mishandling or poor teaching of controversial subjects;
3. The teacher is to remember that according to Scripture and the objectives of Capstone Classical Academy, he is serving as a role model of a mature Christian adult to the students and is teaching them how to apply Scripture and to take all thoughts captive to Christ. As such, teachers are never to enter into an adversarial debate with students on controversial subjects within the classroom setting. Even though the teacher may hold strong personal convictions regarding a subject, in light of this policy and sound teaching practices, he is to encourage a gracious and scholarly attitude in the students;
4. Teachers may express their beliefs on controversial subjects. They must also, when expressing their beliefs, provide balance by presenting opposing views as accurately and fairly as possible and from the minds of the opposition when possible, all in humble submission to our Lord.

A survey of the topics most often asked about by parents is provided below. Parents should feel encouraged to bring up controversial topics with the teacher or Headmaster in order to gain an understanding of how their teaching and conviction at home compares to what may be read or taught in the classroom.

### ***Religion***

As a Christian classical school, Capstone will teach all content from a biblical, Christian-theistic worldview. However, teachers must also treat other religions and worldviews with intellectual honesty and civility. Many of our students come to the classroom from diverse faiths and worldviews, and Capstone classrooms will treat all students and their families with equal dignity and respect. In discussing religions, the tone will be one of intellectual and philosophical analysis and civil discourse rather than one of judgment and proselytizing. A collective honest pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty is the objective.

We believe that Jesus Christ and Christianity are best understood in their greater global and historical context. Western civilization has had and continues to have an ongoing, vigorous, and thoughtful conversation concerning the place of religion in human life. In the course of history, theology, and literature classes, the Capstone curriculum will include texts, stories, histories, and beliefs connected to Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and secular worldviews. Knowledge of these topics is crucial to understanding the modern world and much of our own history.

Teachers will address these topics from a Christian theistic worldview, but will seek to let believers of other faiths speak for themselves through authentic texts and guests on campus or in media formats. Capstone has no desire to be disrespectful or to proselytize by misrepresenting non-Christian faiths or worldviews, but in the curriculum and traditions of the school, Jesus Christ will be presented as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and the Christian scriptures will be respected as inspired by God.



The Secondary Doctrines and Principles policy above this section outlines the school's approach to the different streams within Christianity.

### ***Evolution and Origins***

Capstone Classical Academy unequivocally believes and will teach that God created all things as outlined in the Nicene Creed, and according to Scripture and reason. Capstone takes no position on the duration of the creative process nor on the age of the earth. The curriculum teaches students that there are many genres within the Bible and that it must be studied within the context of time, place, culture, original language, and occasion with great humility, patience, and reverence. We do not believe that God and the authors He inspired by His Spirit were intending to write a science text but rather to help us to know the God of creation and how we can have right relationship with Him. When we go to the Bible to answer scientific questions or to science to answer metaphysical questions, we are not being realistic about the capacity for either to serve those ends well.

Capstone Classical Academy also unequivocally asserts that man is unique among all created things. He is made in the very image of God and therefore bears intellectual, relational, moral, and creative capacity greatly beyond all other living things and bears corresponding responsibility for stewardship of this image in himself and of the creation over which he has been placed as steward. Mankind is therefore the result of an intentional Creator who calls him to unique purpose and meaning.

The academy renounces the assertion that mankind is simply the result of random mutations and natural selection and therefore a tremendously lucky chemical and biological accident. This does not mean that we deny the reality of mutations and natural selection, which do, in fact, play a significant role in the unfolding of an ever-evolving array of flora and fauna and even in the variability of expression within the human genome.

Capstone embraces a rigorous program in the natural sciences. In biology, the school will teach the theory of evolution as found in the standard high-school biology textbooks and as also taught at the college level in both secular and many religious colleges. The theory of evolution is largely misunderstood today by the general public. Much of what constitutes the teaching of evolution concerns adaptation of species to their environment and change over time. A great many of these phenomena are observable. A very small percentage of evolutionary theory deals with the more controversial issue of the origins of life. This latter aspect of evolution, to the extent it is taught, will be introduced to students briefly with a great deal of circumspection and thoughtful critique; it is not a central part of the theory. Furthermore, the study of science will be confined to the investigation of the physical world. For this is within the role and capacity of science.

### ***Human Sexuality***

At Capstone, we believe parents own the fundamental responsibility for their children's education, which includes the areas of morality and sexuality. The school's role should be viewed as a supportive one but not as primary. It is apparent that sexuality is more than biology and physiology. It also encompasses morality, spirituality, and the emotions. Because it is a part of the whole human experience, it must be taught with circumspection and sensitivity.

As mentioned in the Capstone Community Covenant, the school will teach that marriage is the spiritual, physical, and legal union of a biological man and a biological woman and that sex and gender are determined by the chromosomes and DNA of an individual and ordained by the sovereign will of God. Studies in life science, biology, theology, philosophy, and government will invariably touch upon these topics. Given the state of stress and confusion that many of our students may live with with regard to matters of gender identity and sexual attraction and the reality that they will have family or friends who believe differently than Capstone's articulated position, these topics will be handled with reverence, sensitivity, and compassion.

We believe children are naturally modest concerning their bodies and are not ready to learn everything at once. They are naturally curious, however, and need to get answers to their questions in a way appropriate to their stage of development. In teaching this topic, we want to minimize the embarrassment associated with it and to honor parental discretion regarding when their children are ready to learn about sexuality and how it should be done.

While Capstone does not teach human sexuality explicitly before 9th grade, even the Bible contains many references to human sexuality and reproduction. All children are curious, and if they are paying attention, they will ask questions related to reproduction and the marvel of life giving birth to new life. We believe it is right and good for parents to answer their children's questions early and often and to teach their children the goodness of God's gift and its significance to faith and the Church. The school will not bring up these topics intentionally, but due to their curiosity students may go home with questions prompted by experiences in the Capstone curriculum.

All parents are invited to ask the school for recommended resources that will help them to teach their children about God's plan for human sexuality, and the school encourages parents to do so as a natural and good part of the parent-child relationship so that the parent is the child's expert on matters of sexuality and so that the child feels comfortable as they get older speaking to their parents about these matters.

In 9th grade biology, human reproduction is taught in conjunction with the study of both the endocrine system and genetics. The school will assume that all parents will have discussed human sexuality and reproduction with their children before 9th grade and that all Capstone students will complete this course of study. The curriculum is always available parental review at any time.

In the upper school, themes that deal with sexuality may emerge from the reading of a serious text, such as *Brave New World* or *The Scarlet Letter*. When these topics do emerge from the curriculum itself, teachers will engage the material in a serious way. Upper school students may be involved in discussions concerning sexuality and sexual restraint as these issues affect their living a moral and responsible life. Such discussions will always be led by the Administration or a faculty member who has the full confidence of the Headmaster in these matters.

In addition, an instructional unit entitled "God's Purpose for Sexuality," which will teach a Christian theology of the body, will be taught in the high school in the context of theology classes. This unit will help students to understand the good gift of God, its transcendent significance beyond simply biology, and their calling from God to be morally upright with regard to sexual desire, thought, and action. Your child's teachers will notify you when this unit of study is scheduled. As with any subject, parents may always review the curriculum before a unit is taught.

We would like our teaching of human reproduction to be a springboard to initiate and facilitate discussions between parents and children on this sensitive subject, and we will share curriculum and lesson plans with parents so that they can initiate such discussions with their children. Employees will not discuss their personal lives on such matters with students.

### ***Sanctity of Life***

As mentioned in the Capstone Community Covenant, the school takes an official position on the sanctity of life, believing that human life begins at conception and that all human life is to be treasured and stewarded with reverence for God and for the image of God in each person. Through the study of reproduction and general biology, students will have the empirical evidence for this belief presented to them, and through theology and philosophy classes, students will learn that the intentional taking of the lives of pre-born humans for our own comfort or convenience is evil. The topic of abortion will not be

explored in the curriculum in any planned, in-depth fashion, and when it arises through the study of science, history, government, theology, and philosophy in the upper school program, it will be handled with great discretion and sensitivity as we know that there will be students and parents who have personal experiences with abortion and the stresses of unplanned pregnancies in difficult life circumstances.

### ***Videos in the Classroom***

From time to time, videos or other media may be used to support a classroom lesson. To be used in class they must meet a specific curricular objective and will not have profane or vulgar language, images, or sexually explicit material. Teachers must receive prior approval from the Dean to show a video more than 15 minutes in length.

### ***Matters of Race***

Capstone Classical Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity in any of its practices. The long story of human suffering due to such discrimination is well-documented throughout history, as is the long line of noble humans who have believed in the equal worth of all humans, regardless of their color, ethnicity, or heritage, and have labored for justice. The Capstone curriculum seeks to accurately present the history of all forms of human hatred and discrimination with a spirit of humility, compassion, and sensitivity. Capstone curriculum, policies, and practices seek to honor the image of God in all people and to promote the unity of mankind.

## **Distinctive Objectives**

In teaching at all levels as well as in athletics, performing arts, and examples set by faculty and staff, Capstone Classical Academy strives to:

1. Encourage and mentor each student to build a love for learning, provide each student with the tools of learning, and help every student achieve his maximum academic potential.
2. Provide an environments, experiences, and works that cultivate student affections for Christ and his Kingdom.
3. Teach all subjects as an integrated whole with Jesus Christ and the Bible at the center, employing exemplary teachers and utilizing only the highest quality curricula and materials;
4. Provide an environment in which all aspects of school life demonstrate biblical principles. We strive for all school-sponsored events to align with our vision and mission to cultivate virtue and wisdom in our students.
5. Teach by way of the seven liberal arts. The seven liberal arts are precisely what the name indicates — arts. These seven arts, which were used in Western Civilization for 1500 years from the ancients on, have two broad categories: (1) the Verbal Arts or Trivium (three ways) and (2) the Mathematical Arts or Quadrivium (four ways). In this way classical education differentiates between the art or skill of a study and the science or formal study of a subject. In classical education, the focus of the Trivium is first and foremost the development of the art of language through literature and grammar. With the focus on language development, the teachers employ a wide scope of great literature in various fields, including fables, the Bible, the stories of history, and other works in other subjects. The goal in these formative years is the development of those skills that aid in formulating and expressing meaningful thought. These skills are Grammar (linking concepts to symbols), Logic or Dialectic (reasoning correctly), and Rhetoric (communicating truth appropriately and persuasively). After training in these skills, a student is able to apply these arts to all the disciplines, such as science, math, and history, in the pursuit of true understanding and purposeful knowledge. With these “tools of learning,” a student is trained to pursue wisdom, beauty, virtue, meaning, and purpose in all subject areas with the ability to communicate these ideas to the community at large.
6. Provide an orderly, loving, and secure atmosphere of Christian community. In a very real way, when students, parents, teachers, and staff enter the school, there should be a sense that they are entering a realm of the true, the good, and the beautiful. This must start first and foremost in how

we treat and relate to one another, but it also extends into what we study — the books we read, the discussions in history, the use of language, the amazing complexity and beauty of creation on both a microscopic level and in the cosmos, the order of nature and the formulas written into it, and ultimately, man’s effort to recreate beauty in art and music in the image of our creator God. How we handle these different but ultimately unifying concepts is how we cultivate, train, and order the affections of our students. We want everyone to feel a sense of the divine at Capstone Classical Academy, that they are living their lives *coram Deo*, in the presence of a sacred, holy God. We want each student to know and embrace that they are living in a world filled with divine meaning and purpose.

To accomplish this, truth, goodness, and beauty must be a part of every school day at Capstone. This extends to the rooms and hallways we use throughout the day. Our rooms should not be cluttered or messy. What is on our walls, desks, bulletin boards, and whiteboards should call our students to think about beauty and to know that something that is beautiful is also true and good. The great works of art and music from the time of the ancient Greeks, through the Renaissance, to the modern age, should adorn our walls and fill our rooms. By incorporating music, art, and a neat and orderly environment throughout the school, we are awakening and cultivating the beauty of Christian culture within our students. This “silent” curriculum of physical space, in concert with the Western canon we teach, cultivates a lifelong affection for the true, the good, and the beautiful.

## Organizational Governance and Leadership

### *Board of Directors*

Capstone Classical Academy is an independent 501(c)(3) organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors which hires and evaluates the Headmaster as the school’s CEO. The Board employs the Carver Policy Governance® model of Board leadership. It is comprised of no fewer than five but no more than nine Directors, which are selected by the Directors as prescribed by the Board’s bylaws. The Board sets the board policies that ensure Biblical, legal, ethical, and effective delivery of the school’s mission through excellent stewardship of the school’s resources—financial, human, and otherwise. The Board ensures the school’s financial security, sets metrics for excellence in delivery of the school’s mission, evaluates the Headmaster’s performance based upon those metrics, and sets the proper tone for the ethical, legal, and prudent conduct of the Headmaster and his management of the school. The Board delegates the management of all day-to-day activities of the school to the Headmaster, who is the Board’s sole employee. Therefore the Board is not engaged in management decisions but rather is focused on evaluating the school’s progress in its current strategic plan and governs strategically regarding the school’s future.

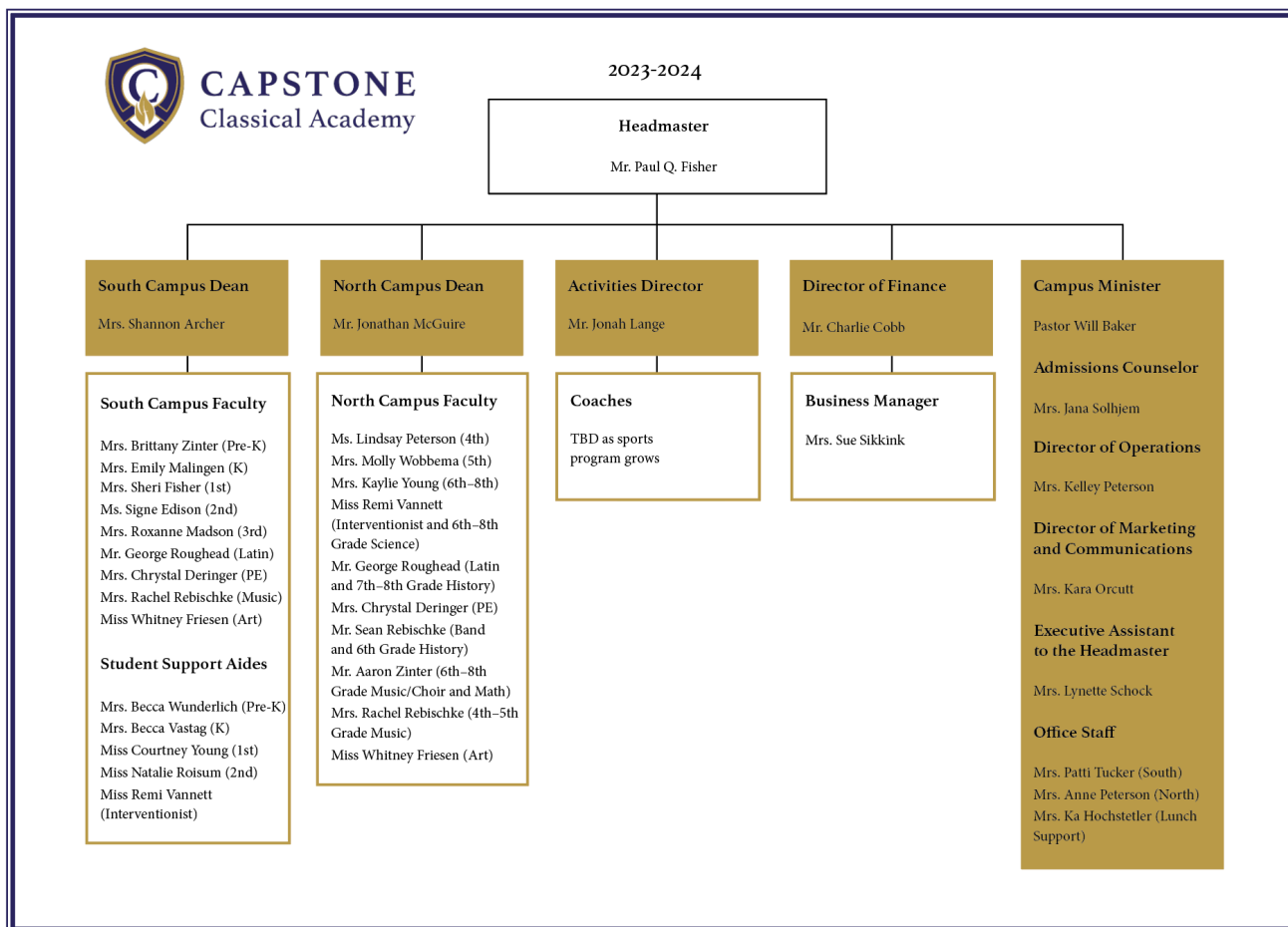
### *Headmaster*

The Headmaster reports to the Board of Directors and is the Board’s sole employee, providing the Board with detailed reports on the status of the school’s operations and activities in fulfillment of its mission. He provides the Board with all necessary “dashboard” information that helps the Board to fulfill its role in strategic evaluation and planning for excellence in delivery of the school’s mission and vision. The Headmaster provides general management of the school by forming a team of professional Christian educators and staff, providing professional development for them, and providing regular evaluation to spur further growth in excellence in classical and Christian teaching. He is the visionary communicator of Capstone’s classical Christian vision for education to the school’s families, students, and teachers as well as to the broader community. In his role he leads and manages all other school employees and daily operations of the school.

## Deans

The deans are the directors of the primary day-to-day functions of the academy as they pertain to classroom student body activities. They hire and review the performance of teachers, supervise, encourage, and equip teachers and staff who work directly with students, are responsible for establishing proper culture and decorum within their assigned grade levels, and work with the Headmaster in a regular review and development of excellence in curriculum and instruction. Teachers and classroom support staff report to their respective Dean.

## Faculty and Staff



For most families, the faculty and staff are the people that they think of when they speak about their school. These roles are the essential day-to-day service providers for students and parents. The term “faculty” is used to refer to the teachers, coaches, and directors of student experiences at Capstone Classical Academy. If an employee or volunteer teaches students in the classroom, on the court or field, in the studio, or on the stage, that employee or volunteer is considered a faculty member.

The term “staff” refers to employees who support the families, faculty members, and Headmaster in the fulfillment of Capstone’s mission by providing the support necessary for teachers, coaches, directors, and the Headmaster to be at their best. Staff members include the admissions team, the office managers and staff, the facilities and maintenance team, and all of the other employees who help the faculty to run their student experiences glitch-free and unencumbered by secondary concerns.

Both the faculty and staff report to the Headmaster.

## **Employment Classifications**

### ***Faculty and Staff***

Faculty consists of the administration and teachers. All of these are salaried employees. Staff members are all other employees of the school. Policies described in this handbook and communicated by the school apply to all faculty and staff.

### ***Regular Full-Time***

Regular full-time employees are those employees whose regularly scheduled work week is 30 to 40 hours. Regular full-time employees will be eligible for all benefits offered by the school. Benefits are outlined in employee contracts. The handbook is not contractual in nature and does not guarantee any continuation of benefits.

### ***Part-Time***

Part-time employees are those whose normal work week is less than 30 hours. Part-time employees are not eligible to participate in benefits programs.

### ***“Exempt” and “Non-Exempt” Faculty and Staff***

Upon hire, all faculty and staff are classified as either “exempt” or “non-exempt.” Exempt faculty and staff include teachers, the Headmaster, various administrators, professional staff, technical staff, and others whose duties and responsibilities exempt them from overtime pay provisions as provided by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and any applicable state laws. Exempt employees will be advised of this classification at the time of hire, transfer, or promotion. All other employees are “non-exempt.”

### ***Temporary Employees***

From time to time, the School may hire faculty and staff for specific periods of time or for the completion of a specific project. An individual hired under these conditions will be considered a temporary employee. The job assignment, work schedule, and duration of the position will be determined on an individual basis. A temporary position will not exceed six (9) months in duration, unless specifically extended by a written agreement. Summer faculty and staff are considered temporary employees. Those temporary faculty and staff classified as “non-exempt” who work more than twelve (12) hours in one day or more than forty (40) hours during any work week will receive overtime pay. All overtime work must be approved in advance by an authorized supervisor.

### ***At Will Employment***

All Employees of Capstone Classical Academy are at-will employees unless otherwise noted separately in a contract of employment. Accordingly, this means that either the employee or Capstone may end the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause. Nothing anywhere in this handbook alters the at-will employment relationship or represents a formal contract between Capstone and its employees.

### ***Equal Opportunity Employer***

All employment actions, such as recruitment, hiring, promotions, terminations, layoffs, returns from layoffs, compensation, benefits, transfers and participation on school-sponsored training, education or social/recreational programs, are made without regard or consideration for an individual’s sex, race, color, or national or ethnic origin. Capstone Classical Academy admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin. Also, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Capstone does not

discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities or employment except where necessitated by specific religious tenets held by the institution and its controlling body.

The School will not discriminate against any individual with a disability who is otherwise qualified for employment. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to individuals with a known physical or mental disability if such accommodation would not impose an undue hardship on the school and would enable the individual to apply for or perform the essential functions of the position in question. Any qualified employee or applicant with a disability who requires a reasonable accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of his or her job should notify his or her supervisor and request such an accommodation. The school will then identify possible accommodations, if any, that will help to eliminate the limitation or barrier. If the accommodation is reasonable, will not impose an undue hardship and neither the employee nor the accommodation would pose a direct threat to the health and/or safety of the individual or others, the school will make the accommodation. The individual is encouraged to fully cooperate with the school in seeking and evaluating alternatives and accommodations. The school may require medical verification of both the disability and the need for accommodation.

## **Professional Affiliations and Memberships**

Capstone Classical Academy is an independent 501(c)(3) organization and receives no government funding. It is a Hillsdale College Member School, a member of the Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS), and a member of the Society for Classical Learning (SCL).

Capstone's status as a Hillsdale member school is a distinguishing strength. The Hillsdale College K-12 Education Office is a project of Hillsdale College devoted to the education of young Americans. Through this office and its initiatives, the college supports the launch of K-12 classical schools that train the minds and hearts of young people through a content-rich classical education in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue. Hillsdale College determined that Capstone's team had the capacity and talent to start a successful school that was a good fit for its mission and provides curriculum design, teacher training, and culture-making wisdom in an ongoing collegial relationship with Capstone Classical Academy.

As a member of ACCS and SCL, Capstone enjoys a rich network of relationships with hundreds of classical schools and classical educators around the world. These relationships are leveraged to provide opportunities for Capstone educators to share their expertise and discoveries with their colleagues in other schools, expanding Capstone's reach in delivery of its mission, and to provide Capstone educators with ongoing and dynamic professional development from the sharpening influences of many of the best professionals in classical education. Capstone faculty and staff attend professional conferences hosted by these associations and read professional research and literature by members.

## **Parent Partnership**

Capstone Classical Academy functions with delegated authority from parents. As a support and extension of the family unit, Capstone considers the family to be of first importance to a child. God, through his Word, indicates that the family is the most important human institution He designed. We desire that all families continue to grow in understanding of classical Christian education. Therefore, parent involvement is crucial at Capstone. Parents are always welcome — any day, any class or activity. We only ask that you communicate with your child's teacher, coach, or director ahead of your planned visit so that they can plan to host you well. Their students might also need to be properly prepared for your visit. Here are a few suggestions for getting involved. Feel free to ask about additional opportunities or to share your ideas with the faculty, staff, or administration.

- Visit classes. Calling ahead is a suggested courtesy to the teacher and class. All visitors, including parents, must sign in to the office to receive a visitor's badge, which must be worn at all times.

- Assist in the classroom. Again, arrangements should be made with the appropriate teacher or staff member.
- Chaperone field trips.
- Serve as a story-reader, song-leader, or guest artist. Share your talents, interests, and expertise.
- Share your experiences, trips, or vacations as they relate to an area of study in a class.
- Host class or House (Houses in upper school only) social events on campus or elsewhere. Events must be coordinated with the teacher and headmaster.
- Support the House System (upper school).
- Closely monitor your child's progress by reading all teacher notes and student papers sent home and talk with your child about their school experience.
- Volunteer in one of the areas you selected in the enrollment process. Email or call the school to find out about current volunteer options.
- Get involved with the Capstone Parent Fellowship (CPF), Capstone's parent association.
- Give to the current capital or endowment campaign to enhance the quality and accessibility of a Capstone education.

## **Visitors**

### ***Sign-In***

Capstone has a mandatory sign-in procedure for all visitors on campus, including parents. Any visitor to campus between the hours of 7:30 am and 5:30 pm must first report to the school office and will be required to furnish a Federal or state-issued photo ID. The visitor's information will be stored in an electronic database to document visitors to the school. Information stored in the electronic database may be used only for the purpose of school security and may not be sold or otherwise disseminated to a third party for any purpose.

All visitors must check in with the front office every time they visit. First-time visitors will be asked to provide identification; repeat visitors may be asked to present identification if the supervising staff member is unfamiliar with the repeat visitor. A visitor badge will be issued to the visitor and displayed conspicuously during the visit.

All parents and visitors to campus must use the bathroom designated for their biological, genetic sex at birth.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

A "conflict of interest" occurs when an individual's private interest interferes with, or appears to interfere with, the interests of the school. For example, a conflict of interest would arise if an employee, or a member of his or her family, received improper personal benefits as a result of his or her position with the school. Any transaction or relationship that could reasonably be expected to give rise to a conflict of interest should be discussed with the Headmaster. Such situations may include the following:

- influencing or attempting to influence anyone who is involved in making or administering a contract or arrangement with the school;
- soliciting or receiving any gift, reward or promise for recommending, influencing or attempting to influence the award of a contract or arrangement with the school;
- drafting, negotiating, evaluating, administering, accepting or approving any contract or subcontract or procurement or arrangement of any type on behalf of the school if he/she has, directly or indirectly, any financial interest in such a contract or subcontract or arrangement;
- non-school employment which adversely affects the employee's availability or effectiveness in fulfilling job responsibilities;
- tutoring students for compensation;
- any type of private business conducted during school time or on school property;



- the receipt of excessive entertainment or gifts of more than nominal value from any person, entity, or organization with whom or with which the school has current or prospective dealings;
- selling anything to the school or buying anything from the school on terms and conditions that are not pre-approved by the Headmaster.

This is not an exhaustive list of all possible situations which would constitute conflicts of interest. Further, any relationship or action which creates an expectation of benefit or profit beyond an employee's normal employment relationship with the school can impair an employee's ability to exercise good judgment on behalf of the school, and therefore creates an actual or potential conflict of interest. In connection with any actual or potential conflict of interest, an employee must disclose the existence of the conflict in writing and all facts material to the conflict to the Headmaster.

## ***Nepotism Policy***

### ***Definitions***

For the purposes of this policy, nepotism is defined as the practice of making policy or management decisions based upon personal relationship status rather than upon what is demonstrably fair and best for the mission of the school. Nepotism includes but is not limited to these examples:

- Overlooking a more qualified employee for a promotion in order to promote a less qualified relative or friend.
- Hiring a less qualified candidate over a more qualified candidate due to a personal relationship with the lesser qualified applicant.
- Setting compensation or providing job descriptions, work expectations, and performance evaluations based upon personal relationship rather than established policy, best professional practices, equitable management, and objective evaluation of performance against uniform standards for professional excellence.
- Assigning schedules and duties based upon personal relationship rather than what is best for fulfilling stated school objectives according to the school's mission.
- Practicing favoritism with a student, whether in discipline, grading, selection for desired roles or offices in the student body, etc. based upon relationship to the student rather than professional objectives and criteria that serve the mission of the school.

The Headmaster and his designees must always seek to place the most qualified and effective people in every position on the Capstone team and must always seek to do what serves the students best for the fulfillment of the mission.

### ***Expressing Concerns about Nepotism***

When personal relationships within the school lead to specific charges of nepotism, it is important that community members, whether employees, parents, or students, share their concerns with the appropriate party in an appropriate manner that honors one another with pure motives, honesty, transparency, and mutual respect, believing the best about each other until given concrete evidence that trust has been broken. This requires keeping the circle of those involved as small as possible. Gossip about real or perceived nepotism will not help to resolve the concerns and will only cause mistrust and division, which do not serve the school's mission well and will bring reproach upon God's servants at Capstone.

The following process has been established to help Capstone to be faithful in doing what is right for its mission and best for the faculty, staff, and students in all circumstances regardless of personal relationships between members of the community.

1. If an employee has concerns about an act or pattern of nepotism within the school, he or she should express their concerns directly to the colleague responsible for the real or perceived nepotism. In some cases, this may help the colleague to see his or her fault or will help the plaintiff to see that nepotism was not involved.
2. If, however, the initial conversation ends in disagreement, and the real or perceived nepotism continues, the plaintiff should report the concern in writing to the supervisor of the colleague responsible for the real or perceived nepotism.
3. The supervisor will investigate the claims in the report and will provide a written response to both parties. If the supervisor concludes that there is an act or pattern of nepotism, the supervisor will develop a plan with the guilty employee or team to rectify the situation and to ensure that equitable practices are instituted or restored.
  1. At times, this decision will require the supervisor to make policy changes, to reassign employees to different roles or departments, to reprimand or dismiss an employee, to put an employee on an improvement plan, or to create with the team a strategic plan that restores trust and equity in management or in the group of employees, students, or parents affected by nepotism.
  2. The supervisor will also provide a written report to his or her supervisor that summarizes the complaint, actions taken by the supervisor, and the strategy for avoiding similar problems with nepotism in the future.
4. If the Headmaster is the employee accused of an act or pattern of nepotism, and if the plaintiff, after expressing his or her concern to the Headmaster in writing, finds that the Headmaster does not rectify the situation to their satisfaction, the plaintiff should provide a detailed report of their concerns, actions taken, and outcomes from those actions to the chairperson of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will review the report, will investigate the concerns, and will make the final determination regarding any real or perceived nepotism and will provide a written decision to the plaintiff and the Headmaster, providing its findings and rationale for its decision.
  - At times, this decision will require the Board to make policy changes or to require that policy changes be made, to direct the Headmaster to reassign employees to different roles or departments, to direct the Headmaster to reprimand or dismiss an employee, to put an employee on an improvement plan, or to create with the team a strategic plan that restores trust and equity in management or in the group of employees, students, or parents affected by nepotism.
  - The Board will hold the Headmaster accountable if it finds acts and patterns of nepotism in the Headmaster's leadership.
  - Because matters of concern with the Headmaster often involve greater visibility or a broader circle of affected members of the community, the Board may communicate or may require the Headmaster to communicate the steps taken to rectify the situation to a greater number of stakeholders well beyond the plaintiff.

### *Due Diligence To Avoid Nepotism*

In a small school community that seeks to employ highly-qualified and like-minded people of biblically-rooted Christian faith committed to classical content and methodology, and in a locale such as the Fargo-Moorhead region, where there are many personal connections spanning years of living in community together, it is inevitable that there will be circumstances where colleagues with a close personal relationship will be serving as employees on the Capstone team. It is important that when this is the case,

due diligence is taken to avoid real or perceived nepotism. For this reason, employees should be careful to:

- Disclose to their supervisor(s) any real or perceived conflicts of interest they may have as they serve in their official and unofficial roles within the Capstone community.
- With their supervisor(s), develop a plan for transparency and accountability whenever the potential exists for real or perceived nepotism. Plans may include:
  - delegating some decision-making to avoid conflicts of interest.
  - asking colleagues or supervisors to provide feedback or to share the decision-making and evaluation processes.
  - providing full transparency to processes (hiring, scheduling, discipline, evaluating, promoting, etc.).
  - taking normally unnecessary steps and incurring additional expenses to avoid creating the risk of nepotism altogether, including but not limited to removal of oneself from circumstances that leave one vulnerable to accusations of nepotism.
- Employees in positions of leadership or authority should be keenly aware of the risks of closeness with any employees or families and must be on their guard, asking trusted colleagues to confront or advise them if they have blind spots in their leadership.

## Conflict Resolution Policy

Despite all of our best intentions, there will be times when communication fails to measure up to expectations, and there will be times when members of our community are not satisfied with the level of service or excellence provided by others in the community. If an employee is unclear or unhappy about anything in the school community, conversations should be handled in a way that treats all parties with dignity to the glory of God by (1) assuming the best intentions and professional competence of the other, (2) keeping the matter private, (3) seeking first to understand rather than to be understood, (4) speaking the truth with love and grace.

Capstone Classical Academy believes that most conflicts are best resolved directly between the individuals involved. If a conflict arises, the plaintiff should attempt to first discuss the issue with the other person involved. For conflicts that are sensitive, discussions should occur face-to-face rather than by email or phone call. Timing should always be considered. Most conflicts are not emergencies, and conversations to resolve them can be scheduled at a time that is most likely to enhance each other's ability to listen well, focus, and provide a helpful response. These conversations should be scheduled in advance and should not be impromptu.

Whenever a conflict arises, refrain from discussing the conflict with others. Gossip is never appropriate nor helpful. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, please use the following Conflict Resolution Policy.

Employees will handle concerns by using the following procedure:

### ***Concerns with members of the faculty or staff:***

1. All concerns must first be presented to the other employee by the plaintiff. A respectful demeanor is required of both parties at all times.
2. If the conflict is not resolved, the employee may appeal to their immediate supervisor.
3. If the plaintiff is not satisfied with the solution proposed by the supervisor, they may let their supervisor know that they are going to appeal to the Headmaster. The Headmaster will not hear any grievances unless the plaintiff has first informed their supervisor of their appeal.
4. The Headmaster's decision is final unless the plaintiff believes that the decision is in violation of written school policy. Should the employee believe that the Headmaster's decision is in violation of written school policy, they may submit a written appeal of the Headmaster's decision to the

Capstone Classical Academy Board through the Headmaster. The Headmaster will forward to appeal to the Board Chair within 24 hours of receiving it, and the Board Chair will provide the employee with a written decision or outline of next steps within 14 calendar days. The Headmaster must receive the written appeal, containing the following elements, within 7 calendar days of his communicated decision regarding the appeal in question:

- A summary of the decision or behaviors of the employee with whom the plaintiff has the conflict.
- A summary of steps that have been taken to resolve the conflict.
- A quote of the relevant policy from the the handbook with which the teacher, staff member, or Headmaster’s actions or decisions are believed by the plaintiff to be in conflict.
- A request for specific action to be taken by the Headmaster and Board to effectively resolve the conflict to the plaintiff’s satisfaction.

### ***Concerns with the Headmaster***

1. If an employee has a grievance or dispute about the general operation or policy of the school (apart from the operation of the classrooms or specific school activities and teams), they should bring their concerns to the Headmaster.
2. If in accord with the school’s written policies, the Headmaster’s decision is the final decision in any conflict resolution procedure.
3. Should the employee believe that the Headmaster’s decision is in violation of written school policy, the employee may submit a written appeal of the Headmaster’s decision to the Capstone Classical Academy Board through the Headmaster. The Headmaster must receive the written appeal within 7 calendar days of his communicated decision regarding the appeal in question. The Headmaster will forward to appeal to the Board Chair within 24 hours of receiving it, and the Board Chair will provide the employee with a written decision or outline of next steps within 14 calendar days. The employee’s written appeal to the board must contain the following:
  - A summary of the decision, behavior, or circumstances with which the employee is concerned.
  - A summary of steps that have been taken to attempt to resolve the conflict.
  - A quote of the relevant policy from the handbook with which the Headmaster’s actions or decisions are believed by the employee to be in conflict.
  - A request for specific action to be taken by the Headmaster and Board to effectively resolve the conflict for the employee.

## **Responsibilities with Regard to Privacy**

Capstone Classical Academy is a non-profit educational institution based on Christian principles. An integral part of our ministry to young people is the need to collect information about our students and their families. This notice describes what information we collect and employee responsibilities with handling it.

### ***I. Personal information.***

Capstone collects information about our students, their families, and Capstone supporters for the purpose of identification, networking, communication, and fundraising. This includes but is not limited to name, parents’ names, address, phone number, and birth date. This information is available to the teaching and support staff as well as the business office as needed to carry out the day-to-day operation of the school. No personal information should be shared with anyone who is not named and identified as “custodial” or “correspondence” in the family relationships chart in the student file in FACTS. No information about donors or their gifts should be shared by any employee with any person in any format unless directed to do so by the donor in writing and approved by the Headmaster. All Capstone employees are subject to this confidentiality agreement.

## **2. Account information**

Capstone compiles information regarding the status of student accounts, including the social security number of the financially responsible party. This information is accessible to the business office and school administration. No information regarding business accounts may be released to other sources without written parent authorization.

## **3. Academic information**

Student academic records are kept in a secure file in the administrative offices and on secure servers. Access to this information is granted to faculty, staff, and administration as deemed appropriate to the pursuit of educating the student. Academic information is available to the student's parent or guardian upon request. (Please schedule an appointment to view this information.) Academic records will be forwarded to other educational institutions at the request of the parent or guardian upon written authorization when account balances are paid in full. General academic information may be shared with the Board of Directors of Capstone Classical Academy, Cognia (national accreditation), the Association of Classical and Christian Schools, Hillsdale College K-12 Education Office, and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction for the purpose of quality assurance and statistical analysis. No employee may share academic records with anyone not mentioned in this policy unless express written consent is provided by the parent, or by the student if 18 or older.

## **4. Health Information**

In compliance with North Dakota state regulations, health information for students and staff is kept on site in a secure file. Health information is made accessible to the staff and school nurse as deemed necessary for the welfare of the student/staff. This information is also made available to medical professionals in the event of a health emergency. A student's parent or guardian may view this information upon request. (Please schedule an appointment to view your child's file.) This information will be forwarded to other academic institutions upon request with written parent authorization. No health information may be shared with a non-employee without the parent's (or student's if 18 or older) express written consent.

# **Academic Policies**

## **Curriculum Overview**

The curriculum of Capstone Classical Academy is an adapted version of the curriculum scope and sequence offered by the K-12 Education Office of Hillsdale College. This curriculum is used throughout the network of Hillsdale Member Schools, of which Capstone Classical Academy is one. Undergirding these key characteristics is the foundational role of prayer, corporate worship, biblical and theological studies, and Church history which are unique to Capstone.

While Capstone has and will continue to make curricular adjustments in order to reflect our distinctive Christian mission, our unique parent-faculty culture, and North Dakota regulations governing private schools, our school has committed to embrace and uphold the following key characteristics of the Hillsdale K-12 Education model, which are listed below. Because the curriculum is chosen with great forethought and based upon significant expertise and history of successful implementation in Hillsdale member schools, it should be treated as an authoritative guide to teachers. Teachers are not at liberty to make significant changes to the curriculum without approval from the Headmaster or his designee.

1. The centrality of the Western tradition in the study of history, literature, philosophy, and fine arts\*;
2. A rich and recurring examination of the American literary, moral, philosophical, political, and historical traditions;

3. The use of explicit phonics instruction leading to reading fluency, and the use of explicit grammar instruction leading to English language mastery;
4. The teaching of Latin;
5. The acknowledgement of objective standards of correctness, logic, beauty, weightiness, and truth intrinsic to the liberal arts;
6. A culture demanding moral virtue, decorum, respect, discipline, and studiousness among the students and faculty;
7. A curriculum that is content-rich, balanced and strong across the four core disciplines of math, science, literature, and history;
8. A faculty where well-educated and articulate teachers convey real knowledge using traditional teaching methods that have been proven to be effective for students;
9. Responsible and wise use of technology as a means to greater ends and not as an end in itself;
10. Academic achievement; and
11. A plan to serve grades K through 12.

\*For Capstone Classical Academy, the integrating core of all history, literature, philosophy, and fine arts is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as revealed in the Bible. The good, true, and beautiful achievements of Western tradition are by the grace of God through Jesus Christ, while the sins of Western tradition find their origin in man's stubbornly sinful nature that often rejects God's good will.

Therefore, in Capstone's curriculum, the Western tradition is studied to preserve the aspects of Western Civilization that are a reflection of Christ and his Kingdom as revealed in Scripture and to provide wisdom and instruction from the sins of Western tradition so that our students become citizens who better shape their communities to reflect the truth, goodness, and beauty of Christ and his Kingdom, which, unlike America and the other nations of the world, will have no end.

Because our students are American, the Western tradition may necessarily be central to the study of history, literature, philosophy, and fine arts, but it is through knowing Christ and his Kingdom that our students are formed into souls who rightly understand and assess the past and the present, imagine a better future, and possess the wisdom and virtue to pursue it.

## Philosophy and Mission Statements for Curriculum

### *Theology*

#### Philosophy

Medieval scholars called theology the queen of all sciences. They understood that the various branches of science needed an overarching standard. The standard for all of the liberal arts is the Bible because it is the source of all truth. Theology is the natural standard by which all other scholarship must abide. One's view of God and the Bible affects every other area of life (Colossians 1:16-17). A scholar's theology is the foundation of his worldview and shapes his study of philosophy and other fields. Theology, then, is the "queen of the sciences"; that is, God's Word is the majestic source of knowledge that informs all other knowledge. Theology truly is the starting place for learning. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." (Proverbs 1:7)

#### Mission

By studying theology, Capstone students will love and be able to articulate biblical Christian theology as a beautiful unified system of truth, goodness, and beauty through which they are able to rightly discover and know within the other liberal arts, will articulate and demonstrate through word and deed a knowledge of and love for Christ and his Kingdom, and will clearly identify and accept their role in

the Great Story of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration in their school, family, community, and world.

## ***Latin***

### Philosophy

Latin is both a classical and liturgical language. It is a “dead” language that refuses to die. While it is not the native language of any community, it is still spoken in some contexts and should still be studied and read for a variety of compelling reasons. As the mother language of French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and Romanian, it contributes roughly 90% of the vocabulary to them. This makes the study of Latin an exposure to six modern languages. Similarly, 50% of all English words are derived from Latin, including 80-90% of all polysyllabic words. This combined with its exquisite grammar will aid students in mastery of their own language, helping them to read and write more gracefully. When reading English literature written prior to about 1950, Latin knowledge is needed to make sense of references and citations. Law, medicine, science, music, theology, philosophy, art, and literature are all steeped in Latin terms. Due to the profound effects of the Roman Empire upon Western civilization, the study of Latin and its history helps students to understand and appreciate their Western heritage. A trip to our nation’s capital will demonstrate how helpful Latin is in interpreting the meaning of monuments and architecture, which is often inscribed with Latin. Additionally, the study of Latin is linguistic conditioning that helps students to become close and thoughtful readers and writers. Its study cultivates careful analysis and attention. Finally, studying Latin can provide enjoyment as students solve the logical puzzle of a language that reveals meanings behind words and allows them to connect with great authors in their original tongue. This connection with great historical figures provides a sense of intimacy with the past and makes history contemporary.

### Mission

By studying Latin, Capstone students will develop diligence, patience, and humility, will excel in further language studies, will demonstrate a deeper and richer comprehension of classic literature and excellent reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery, and will enjoy an intimate dialogue with great figures who wrote and spoke in Latin.

## ***Literature and Writing***

### Philosophy

The study of language and its uses through the written and spoken word are vital to a Christ-centered education. Jesus himself is identified by Scripture as the Word made flesh (John 1). It is by words that God brought his creation into existence. By the word of his power He sustains the universe (Hebrews 1:3). By words we bless and curse, reveal truth and propagate lies, create beauty and destroy it, nurture righteousness or soil it (James 3). God reveals himself to us most specifically through written language and through Jesus, his Word made flesh. In these truths we can see that language is symbolic for realities. When we read, listen, speak, or write, we deal in great realities much weightier than the words (symbols) themselves. Therefore we must approach literature and writing with great reverence.

God desires for our use of language to glorify Him. Consequently, we must exhibit both gratitude and reverence for its power and an active desire to master its uses. God has always used language to communicate his will and person to man and expects his people to use language to glorify Him and to lead others to a rich relationship with Him. Language holds the power for influencing others and reflecting and shaping ideas and meaning. Literacy, the ability to communicate with a language, opens doors of opportunity for expression of Kingdom truth, goodness, and beauty, for learning, for

preservation of knowledge, and for developing both personal and professional relationships to the glory of God.

The Trinitarian nature of God demonstrates the centrality of community in mankind, the *imago dei*. Literature and writing matter because they are how we cultivate or destroy community. Community requires communication. Written and spoken words are the movers of relationships, either toward unity, reconciliation, and strength that glorifies God and brings joy to mankind's heart or toward division, mistrust, and hatred that lead to suffering and injustice. We are called to seek mastery over our tongues—whether through speaking, writing, or listening—by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that they may be used for building others up according to their needs, namely to draw them closer and further in to Christ and his Kingdom, and to differentiate truth, goodness, and beauty from lies, evil, and profanity as we read and listen to the written and spoken words of others.

#### Mission

By studying literature and writing, Capstone students will practice and develop purity, self-denial, love for God and others, diligence, patience, kindness, and humility by becoming selfless writers and speakers for the glory of God and love of fellow man and compassionate, thoughtful, and discerning readers and listeners who seek to understand others in order to better love them and draw them more deeply in to Christ and his Kingdom.

### **Mathematics**

#### Philosophy

Jesus Christ is before all things, and in Him all things hold together (Colossians 1:16-17). In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3). Because we are created in God's image (Genesis 1:27), we have been given the gift of knowledge, though finite and limited. It is with this gift that we explore and gain a framework through which we understand God's creation. God is the ultimate source of mathematical knowledge, and we discover mathematical realities using our God-given intellectual gifts. We did not invent mathematics but rather discovered it. God designed an orderly universe that is governed by laws which can be described through the language of mathematics. The mathematical realities behind these laws exist whether we are aware of them or not. As we discovered these laws, we developed symbols and notation to describe notions and properties.

Although our minds are finite and can never grasp the infinite knowledge of our Creator, they do reflect the order, imagination and inventiveness that his creation demonstrates. Mathematics is used to describe the beauty and order of creation as well as the attributes of God. It reveals God's power, wisdom and infinite nature.

God created us with a mind made for mathematics because we need such a mind to steward his mathematical universe. We can faithfully serve God's purposes for Creation because his unchanging character means that  $2+2=4$  forever and always (Hebrews 13:8). Mathematics provides us with the means to carry out the mandate to be stewards of Creation.

#### Mission

By studying mathematics, Capstone students will develop diligence, humility, and love for God and will care for God's creation and for mankind by applying mathematical reasoning, logic, and problem solving to steward creation, to create beauty, and to do real work to meet the needs of real people for the glory of God.



## ***Science***

### **Philosophy**

To practice science is to look into the eternal power and divine nature of God. It is to view and appreciate the creative power of God. All creation, whether ours or God's, begins with a vision in the mind of the creator. "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse." (Romans 1:20) Science endeavors to study the mind of God. The purpose of science must be to discover the Creator behind the creation.

Since Adam, curiosity and a desire to understand the natural world around us have driven us to practice science. Beginning with Adam, every human has attempted to name, classify, intellectually contain—and even control the unfathomable, vast creation that surrounds us—that is us. There has never been a world without science. It is vital to Christians because it validates our faith and reveals God's creativity, power, artistry, and divine nature. Consequently, the knowledge we gain from science often strengthens our belief in God and evokes praise for Him. It is vital to the human experience because it provides answers to questions about the physical world of human experience and can drastically improve the quality of our biological experience.

Christians must look upon science with excitement—must even embrace it because it is the opportunity to discover more about God's mind and is a catalyst for faith-building discoveries. The great accomplishments of science that have improved our human experience produce awe for perhaps the most wonderful of God's creations, the human mind. Christians must therefore use science to point the world to its Creator, Jehovah God. We must see it as a tool for better service to others. Medicine, engineering, custodial work, auto mechanics, cooking, laundering—virtually any service we can offer our fellow men has been blessed with more effectiveness and efficiency because of science. We must serve others even more diligently as technology improves our ability to do so.

We must realize that science, because it is a creation of mankind, is limited. For all of our scientific prowess, we cannot create more life. We cannot control nature. On the contrary, throughout history, God has used nature and commanded nature to fulfill his will. From the flood of Noah's time, to the plagues in Egypt, to the miracles of Christ and his calming of the storm, and most importantly and powerfully, in the resurrection of Christ, God has illustrated that creation comes from Him and obeys Him. We will never be able to claim that.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to spiritual realities and calls us to focus not on the creation but on the unseen world. Unfortunately, many have made science their savior. The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ demonstrate that eternal life, the cure for all of our physical and spiritual ills, is found in Christ. We overcome the natural order of things—death and decay—through faith in Jesus—not in any part of His creation. Science should help us to appreciate this even more.

### **Mission**

By studying science, Capstone students will grow in reverence and gratitude toward God, will develop the humility, love for God and neighbor, and diligence and will harness the gift of science to steward creation, to create beauty, and to do real work to meet the needs of real people for the glory of God.

## ***History***

### **Philosophy**

God is sovereign over all of history. The study of history is a study of God's great story in which mankind, made in God's image, corrupts that image through sin and falls into depravity, in which God

graciously provides prophets and ultimately a Savior to redeem his people and his creation from the curse of sin, and in which all of mankind is moving toward either restoration or eternal darkness. Christ and his Kingdom are at the center of history, from beginning to end. Therefore all of human history must be interpreted through the lens of the Bible.

Faith is increased by the studying the legacy of the faithful who have gone before us on the journey. Furthermore, they are the witnesses of our performance in the race of life. We learn from both their victories and defeats as they serve as our trainers and mentors for “the race marked out for us” (Hebrews 12:1-3). This spiritual principle inspired by the Holy Spirit provides profound meaning to the study of history and is relevant not only to the study of biblical history, but must also be the driving force in the way we approach all history. For the history books have been molded by people’s desires and behaviors, whether driven by faith or by depravity.

Perhaps more importantly, as God revealed to us through his prophets, the character and hand of a sovereign God is witnessed in history through both judgment and grace. History shows us how God works all things together for the blessing of his people and the praise of his grace (Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:12-13). The character of God is revealed in history from the story of his creation, to his commands for Adam, the Mosaic law, and the New Covenant, to his relationship with the kingdoms of this earth, such as Israel, Sodom and Gomorrah, and Rome. By his common grace, his justice, mercy, and order are strong influences on the laws of nations the world over.

The need for salvation is demonstrated through history as our fallenness is consistently accentuated by our cruelty to our fellow man. The study of world history and diverse cultures provides a rich tapestry of the diversity of the Kingdom of God but also the diversity of expressions of depravity and idolatry. Both are rich resources for how to love the Church and fellow man in all of their diversity. With regard to the idolatry of mankind, history and sociology can provide us with a keen understanding of the worldview and experiences of others so that we may win to Christ as many as possible. The apostle Paul employed his knowledge of the Greek culture to persuade the citizens of Athens. We believe that God would have us study world cultures so that we might be effective in meeting people where they are to draw them to Christ and his Kingdom.

### Mission

By studying history, Capstone students will develop purity, self-denial, love for God and neighbor, diligence, patience, kindness, and humility. They will know God as the providential hand in history and will draw upon historical witness to make wise, good, and beautiful contributions to family, church, community, nation and world, striving for God’s will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

### *Art*

#### Philosophy

God has created the world in beauty, and his people were created to make beauty as well (Exodus 35:1-5; Philippians 4:8). In the making of art we worship the First and Great Artist. The creative spirit of mankind is testimony to the truth that we are made in the image of God. No other living thing imitates God as creator, indeed as artist. Art is ministry to the Kingdom and to the world.

Through art we draw others to Christ and his Kingdom or draw them toward folly and idolatry. The act of creating can often lead to meditation on and appreciation of God’s awesome creative powers. Art often expresses admiration for God’s creation, bringing glory to Him. Just as God expressed Himself through his handiwork, so mankind expresses himself through his art. We can create art to praise God, to bring glory to Him, and to communicate his love, truth, goodness, and beauty in a medium that can evoke holy emotions, but mankind also uses art to express the otherwise inexpressible depths of his

soul. Consequently, studying others' artwork can help us better understand the people, cultures, and worldviews of those in our communities and world so that we can better love them and draw them more deeply in to Christ and his Kingdom.

#### Mission

By studying art, Capstone students will develop purity, self-denial, love for God and neighbor, diligence, patience, kindness, and humility as they practice the ministry of art. They will learn to meditate on the glory of God's creation and to worship through art by developing and practicing artistic skills in various media for the purpose of reflecting Christ and his Kingdom for the joy of all people for the glory of God.

### *Music*

#### Philosophy

Music is a gift from God—a gift that He commands and exhorts us to use to praise Him and to teach and encourage each other. However, the gift of music can also be used for destructive purposes, creating and reinforcing in us evil desires and thoughts that God hates. We are to be faithful stewards of his gift. God has given the believer a new song, and we are to sing it.

Music holds the power to connect the intellect with the emotions, often stirring within the human heart the spirit of the words being sung, helping us to worship God in spirit and in truth. It is this mind-spirit connection that makes song a spiritually formational gift, cultivating the affections for Christ and his Kingdom and educating and encouraging the believer to be faithful to God. We possess God's creative nature, which He has woven into our being so that we can create for Him the worshipful and prayerful expressions that He desires from us as well as gifts of truth, goodness, and beauty to bless one another.

#### Mission

Through the study of music, Capstone students will develop purity, self-denial, love for God and neighbor, diligence, patience, kindness, and humility, will seek cultivation of rightly ordered affections through enjoyment of great music, will discern between foolish and idolatrous music and beautiful music, and will offer worship and prayers to God and ministry to one another through the creation and performance of edifying music that draws the soul more deeply in to Christ and his Kingdom.

### *Physical Education and Health*

#### Philosophy

The human body is a testament to God's wisdom and creative power (Psalm 139:14). It is the vessel for God's most precious creation: life. As God's vessel, the human body exists to accomplish his purposes (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). It is the temple of his Spirit and, for the believer, a member of the Body of Christ. The body belongs to God and should accordingly be treated with great respect and care. God created our bodies as marvelous machines capable of work for the blessing of family and neighbor, cultivation and care for creation, and physical recreation for both our enjoyment and his glory. Through work and sport, we can grow in our admiration of God's design and bring glory to Him. Athletics provides the

opportunity for virtue development in self-denial, diligence, patience, and humility. The highest goal of health and physical education is spiritual, not physical.

### Mission

By studying health and physical fitness, Capstone students will develop self-denial, diligence, patience, and humility and will present their bodies back to God as healthy and fit vessels for service to family, church, and neighbor for their joy and God's glory as they enjoy God's good gift of body in both work and recreation.

## Pedagogy

### *Excellent Capstone teachers. . .*

1. Maintain strong personal and professional characteristics.
2. Show excellence in **curriculum** content planning and management.
3. Demonstrate competence in **instructional practices**, assessment, and management of instruction.
4. Maintain an engaging learning environment and fruitful relationships with students.
5. Contribute to collegiality, community, and effective communication.

### *Philosophical Guidance*

Teachers new to classical education often find its pedagogy rather mysterious. They have been trained in various flavors of instruction—project based learning, 1:1 technology methods, learning clusters, direct instruction, etc.—and they think that classical education is like that. The truth, however, is that classical pedagogy does not fit into a neat package that can be described with an acronym or a short sentence. To understand classical pedagogy, you'll need to understand several important things about it:

- **Classical education is focused on human nature**, and takes its cues and direction from that. We are shaping our students in knowledge and in virtue, and we need to account for their capability and maturity while we encourage them towards excellence. This means, among other things, that instruction may look a little different at different grade levels—an idea that the Trivium model usefully simplifies.
- **Classical education is traditional.** Human beings do not change much over time, and neither do the ways they learn. Teachers should employ strategies that have worked in the past while evaluating whether or not to adapt so-called “new” practices for use in their classrooms. The Trivium model of Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric has been in use since the Middle Ages, and its staying power is in its truth and simplicity: Students must learn the grammar of a subject before they can learn how its pieces fit together—its logic. And they must understand its logic before they can rearrange or explain its pieces in a way that is compelling or beautiful—its rhetoric.
- **Classical education is interested in knowledge as a gift from God.** We approach the world with wonder because it is full of interesting things to know, and because such an approach cultivates a spirit of gratitude and worship of the Creator, Sustainer, and Restorer of all knowledge, regardless of whether said knowledge is tied to monetary profit. We expect that our students will specialize in a particular professional field, but our job is to provide them with a broad and rich knowledge of the world and their place in it, to provide them with a foundation that will allow for all different kinds of specialization.
- **Classical education is concerned with the moral formation of students.** Moral formation occurs in many different ways, and not least in the curriculum. The stories we tell our students and the subjects we focus on shape their moral imaginations and teach them about what is important. The intent of our curriculum is not to be morally pedantic, but to invite our students into a better story that is true, good, and beautiful.
- **Classical education aspires to Socratic discussion.** We want our students to engage seriously in the most difficult questions, but this does not come automatically. It comes by providing our students with a foundation of things to think while simultaneously teaching them how to think.

Often this will look like an ordinary lecture or story, but even early grammar school teachers should be asking probing questions and helping their students to do the same. With a strong basis in knowledge and the intellectual development that comes from asking and answering tough questions, our students will grow into effective thinkers.

### ***The Essential Capstone Lesson Plan***

All teachers are required to provide lesson plans to their Dean according to the manner and schedule requested by the Dean each academic year. An effective lesson plan will include the following components:

- Always a measurable objective (expressed as what the student will be able to do), and sometimes a difficult to measure objective (often expressed in affective or more subjective verbs)
- Discrete, manageable parts (chunks) of the lesson (smaller concepts or elements of the objective) in the order they will be taught, experienced, practiced, or discussed
- Processing strategies
  - Warm-up activity to get students focused and ready to learn and possibly to review previous content
  - Previous content to be reviewed
  - New question, challenge, or curiosity to be introduced and preview of day's lesson
  - Method(s) for engaging with the question, challenge, or curiosity
  - Checking for understanding (formative assessment)
  - Method for review of the day's new content
- Preview question, statement, or sneak peak of the next lesson

### ***Pragmatic Guidance***

- Good pedagogy has students engaged in their learning. They must not be passive recipients of knowledge or they will not retain it. Learning requires attending with one's mind, and teachers must design lessons that provide empirical evidence that student's minds are engaged.
- The schedule provides just enough time to offer a lesson and/or a seminar discussion of a topic or work. Each class period is thus used for instruction while homework is reserved for the home. Natural exceptions to this would be, for instance, in-class essay writing, the completion of a study guide, project, or lab, or the completion of sample problems or exercises to test comprehension prior to attempting the homework.
- Teachers should instruct from the front and center of the classroom, and in peripatetic fashion. If you move around the room while teaching it can help students focus. During seminar-style classes in the Upper School, teachers may sit.
- Pedagogy can include daily warm-ups, review of organizing principles or guiding questions, interactive lecture and discussion, Socratic questioning, seminar, debate, reading aloud, close reading, composition, recitation, call and response, demonstration, lab work, music and theatre performance, drawing and painting in art class, formative assessment, and summative assessment.
- Instructional methods to avoid include project-based instruction, group work, PowerPoint, films, fluffy games and activities, crafts, and methods that disturb learning in nearby classrooms. Research should rarely be a significant focus of class time, especially in the lower grades.
- While students are working independently or testing, teachers should monitor students and move about the room to ensure students are on task and that student work is productive. Teachers may sit at their desks for brief periods of time while students are working.
- Class time is precious, and a minute lost is lost forever. A minute per day not used for instruction adds up to three 60-minute blocks of time, or about three and a half class periods, over the course of the school year. Lessons should begin promptly and end on time.
- From time to time, videos or other media may be used to support a classroom lesson. To be used in class they must meet a specific curricular objective and will not have profane language or sexually explicit material. Teachers must receive prior approval from the Dean to show a video more than 15 minutes in length. Students will not be shown a full movie in class without prior Dean and parent

permission.

Videos are typically of three kinds:

1. strictly educational, e.g. a NASA film on rockets;
2. videos of works read by students, e.g., *Pride and Prejudice*;
3. videos viewed for enjoyment and/or artistic value, e.g. *Citizen Kane*.

**Educational films.** Educational films may be shown at the discretion of each faculty member, so long as the selection to be viewed by the class does not run for more than 15 minutes in length. Faculty must view the entire video ahead of time to ensure that the content of the video is appropriate and applicable to the course. The teacher must have a clear rationale for how the video will advance the understanding of the students, and he/she must do some active teaching to integrate the video into the course (post-viewing discussion and/or writing assignment, requirement of note-taking, etc.). It is not adequate to show a video and let it speak for itself; a lifetime of television viewing likely means that when the “tube” is on, the student’s mind is habitually off. Teachers must exert extra effort to counteract this unfortunate mental habit so common to the visual age in which we live.

**Videos of works read by students.** Since our school is deeply committed to the reading and understanding of original texts, the viewing of videos of works in the second category—works already read, or to be read—is generally prohibited. The video is a medium entirely different than the book, and is, indeed, another interpretation of the work. Further, a film/video of a work of literature limits the imaginative possibilities of the student, and can be misused as a shortcut to understanding it. In some cases, we do view screenplays of dramatic works we have already read to better understand the interpretive possibilities of stage performance. If a faculty member wishes to show a film in this category, the permission of the Headmaster is required. Note that video biographies of authors should likewise not be shown. We read great literature because of what it is, not because of who wrote it; the great books are immeasurably more interesting and rewarding than are facts about the lives of their authors. Class time should always be devoted to these inexhaustible classics, not to biographical curiosity that distracts from the study of these works. Biographical information that aids exegesis of a text is the exception to this rule.

**Videos viewed for enjoyment and/or artistic value.** Videos of this last category are not permitted unless Dean approval has been granted. There are some films that can offer insight into a historical period or an aspect of classical culture that may be appropriate for a specific course, but this determination will need to be made on a case-by-case basis.

### *Going Outside for Class*

Generally speaking, class should not take place outside. The distractions of the outdoors and the novelty of a change of pace often make it impossible for students to learn outside. Possible exceptions are few and far between, but could include an art lesson sketching from nature or a science lesson gathering natural objects for observation or a lab. In the grammar school, remember that students spend a great deal of time outdoors during recess and can be encouraged to gather nature samples for science class during that time.

### *Classroom Appearance*

- Classroom décor should reflect the serious work that teachers in a classical school do. Teachers are encouraged to use posters and other decorative items that reflect the course content and a Christian liberal arts environment.
- Classrooms should be clean, organized, and free of clutter. Student work should be displayed in an organized fashion. Teachers are encouraged to create special displays of truly excellent student work outside of their classrooms for the whole school to see. Additionally, we will host many

parents and visitors throughout the school year, and to these guests we are an example of classical Christian education, and we want to share the good fruit of our ministry well.

- In decorating your classroom, avoid clutter. Simplicity is beautiful and gives students room to think.

## ***Homework***

Homework is an important part of a classical education. At Capstone, it is designed to be the kind of work that provides practice and deep work sessions that a student cannot experience as easily at school. Reading, writing, and math practice are the most common types of homework. Homework should not be busy work (work that appears to be given by the teacher simply to keep a student busy or to provide points to add to the gradebook).

- Why do we assign homework?
  - **An essential part of learning.** There is no doubt homework done right leads to sustained learning gains. Research from both cognitive science and generations of experience prove this to be true. Having said this, it is important to underscore the following: homework should be targeted and not assigned simply for the sake of giving homework. While we often say that we promote knowledge and learning for its own sake, we do not promote homework for its own sake.
  - **Provides for practice of newly learned concepts.** It enables students to prepare for what the class will do in the next day's lesson. Sometimes we can provide sufficient time in class for practice as well as for reading and other preparation for the next lesson. Whenever we can do this, we should. We ought to aim to complete as much in school as possible so that students' homework time is minimal. As we cannot always get it all done in class, we assign homework.

### ***best homework practices***

- Homework should be posted daily in the classroom, and reviewed orally at the beginning or at the end of class. It must also be printed in weekly grammar school classroom newsletters, or for Upper School students in 7th grade and up, posted on FACTS daily.
- Don't overdo it. Students spend about 7 hours per day at school. After a long day's effort, a typical child does not have much left in his intellectual fuel tank. Plus, he has other important waking-hour obligations outside of school, namely, those related to family time. These include the evening meal, chores, devotionals, leisure or play, and rest. We should keep all of this in mind as we plan our lessons and consider what homework to assign each day. While what we do with children at school is weighty and essential, we must always consider their lives beyond the school day and the nature of their human souls. Young people need rest and time to engage in other endeavors. We must strive to provide a vigorous learning experience for our children but avoid overextending them and extinguishing their love of learning.

### ***targeted homework that can and should be assigned***

- **Practice:** Quick practice of newly learned content is helpful (e.g. grammar, vocab, math facts or algorithms, recitations). The saying "practice makes perfect" does not only apply to music or athletics, but it most definitely relates to learning academic facts and concepts. The age-old and classical adage "repetition is the mother of all learning" is apropos. There is no substitute for time on task. Students need practice if concepts are to become part of their long-term memory/learning. We can and should do a good part of this in class. Practice sometimes extends beyond the school day.

Note: practice refers to concepts to which students have already been introduced in class. Do not send home new concepts for practice for which you do not have sufficient evidence that the students have understood the new concepts.

- **Preparation for new content:** Preparatory homework typically involves short assignments that include background reading and “hook exercises” or “preview assignments.” These prepare students so they can hit the ground running when they enter class the next day (e.g. reading in history, literature, science, and in other disciplines prior to class discussions), this may involve annotating or answering a very brief number of guided reading questions. If a literature teacher is going to begin a new novel tomorrow, it helps a great deal if students have some background knowledge coming in. Background reading, and hooks or previews, help get students ready to learn. It is important to emphasize that you should not expect students to come in knowing every detail about the evening reading, and we should emphasize that with the students themselves. The preparatory work is meant to get them ready for class the next day, where the teacher will lead students into a deeper understanding of the content.
- **Long-term assignments:** Long-term assignments include extended essays, research papers, history or science fair projects, etc., and involve both work completed inside the classroom and work done at home, usually over an extended number of days. These are limited in number and geared more toward Upper School classes. When this type of homework is assigned, other homework should be reduced or eliminated for a time, depending on the length and nature of the assignment, so the student can work on the long-term assignment.

#### *inappropriate homework practices*

- Homework should not be used to make up lost time in class, whereby students are expected to learn essential content on their own.
- Homework that falls under the categories of practice and preparation should not be counted as major portions of students’ grades (see grading policies).
- Under no circumstance should homework be used as a form of punishment.

#### *expected homework time*

Students in kindergarten and up will have some homework nearly every day. Students in grades K-6 should spend 20 to 30 minutes every evening reading, whether or not reading homework is assigned. We encourage families to choose a book to read as a family and to make a little progress on it every night. As a general rule, a student can expect 10 minutes of homework per grade level plus additional time for reading. So, a 1st grader will have approximately 10 minutes of homework per night (plus reading time), and a 6th grader will have approximately 60 minutes, or one hour. In the Upper School (7th-12th), students can expect to have up to 2 hours of homework per night, 30-60 minutes of which should be reading time.

These times serve as guidelines and may vary depending on the work assigned on a given day, the schedule, the student’s organizational skills and study habits, the varying abilities of the students, and the nature of the assignments. Students are expected to learn how to use their time effectively to complete the required work at each grade level. Parents are expected to support their children in this endeavor.

The proper balance of non-academic home life and academic home life is important to healthy living for students and their families. It is important for parents to share with teachers and staff when the homework experience is offering diminishing returns. The Capstone faculty is committed to designing a homework program that honors the best that homework has to offer while blessing each home with time for other important aspects of family life and the life of the student’s community of faith.



***poor or incomplete work***

For poor or incomplete work, teachers may require students to redo an assignment. Whether such work is given any credit is left to the discretion of the teacher. Students are expected to complete all of their homework.

***late homework policies***

In addition to helping students to meet learning objectives, homework also teaches students responsibility and accountability. In order to accomplish this, and to ensure students do not fall behind on their school work, it is essential that students complete their work on time. Students who have an excused absence will have the number of days equal to the number of days absent to make up class and homework without penalty up to 7 days. Homework will not be sent home nor will credit be awarded for any work done during periods of unexcused absence. In grades 3-12, homework submitted one day late will receive 75% credit and two days late will receive 50% credit. Homework submitted more than two days late will not receive credit. In grades K-2, students with late homework may be required to complete work during lunch, recess, or with the teacher outside of school hours. Any time a pattern of poor, incomplete, or late homework develops, the teacher will consult with the parents to develop a strategy for improvement.

***Tests and Quizzes*****Lower School**

**Grades K-2:** The content and amount of written work, including tests and quizzes, should depend on the class's place within the literacy and orthography. Students should not be writing beyond their phonemic awareness. History, science, and literature assessments at these grade levels may be oral, aural, or pictorial. The assessments for literacy and math are prescribed by the *Literacy Essentials* and *Singapore Mathematics* programs, respectively. Tests should average 15-25 minutes in these grade levels.

**Grades 3-6:** Students at these grade levels should not be held to the expectations outlined below for Upper School students. However, teachers should be mindful of their students' abilities and progress throughout the year and as they matriculate into grades 5 and 6, in order to create appropriate assessments. Tests at these grade levels should take the average student 20-35 minutes, depending on the specific grade level. Teachers should not give more than one test per day unless the tests do not require studying and preparation at home. A one- or two-page review sheet should be given to the students in advance.

Teachers are to actively proctor all assessments. They should spread desks out as precautionary measures. Teachers must go over directions and answer questions before the test begins. Teachers must circulate frequently around the room and up and down the rows. Students are to raise their hand for tissues or to sharpen pencils to assist the teacher in monitoring assessment integrity.

**Upper School****Tests**

A test should take the average student 40-50 minutes to complete. Tests cover a unit of work (for example, a chapter or two in history or science, a book in literature, a unit of grammar). Tests must be announced to the students in advance. Teachers should spend a class period or a portion of a class period reviewing the material that will be assessed. Open-note and open-book tests are prohibited.

**Quizzes**

A quiz should take the average student no more than 25 minutes to complete. Quizzes can cover anything from last night's reading homework to a portion of a unit. Quizzes may be announced or unannounced

(pop quizzes). Teachers may choose to allow their students to use their notes on specific quizzes (such as reading quizzes or pop quizzes).

## **Exams**

A comprehensive assessment is given at the end of each trimester. The assessment should be representative of the entire trimester's curriculum and counts for 10% of the semester grade. Review sheets must be given to the students at least three weeks before the exam date.

## **Test Calendar (Upper School)**

In 7th-8th grades, no section of students should have more than one test, essay, or major project due on the same day. In 9th-12th, students may have no more than 2 tests, essays, or major projects due on the same day. In all grades, the faculty should not give students more than 3 tests, essays, or major projects per week.

All teachers must record their tests, major quizzes, project due dates, or essay due dates on the shared Google test calendar for the relevant grade/section of students at least three days in advance of administering them.

The calendar works on a first-come, first-served basis, but teachers should be flexible and try to accommodate the reasonable needs of other teachers whenever possible. The purpose of the test calendar is to space out work for our students in a way that allows them to give each major assignment the attention it deserves and to give our students a manageable schedule.

## **Study Guides**

It is important to make use of study guides in a thoughtful way. Used poorly, a study guide could cause students to think that their only task is memorization, not deeper thinking, or it could increase a student's anxiety about a text. Here are some general points about study guides to help you design them well:

- In grades K-4, the study guide should be no more than 1 page. Provide a list of questions on one side, and then answers on the flip side. Simple, straightforward. Have a few questions that are open-ended without a specific answer on the back. These might be phrased like, "Tell me about. . ." or "How are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ different from each other?"
- In grades 5-6, the study guide should be no more than 2 pages. At this level, open-ended questions as a study guide are better than a list of points to memorize. Sometimes both will be necessary, but do not reduce the content to a list of factual points, and do not make the study guide essentially a copy of the text itself.
- Use the study guide to show the parents and students that what we are teaching is fascinating, open-ended, and rich for discussion.
- Remember that tests should be predictable. The study guide should be more challenging than the actual test. Use a study guide to show students the depth and complexity of the subject but then be very reasonable in your expectations for a test. Students should typically study more than you will actually ask on the test itself.

## **Grading**

Grading is not the be-all and end-all of education. If anything, some students put more emphasis on grades than their teachers do. The grade a student receives in a class is subordinate to the knowledge the student acquires. Still, grades are a useful tool to evaluate the extent to which a student has mastered a particular subject, and they are an important way that the school communicates with integrity the growth and development of each student. Capstone parents deserve and are entitled to feedback that gives them an accurate picture of how their children are doing in school. Pre-K through 2nd grade students receive

skill and knowledge-specific mastery level ratings on their report cards. Students in grades 3-12 receive traditional letter grades on their report cards, assignments, and assessments in all subjects.

### *accurate grade assurance*

Capstone Classical Academy assigns grades in order to accurately reflect the range between true mastery and insufficient knowledge of a subject. Grade inflation, which is the common problem of grades reporting student success even though the student is struggling, will be discouraged by the following policies:

- A portfolio of completed and graded formative and summative assessments for each student will be maintained by each teacher in every subject until August 1 after the completion of the school year in which the assessments were completed.
- Seventy-five percent (75%) of the quarter grade must be summative assessment (formal teacher evaluations of discrete student knowledge and skills, chapter tests, unit tests, formal papers and essays, projects that assess independent student mastery, etc.)
- No more than 3% of the grade may be class participation.
- No more than 10% of the quarter grade may be homework.
- Extra credit is not permitted in any classes.

For letter and percentage grades, an examination of students' grades should show that no student's quarter grade is more than 10% higher than his or her summative assessment average (formal teacher evaluations, chapter tests, unit tests, formal papers and essays, projects that assess independent student mastery, etc.)

### *grade reporting*

Pre-K through 12th grade report cards are provided to parents at the end of each trimester (every 12 weeks). GPA is only calculated and reported for Upper School students. For Upper School students, GPA is based upon the final grade for a course and not upon semester grades alone.

For Pre-K, parents are provided three narrative reports of their child's growth in developmental and program benchmarks as well as mastery level ratings using the K-2nd system for mastery reporting (see below).

At Capstone, we spend a lot of time and effort defining what the standard for mastery is. We are committed to every student that graduates from Capstone having met a well-defined and rigorous standard for mastery of key knowledge and skills. We grade based upon comparison to the standard — not comparison to the performance of others. We will not grant credit to students who do not meet the standard in a subject and will not grant A's to students who don't often exceed the standard.

For K-2nd (all subjects) and grades 3 to 7 in foundational and prerequisite skills, the following marks for mastery reporting are utilized:

E-Exceeds the standard for this point in the school year  
 M-Meets the standard for this point in the school year  
 S-Short of the standard for this point in the school year  
 N-Needs immediate intensive support or remediation

For 3rd grade and up, the following grading scale is utilized for rote knowledge in content-heavy subjects, while foundational and prerequisite skills receive mastery marks outlined above (GPA for Upper School only). For grades 7-12, the scale below is used across all subjects:

<b>Grades 3-6</b>		<b>Grades 7-12</b>	
A	Exceeds the standard	B	Meets the standard

C	Struggling to meet the standard	B	Sometimes exceeds the standard
DF	Does not meet the standard and requires a support plan and remediation	C	Meets the standard
		D	Struggling to meet the standard
		F	Does not meet the standard and requires a support plan and remediation
A	Often exceeds the standard		

	Grade Scale	Unweighted Quality Points	Weighted Quality Points	Honors Quality Bonus	AP/Dual Quality Bonus
A+	98–100	4.00	4.67	+ .5 / credit	+1 / credit
A	93–97	4.00	4.33	+ .5 / credit	+1 / credit
A-	90–92	4.00	4.00	+ .5 / credit	+1 / credit
B+	87–89	3.00	3.67	+ .5 / credit	+1 / credit
B	83–86	3.00	3.33	+ .5 / credit	+1 / credit
B-	80–82	3.00	3.00	+ .5 / credit	+1 / credit
C+	77–79	2.00	2.67	+ .5 / credit	+1 / credit
C	73–76	2.00	2.33	+ .5 / credit	+1 / credit
C-	70–72	2.00	2.00	+ .5 / credit	+1 / credit
D	60–69	1.00	1.00	0	0
F	59 & below	0	0	0	0

High school final grades are calculated and then included on the transcript based upon the following weights:

Trimester 1 Term	90% of Trimester 1
Trimester 1 Exam	10% of Trimester 1
Trimester 2 Term	90% of Trimester 2
Trimester 2 Exam	10% of Trimester 2
Trimester 3 Term	90% of Trimester 3
Trimester 3 Exam	10% of Trimester 3

Final Course Grade	Average of All Three Trimesters
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In grades 7-12, all trimester and final grades expressed as traditional letter grades or percentages are rounded to one tenth of one percent. No grades will be rounded to the nearest whole percentage point. Teachers do not have the discretion to round to a whole percentage point.

### *High school GPA calculations*

In order to calculate a grade-point average or GPA, numeric grades are converted into points based on the grading scales above. Quality points are awarded for each class at the end of the course. Total quality points earned are divided by total credits attempted to determine the student's GPA. The year and cumulative GPA are calculated for high school students and published on official transcripts. The school may at times calculate a trimester GPA for occasional honors, references for student applications to

outside organizations or for scholarship opportunities. The same method is used but with shorter terms than the full course. GPAs are rounded to one one-hundredth of a point.

Students completing high school level courses in grade levels 6-8 are awarded high school credit. The final grades and credits are reported on the student's transcript; however, any high school level courses completed in grade levels 6-8 will not be calculated in a student's cumulative high school GPA.

Because weighting procedures and level of rigor vary greatly from institution to institution, Honors and AP courses taken at other schools will be given standard 4-point quality points only and are not eligible for weighted bonus points on the Capstone transcript. Class ranking will be reported on the official Capstone high school transcript based upon the cumulative weighted GPA for all students but will not include weighted bonuses from other schools.

### ***School Activities Outside of Class***

Field trips, competitions, and other off-campus activities can be positive experiences for students and teachers and are a beneficial part of the Capstone experience. At Capstone, students have opportunities to participate in both academic and co-curricular activities that interrupt the school day. Off-campus activities are limited in order to emphasize strongly the importance of the classroom. The Dean must approve every off-campus trip and interruption to class.

### **Parent Partnership in Academic Progress**

Capstone Classical Academy commits to regular and timely communication with all of its parents regarding adequate progress of their children in curriculum. To honor this commitment, teachers should keep the following commitments to parents:

- Prompt grading of all formal assessment of their children and reporting of grades in a timely manner that allows for parent-teacher intervention and support when needed.
- Work with parents to strategically plan for and to provide early intervention when their student is struggling to meet the standard.
- Provide parent-teacher conference opportunities throughout the year as needed. Please be invitational for parents to conference with you as you and they see fit. (Not just on school wide conference days)
- Keep FACTS grade book and student evidence of learning current so that you are always prepared to answer questions and to be proactive on students' behalves.
- Provide transparent, helpful, specific feedback on graded student assignments and assessments.

### **Academic Placement, Promotion, and Retention**

The Capstone admissions process is designed to collect as much academic information as possible from the sending school to help our administration and faculty determine the student's current mastery level in math, reading, and writing. When insufficient information is available to our admissions team, we administer an academic assessment to ensure that we properly place the student in the courses or grade level most conducive to the student's long-term success. Our decisions regarding placement are based upon our best judgment as to how to best serve each student. These decisions are based upon objective evidence regarding the student's strengths and challenges within the core content areas.

There are several options for both new students and re-enrolling students with regard to placement from one school year to the next:

- Placement in the next sequential grade level with no adjustments made.
- Placement in the next sequential grade level pending successful completion of additional remediation or coursework before the start of the next term.

- A hybrid schedule that places the student in different levels based upon varying mastery levels across different disciplines.
- Any of the above with an individualized learning plan (ILP) in place, providing tailored teaching strategies, support, and accommodations to help the student reach his potential.
- Retention in the current grade level for all courses.
- Recommendation that the student withdraw to be placed in a program that will better meet his needs.

### ***General Guidelines for Promotion to the Next Grade Level or Course***

To be promoted to the next grade level, all of the following standards must be met.

#### ***Kindergarten-6<sup>th</sup> Grade***

- Reads above grade level (as assessed using repeated standardized reading assessments).
- For grades K-2, meets the standard in English phonogram mastery.
- Meets the standard in mathematics, with or without support.
- Meets the standard in at least three of English, history, science, Bible, and (6th Grade) Latin, with or without support.
- Meets the standard on the end-of-year reading and math assessments.

#### ***7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade***

- Attain an end-of-year 1.7 GPA (C- or higher) in the core subjects (English, math, history, science, Bible, and Latin) to pass to the next grade.
- Pass at least 4 of the core subjects with a 60% or higher.
- Students who fail end of course exams in English or mathematics may be retained.

#### ***9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade***

- Pass minimum of 5 required classes per year
- Stay on track for earning the required credits for graduation by the scheduled graduation date.\*

\*High school promotion and graduation is about credits earned rather than grade level designation, therefore the focus is on earning the required credits to graduate. Some students may graduate a year later than anticipated if they fail required credits multiple times and are unable to make them up in time.

## **Academic Honesty**

A school that does not take academic honesty seriously does not take education in wisdom nor virtue seriously. As a classical Christian school, honesty is written into our honor code and will be highly esteemed and treasured by our faculty, students, and their parents. It is the conviction of Capstone Classical Academy that academic honesty is at the very core of the integrity of the school's culture and credibility and is essential to the excellence of our students' academic formation and virtue development. We believe that all students can learn quickly the importance of academic honesty and can exercise self-discipline and integrity once they have been properly shepherded through one or two transgressions. Many will deeply internalize this virtue early and will never falter, while others will need to learn through making mistakes. We believe all can and will become people of intellectual honesty.

### ***Plagiarism***

Plagiarism will not be tolerated by any teacher in any subject. Teachers cannot accurately assess students and nurture their growth if the work they turn in is not their own. Plagiarism robs the student of formative educational experiences and constitutes a form of theft of others' ideas and labor. Plagiarism is defined as the appropriation of another's ideas or words in order to present them as one's own. An instance of plagiarism can be as long as a term paper or as short as a sentence. Simply rephrasing an author's words

can also constitute plagiarism. The words and original ideas of authors can only be used when properly quoted and/or cited. Teachers will provide the guidelines for acceptable use and citation of the work of others. When in doubt, the student has the responsibility to ask how an author should be used in an assignment.

Regarding cumulative records of academic dishonesty, in grades K-2, every student starts with a “clean slate” every school year. Grades 3-4 keep their own cumulative two-year record. Likewise, grades 5-6 keep their own two-year cumulative record. During these early years, students grow and change, learning so much as they go, that frequent fresh starts are granted. In the Upper School, however, the record starts in 7th grade and is kept through 12th grade. An offense in 7th grade would be the first offense, and a subsequent offense in 10th grade would be considered a second offense.

### *Lower School*

Plagiarism in the lower school is rare and often caused by ignorance more than a desire to cheat the system. Each case will be shepherded based on the context and details of the circumstances. For students at this age, simply having to rewrite plagiarized assignments provides sufficient learning and reform.

- The teacher will keep a copy of the student’s assignment and, whenever possible, a copy of the plagiarized work.
- The teacher will discuss the matter with the student.
- The teacher will inform the student’s parent of the plagiarism.
- First incident: The student will rewrite the assignment properly and ethically and will receive full credit for the new submission, and more importantly, the formative experience of finishing well and receiving helpful feedback from his teacher.
- Second and subsequent incidents:
  - The teacher will inform the Dean of the incident.
  - The student will rewrite the assignment properly and ethically but will receive no credit for the new submission. The formative experience of finishing well and receiving helpful feedback from his teacher will be his reward.

### *Upper School*

Whenever a student has been caught plagiarizing, the following process will be followed.

- The teacher will keep a copy of the student’s assignment and, whenever possible, a copy of the plagiarized work.
- The teacher will inform the Dean of the incident.
- The teacher will discuss the matter with the student.
- The teacher will inform the student’s parent of the plagiarism.
- The student will receive an F (an automatic zero) on the assignment if it is the first offense.
- The student will rewrite the assignment properly and ethically but will receive no credit for the new submission. He will, however, benefit from the formative experience of finishing well and receiving helpful feedback from his teacher.
- On second and subsequent offenses, the student will receive an F (automatic zero) on the assignment, will receive a 50% F for the course for the semester or his current average if below a 50%, and will rewrite the assignment properly and ethically. The value of completion of the assignment and the teacher assessment and feedback are the student’s reward for finishing the task well.
- High school students found guilty of academic dishonesty or similar serious offenses may, if applicable and at the discretion of the Dean, lose offices held within the school, positions of privilege or responsibility, honors, and awards.

### *All Grade Levels*

Any student who practices academic dishonesty more than twice in either Upper or Lower School will be referred to the Headmaster and his chosen discipline committee to discuss how to best

serve the student and support his parents in overcoming this significant threat to his spiritual formation. The discipline policy explains the role of the discipline committee.

### ***Cheating***

Like plagiarism, cheating will not be tolerated by any teacher in any subject. Cheating occurs when a student uses someone else's work or a prohibited source of information in order to gain dishonest advantage on a test or an assignment or to avoid doing his own work. Cheating comes in many forms. One student copying from another, a student using a "cheat sheet" to answer questions on a test, and a student trying to pass off another student's work as his own are examples of cheating. The same process outlined for plagiarism will be followed for instances of cheating, including that students caught cheating will fail the assignment. A student who willfully allows others to copy his work will also be held accountable in the same fashion.

High school students found guilty of academic dishonesty or similar serious offenses may, if applicable and at the discretion of the Dean, be removed from offices held within the school, positions of privilege or responsibility, honors, and awards.

All grade 7-12 incidents of academic dishonesty become a part of the student's cumulative discipline record.

## **Student Support Services**

As a private school that receives no tax revenue, Capstone Classical Academy is not subject to the Federal requirements of IDEA or FAPE. However, Capstone is ethically obligated by God and our inspired mission to honestly assess our program's capacity to meet the needs of our students and of student applicants. We owe parents an objective professional recommendation regarding their child's placement at Capstone. When we admit a student, we are committing to doing everything within our power and resources to help that student reach his potential in our classrooms, fields, courts, and stages.

All students accepted to Capstone Classical Academy have been interviewed and screened to assess learning, social, and emotional needs before the first day of school. The admissions process is designed to discover any special support services that may be needed in order for the new student to thrive at Capstone. In an ideal world, there are no surprises after enrollment. However, whether we discover before enrollment or after that a student has special needs for which we had not planned, the team of faculty, administration, parents, and support staff goes to work on assessing the needs and the best solutions.

Capstone has a method for developing student support plans that provide assessment, strategic direction, and accountability for follow through on plans that will help every student succeed.

1. When you observe patterns of struggle or clues to a developing struggle in a student's educational experience, or when the student expresses his own concerns, you must complete a written student support referral, which can be in the form of an email to your Dean.
2. The Dean will meet with the student, the student's teachers, and the parents in coordinated meetings to complete a full team assessment of the circumstances.
3. The Dean will recommend outside professional assessment such as psychological educational evaluations, speech or occupational therapist assessments, etc., or suggest that further monitoring and study of variables be conducted in the short-term to provide more insight prior to referral to outside assessments.
4. Regardless of whether referral is made outside of the school, an initial First Tier individualized learning plan (ILP) will be drafted by the student's team and is implemented for a specified period of time.
5. At a reevaluation meeting, the team will either modify the ILP and or continue with it if progress has been evident, or continue with the ILP but make a referral for outside assessment to learn more about how to best help the student (particularly if the ILP has not produced positive gains).



6. When outside professional reports are provided to the team, the ILP will be revisited, and the team will either (1) draft an improved ILP with the new information provided by the reports or (2) determine that the needs of the student cannot be met at Capstone due to lack of resources to deliver an appropriate program to meet the student's needs.
7. Should a new ILP be drafted, a regular schedule will be followed to review program fidelity to the ILP, student progress, and to recommend possible modification to the ILP.
8. The goal for most students is to equip them to become adept at modifying their own approach to school to accommodate their own unique challenges, to self-advocate for the support they need to reach their potential, and to accept their own uniqueness while leveraging their gifts to follow their calling in life.

ILP's provide accommodations that help students to master more of the curriculum and to demonstrate to their teachers more accurately what they have learned. ILPs do not lower the curriculum standards for students. All Capstone students will be measured against the standards of mastery defined for each subject, regardless of whether they are learning with an ILP.

## Graduation Requirements

Biblical Studies	2	Including systematic theology, Church history, Old Testament Studies, and New Testament Studies
English	4	
Mathematics	4	Including Algebra II and one credit for which Algebra II is a prerequisite
Science	4	Including at least one lab-based physical science and one biology
History-Civics	4	Including world history, U.S. history, American Government, Politics, Economics
Logic/Rhetoric & Philosophy	3	
Fine Arts	1	
Languages	2	
PE	1	
<u>Electives</u>	<u>3</u>	
Total	28	

## Upper School Co-Curricular Eligibility Requirements

All co-curricular activities at Capstone are designed to be purposefully formational just as the core curriculum is. Therefore, we never want students to miss opportunities in these activities. Nevertheless, the core curriculum required for graduation is a higher priority due to our nature as a classical academy. To ensure that all students also prioritize their studies in the core curriculum and to promote mastery in the Capstone core, the academy utilizes an eligibility policy for participation in practices, rehearsals, and performances in co-curricular activities that are not part of a credit-bearing course in the Capstone curriculum. This policy applies to ancillary performance groups in the arts, athletics, interscholastic academic competitions, clubs, and select social events as determined by the Deans.

Eligibility is not part of our disciplinary response plan and is not used as a disciplinary measure. It is used to help students set appropriate priorities and to manage their responsibilities with discernment.

To remain eligible, after the second week of classes in each quarter, students must:

- Have a 70% cumulative quarter average of all grades in credit-bearing or graded courses.
- Have no more than one class with a percentage grade below a 60%.

- Have no classes with a quarter percentage grade below a 50%.
- Have no currently outstanding assignments.
- Not be on behavioral probation.

The eligibility list will be generated every Friday and will govern participation in activities during the following week. A student may become eligible during the course of any week by satisfying the eligibility requirements. A student may not become ineligible in the middle of a week.

During the first week in which a student fails to meet the eligibility requirements, he or she will be provided an email notice regarding the steps necessary to remain eligible. If the requirements are not met during the warning week, the student will be notified by email that he or she is ineligible for the following week and each subsequent week until all requirements are met. During the warning week, the student must complete a written plan to regain eligibility and have the plan signed by each teacher of a course for which the student has a failing grade or outstanding assignments.

## Reporting Attendance and Tardies

Grammar school teachers are expected to record attendance in FACTS within the first 10 minutes of the school day. Upper School teachers are expected to report attendance through FACTS within the first 10 minutes of each class period.

- Grammar school teachers record attendance once at the beginning of the school day. All early dismissals are recorded by office staff.
- Upper School teachers record attendance each period of the day. All early dismissals are recorded by office staff.
- All absences should be marked unexcused by the teacher. The office staff will change absence codes to excused once an acceptable excuse is provided by the parents.
- All tardies should be marked unexcused by the teacher unless a written excuse is received from the office or office staff have already noted the excuse in FACTS.

## Communication Matters

### Written Communication Standards

All written communication being sent as an official document from Capstone Classical Academy must be orderly, legible, and professional in appearance. It must reflect the rules of standard edited English (correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, mechanics).

### Email

Email is an effective tool for some kinds of communication. However, it should not be the preferred communication vehicle when conflict is likely or inherent in the dialogue or when the topic is sensitive or emotionally-charged. Because tone is difficult to read in an email, bad news is better delivered in person or by phone.

For routine communication within the building, email is preferred over paper. Teachers are expected to check their email several times a day during the school day. Responding to email in a timely manner regarding work-related issues is an expectation.

Teachers are expected to establish boundaries that allow them to focus on caring for themselves and their families at night and on the weekends. They are not expected to be checking and responding to work emails in the evenings and on the weekends. Capstone administrators will strive to lead by example in this area. We want to honor God by being attentive to our personal devotions and home and church ministries and not just to our school ministry.

## **Social Media**

Teachers must ensure that all social media activity supports the mission of the school and provides a positive, Christian example for any stakeholders who may see it.

## **Prohibition Against Personal Storage and Sharing of Photos and Videos of Students, etc.**

Employees other than the Marketing and Communications Director may not share or transmit pictures (digital or print) or recordings (video or sound) of the interior of the school, students, school employees, student work, or student social artifacts, whether online via social media, websites, other public forums, email, or text without permission from the Headmaster and the Marketing and Communications Director.

The marketing and communications office carefully curates content to be shared and controls its transmission based upon legal and school policy requirements.

Employees should not create such content for personal reasons. Any such content captured on an employee's personal device in fulfillment of assigned duties must be transferred to a school device or school cloud account and must be deleted on the employee's personal device or accounts. Such content created by parents and shared directly by the parent to the employee may be retained by the employee on their own device or cloud accounts but must not be shared per this policy.

## **Communicating with the Media**

- It is important that Capstone employees speak with a single, unified voice when communicating with the press. Should you be contacted by the media, please refer the contact to the Headmaster.
- Only the Headmaster and his designee are permitted to speak with members of the press about Capstone.
- It is the general practice of Capstone to be open to public interest and inquiry, including inviting local media outlets to cover significant events and features at the school. All faculty and staff are expected to help participate in good communication with the public and the press and to be ambassadors of the school and the school community.
- At the direction of the Headmaster or his designee, faculty and staff may be asked to participate in photos or stories for use in social or traditional media on behalf of the school or one of our institutional partners (e.g. Hillsdale College). Faculty and staff are not required to participate, but those who do not wish to participate should provide reasonable notice in writing to the Headmaster. The school will make significant effort to honor requests for privacy, but may not be able to honor retroactive requests.

## **Communication with Parents**

Parent partnership is one of our core commitments to make our vision a reality. Teachers are encouraged to communicate with parents in a variety of ways: by making telephone calls; by sending letters, email, or computer printouts; by posting comments in FACTS; or by meeting in conferences. Final grades must not be the parents' first clue that their student's academic performance or behavior needs improvement.

Grades in FACTS (Upper School) or the teacher's preferred gradebook (Lower School) should be kept current at all times. Grades for daily assignments and small assessments such as quizzes should be graded and posted in FACTS within 48 hours of the due date. Tests and other large assessments or projects should be graded and posted in FACTS within 5 school days, but as soon as possible.

Although parents have also been told that teachers will return telephone calls within twenty-four hours, the administration actually expects teachers to return the call the same day unless there is an unusual circumstance. If you have difficulty reaching the parents, please let the Dean know.

Parent conferences are typically between the teacher and the parent. In the rare event of a conflict or difficult parent, teachers are encouraged to ask the Dean to participate in the conference.

Parents may request conferences with one or more teachers by emailing them directly or by calling the school office to leave a message for them since teachers will usually be busy with classes during school hours. Teachers will make every effort to meet with parents at a time that is convenient and expedient for both parties. During the school day, parents are welcome to visit a classroom, but they are asked to provide advance notice out of consideration for the teacher.

When a student fails a class for the quarter or for the year, the teacher must communicate with the parents by phone or in person before the grades are finalized.

### **Copies of Communication on File**

Teachers should keep copies of their communication with parents on file on their computers, email accounts, or physical files. All written communication with parents should be by school email only and not by text, social media messaging, or other apps. Using school email helps to create a formal record of all written communication and helps to keep exchanges professional.

### **Professional Boundaries with Parents, Colleagues, and Community Members**

Maintaining proper professional boundaries with Capstone stakeholders at all times is an essential responsibility of every employee. Failure to maintain these boundaries can lead to serious damage to the school's reputation and effectiveness in fulfilling its mission and can create irreparable breaches in trust between school and home and between colleagues, hindering and even destroying community partnerships.

The content of faculty and staff meetings, professional conversations between colleagues, student records, faculty lunch conversations, leadership meetings, faculty meetings, and virtually every other professional activity that takes place within the bounds of the employee's professional duties and clock hours should be considered confidential. All employees should act according to the following guidelines to assist them in maintaining professional boundaries.

Regarding sharing of information and opinions, do not share unless the information is:

- Essential to fulfilling your obligation to the stakeholder with whom you are communicating.
- Uniquely part of your specific, assigned role and responsibility within the school.
- Needed by the listener in order for them to fulfill their contracted professional or God-given role in the school or their family.
- Public knowledge that has been identified by the Headmaster and the Director of Marketing and Communication as a part of a strategic plan to communicate publicly.
- Edifying to the hearer and beneficial to the strong reputation of the person about whom or subject about which you are speaking.
- From a spirit of specific professional Christian service required of you by your supervisor and the Lord.

Regarding relationships with parents, colleagues, and students:

### *Parents*

- Capstone employees are professional service providers under financial contractual obligations to Capstone parents.
- Parents should not be treated or regarded as friends in any of the employee's interactions with them. Parents are customers and are only entitled to information and relationships that are fitting for their contractual arrangement with the school.
- On campus, when interacting with parents who are also friends, employees must act as professional partners only.
- If a friendship exists between an employee and a parent outside of school, the employee must take very strict measures to maintain confidentiality with regard to their insider information about the school and to speak in a positive, constructive manner about it.
- Regardless of personal friendships with parents, employees must never share information with them that is intended for faculty and staff only and must keep the guidelines above in mind.
- Avoiding conflicts of interest when a dual relationship exists is expected of all employees. See Conflicts of Interest in this handbook.

### *Colleagues*

- Employees of Capstone must maintain professional boundaries in their relationships with colleagues.
- With regard to roles exercised in fulfillment of contracted roles and when working on school duties, employees are professional colleagues—not friends and not family members.
- If relationships of a personal nature exist between colleagues outside of work, those relationships must not create distractions that lead to conflict, nepotism, moral or social impropriety, appearance of immorality or impropriety, ineffectiveness, or distraction, even if those relationships are primary outside of work. For example, a husband and wife who are colleagues must conduct themselves as professional colleagues while fulfilling school duties on and off campus.
- If a close relationship develops between colleagues that is deemed detrimental to fulfillment of the school's mission, the employees' supervisor(s) is/are required to take action to correct the employees and to eliminate the problematic behavior. All such relationships must be disclosed to the Headmaster.
- Dating relationships and relationships of a romantic nature are prohibited between Capstone employees unless those relationships are disclosed to the Headmaster before they commence and proper written professional and moral safeguards are approved by the Headmaster and signed by all parties. Such safeguards must be followed and enforced. Failure to do so will lead to formal discipline up to and including termination of employment.
- Should Capstone employees wish to enter into a dating or romantic relationship, the Headmaster reserves the right to reassign them to different roles within the organization in order to safeguard against nepotism or unhealthy organizational dynamics.
- The moral clauses of the Employee Covenant apply to all relationships between colleagues, whether those relationships are expressed inside or outside of school.

### *Students*

- Rules for Supervision of students are provided on pages 54-57 and outline safeguards against misconduct and liability in the employee-student relationship.
- The employee relationship with students is professional and professional only. Employees are hired by the school and by parents to fulfill narrowly defined roles delineated in this handbook and in employee job descriptions and contracts.
- Capstone employees are not church pastors or priests, parents, therapists, doctors, friends, or family of their students. All employees are expected to act strictly within their role as narrowly defined in this handbook and employment documents.

- Any time an employee seeks to be more to a student than is outlined in employment documents, that employee is crossing a required professional and moral boundary and is at risk for misconduct and discipline up to and including termination of employment.
- Because teachers and students fill different roles, teachers need to keep a line of distinction between themselves and their students at all times. Teachers can typically discern the line of distinction between themselves and students; it is the students who often cannot see the line. A teacher can be warm, understanding, and compassionate toward students and still maintain a professional distance. It is the adult's responsibility to make sure the line is neither crossed nor appears to be crossed.
- Teachers and coaches will require the students to address them with courtesy titles and last names (Mr. Smith, Coach Brown). Likewise, when a teacher speaks to or about another teacher in the presence of students, he or she should use a courtesy title. A teacher should never address another teacher by first name in the presence of students. A teacher should not permit a student to address him by first name. Likewise, the expectation is that teachers will address parents of students with courtesy titles (Mrs. Smith, Dr. Brown), unless the teacher already has a personal friendship with the parent and using formal titles would accordingly be received as cold, rude, or awkward for the parent.

## **Teacher Attendance**

The school's regular office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Summer office hours are from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday. During the school year, classes normally begin at 8 a.m. and end at 3 p.m.

Full-time faculty members are expected to be at school by no later than 7:30 a.m., unless they have a morning duty that begins earlier. Faculty should expect to stay at school until at least 3:30 p.m. Part-time faculty should arrive at least 15 minutes before their class so they may review any special plans for the day.

Faculty must notify the office manager when they leave campus during the day for lunch or to run brief errands so that their supervisor knows how to contact them if they are needed; however, teachers should generally not schedule appointments or leave campus for an extended amount of time during their prep periods. Please keep in mind that faculty may be occasionally needed during prep periods to cover classes for absent teachers.

Faculty have normal holidays as published in the school calendar, as well as fall, winter, spring, and summer breaks. Besides regular classroom duties, faculty members are expected to help in supervising students on the grounds (daily duty); to sub for their colleagues, when needed; to serve on various committees; to attend regular faculty meetings, open houses, and other school events. Faculty are also encouraged to show school spirit by attending student extracurricular games and events from time to time. Any school-sponsored event held at the school will be free for teachers to attend.

## ***Teacher Absences***

Every teacher shall prepare a substitute folder or binder and will, in the first week of school, prepare necessary guides and documents for substitute teachers and will place them in the folder. These folders will be kept in the classroom to be used when the teacher is absent. Teachers are responsible for updating the information in these folders as needed.

In case of sudden illness or other emergency, the teacher should call their Dean the night before the absence, ideally before 9:00 p.m. On school mornings, the teacher should call before 6:00 a.m. to request a substitute. The teacher is responsible for completing their leave request in the employee dashboard software.

For planned absences, requests and notification should be made to the Dean as many days in advance as possible by using the leave request function in the employee dashboard software. If notifying the Dean at least 48 hours in advance, teachers may rely on the software as their notification. All such requests and notification must be in writing. No oral requests or notification shall be considered valid.

Any notification of the Dean fewer than 48 hours before the expected absence requires that the teachers speak directly with the Dean. Email, texts, and voicemails are not valid forms of communication regarding teacher absences taking place within 48 hours of communication with the Dean.

The Headmaster's executive assistant will arrange for substitutes.

Each teacher will note the following items carefully:

- Teachers are asked to create an emergency substitute plan that can be left in the substitute folder or in the classroom. This plan would be something that any substitute could carry out in the case of an unexpected absence.
- Teachers should update their substitute folders periodically, making sure that the most up-to-date rosters and seating charts are included. It is good to have a list of basic classroom rules in the substitute folder, as well.
- It is never acceptable to be absent and not leave assignments for a class. Teachers should not leave instructions for the students to *bring something to study*. Teachers should be prepared to send assignments to school or to give instructions to the Headmaster when they call.

See a separate Fringe Benefits Plan in the Employee Handbook for specifics about sick and personal days.

## Supervision Responsibilities

### *Mobile Device Use*

Making personal calls, checking emails, or texting on cell phones or iPads may be done only during planning times and lunch break, but not in the classroom, hallway, or gym while the teacher is supervising students or in a manner that disturbs the instructional environment, the professional office environment, or other employees. Cell phones must be kept in a secured location that is not visible to students during normal working hours. The only exception to this policy is when cell phones are taken out for emergency phone calls related to student safety.

### *Hallway Supervision*

All employees are expected to monitor all students' behavior throughout the day and to handle any minor offense that occurs in their presence. A universal duty of teachers is that of monitoring the halls. Teachers should be visible in the hallways between classes. Teachers should stand in the hallway at their doors during class changes.

Teachers should use their own judgment in allowing a student to leave the classroom. Unless there is an emergency, teachers should not allow a student to leave class without a hall pass.

Teachers should never dismiss class before the scheduled end time.

Teachers must not put students in the hall to take make-up tests. The environment there is not conducive to good test-taking, and the student is missing what is being taught in class at the time. Rather, teachers should work with the student to arrange time for making up work outside the regular class time (before-school testing, study hall, after-school testing, etc.).

All teachers should monitor the hallways from 3:00–3:15 unless assigned to pick-up line/dismissal duty.

Teachers who are parents of Capstone students may allow their own children to stay in their rooms before or after school but need to be prudent about computer use and may not allow their children to wander the building unsupervised, regardless of how empty the building may be.

### ***Safety, Discretion, and Liability***

Employees need to be aware of and avoid situations that may put them in positions of risk or liability. The Headmaster realizes that employees by nature want to be helpful and go beyond the call of duty to give special attention to students who need it. However, when an employee chooses to be alone with a student, the employee can create considerable risk for legal action taken against them, their supervisor, and the school. Without feeling that motives are being questioned and without becoming paranoid, employees need to be alert to compromising circumstances.

No employee has the right to withhold from the Headmaster knowledge of a student's serious misconduct.

It is extremely important that the Headmaster be told in a timely fashion of any serious misconduct, including those occurring away from the campus during a school-sponsored activity. An employee who withholds this information will face serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The first and most important concern must be the student's safety and well-being. Employees do the right thing because it is the right thing, not because they want to avoid a lawsuit. However, a lawsuit can present serious consequences for the school and the employee that can seriously hinder the school's ministry to its community.

Students may not be in any school space unsupervised. Teachers are responsible for supervising their students at all times and must not leave them unattended in the classroom. Most classroom safety/negligence/liability problems occur when the teacher is out of the room.

Any physical injury to a student requires that an injury report be filed ***immediately*** with the office.

### ***General Rules for Supervision***

- A school sponsor must be present at all school activities.
- Students are covered by school accident insurance whenever riding in a vehicle driven by a person who is a school employee or by a school-designated driver who is over 21.
- Students are covered by school accident insurance for school day or school-sponsored activities only.
- Teachers may not spend time alone with a student of either sex...
  - in a classroom with the door closed.
  - in a vehicle.
  - in the teacher's home, in the student's home, or in another private place.
  - at a restaurant, movie theater, or other public place.
- Communication with students (email, mobile phone, social media, etc.)
  - Teachers must only use their official Capstone email account when communicating with students electronically.
  - When emailing a single student or small groups of students, especially when regarding something other than mundane academic issues, parents must be copied on the email.
  - If teachers use their mobile phones for communication with students, content must be strictly academic and professional in nature, and parents must be copied on all text messages.
  - Teachers may not communicate directly with students via social media or smart phone apps.
- When a teacher takes students on school trips...
  - for mixed groups for out-of-town or overnight trips, include male and female chaperones.
  - an adequate number of chaperones are required (rule of thumb: 1 per 4 students in Grammar School and 1 per 6 students in Upper School).
  - seatbelts must always be fastened and the vehicle must not be overcrowded.



- students must ride with school-approved drivers (see full off-campus transportation policy below)
- students must furnish signed permission slips from the parent or legal guardian.
- employees are responsible and accountable for each student 100% of the time.
- When employees have knowledge of a student's questionable or dangerous activity (substance abuse, sexual activity, threats to commit suicide/run away from home, sneaking out of the house, and so forth). . .
  - they must inform parents immediately.
  - they must immediately report all such incidences and suspicion or rumor of such incidences (whether they occur on or off campus) to their immediate supervisor.
  - they should remember that parents may be able to hold the employee (personally), the administrators (personally), and the school liable if the employee knows about a student's questionable activity and does not inform the parents.
  - they are obligated to inform the school if the activity has occurred while the student is at school or at a school-sponsored activity.

### ***Mandated Reporter Status***

All employees at Capstone Classical Academy are mandated reporters by law. Any suspected child abuse or neglect, whether experienced at home, at school, or anywhere else in the child's life must be reported to the Headmaster, who will report to the proper authorities or will designate an agent of the school to report the concern. In such cases, all employees who may have information or evidence of the suspected abuse or neglect will be interviewed and will have their names added to the report.

- ND House Bill 1144 (2023) mandates annual completion of specified training regarding your responsibility as a mandated reporter of any suspicion of child abuse or neglect of any kind. You must complete this training every year prior to the first day of classes and submit your completion certificate to your direct supervisor. The training can be found at <https://mandatedreporter.pcand.org/>.

All employees may call **1-833-958-3500**, North Dakota's toll-free Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Line to report suspected abuse or neglect.

- Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect may be made verbally or in writing
- The state's reporting form, [SFN 960](#), is also available at local human service zone offices (formerly called county social service offices).

### ***Before/After School Procedures***

#### ***before school***

- Students are not to enter the building before 7:30 a.m.
- Students arriving before 7:50 a.m. will be required to check in to extended care. Pre-K students reporting before 8:20 will be charged extended care fees.
- Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must be checked in to the front office by a parent. Student drivers may check themselves in at the front office if after 8:00 a.m., but a parent must call the front office or email [attendance@capstoneclassical.com](mailto:attendance@capstoneclassical.com) to provide the reason for tardiness.
- Students in grades 9-12 may enter the building after 7:30 a.m. but must remain in the upper school hallway until 7:55 unless they have an appointment with a teacher for tutoring.
- Teachers must be in the hall outside their classrooms by 7:50 a.m.

#### ***after school***

- Students are dismissed from their last class at 3:00 p.m.
- Teachers should be in the hallways monitoring students until 3:15 p.m.
- Students must be out of the building or in a supervised school activity or extended care by no later than 3:20.

- Any student who is on campus but unassigned to a supervised school activity after 3:20 will be sent to extended care. The parent will be charged applicable extended care fees.

### ***Classroom Procedures-General Guidance***

- Teachers should establish classroom procedures before class begins and train students to follow them during the first weeks of school. Sample procedures to discuss with students: entering and exiting the room, turning in homework, asking a question, contributing to discussion, taking notes, using a planner, sitting at the desk, handling supplies, sharpening a pencil so as not to interrupt class, using the restroom, etc.
- Teachers should greet students outside the classroom as students enter the room. This encourages a good rapport and a school-wide community and prevents potential behavior problems.
- Students should enter the classroom quietly and orderly. It would be helpful to have some type of warm up activity for students to begin working on immediately, so the teacher has time to take attendance, handle notes from parents, etc.
- Teachers may not use cell phones during class.
- At no time should students be left in the classroom without an adult present. No exceptions. If there is a need to leave the classroom, teachers should contact the office. Someone will be sent to relieve the teacher.

### ***first period***

#### **Grammar school**

In grammar school (K-5), during the first period/homeroom, the following activities occur:

- Attendance is taken.
- The Bible verse of the day is read aloud.
- The class is led in prayer for the day.
- The honor code is recited.
- A heart-shaping habit is reviewed.
- The teacher evaluates uniforms.
- Announcements are made.

#### **Upper school**

Upper school (6-12) will have liturgy to start the day, so they will not have the same morning exercises during the first period. The honor code will be recited in House meetings.

#### **The Pledge of Allegiance**

At all grade levels, the pledge of allegiance will happen at the beginning of history, geography, and government/civics classes throughout the week, not during morning exercises.

#### **Student Decorum**

Students are expected to be in their seats or the teacher-designated spot with all materials ready at the start of all classes. If class starts at 8:00, students are in their seats at 8:00, not walking through the door or rifling through their desks, belongings, or backpacks.

### ***Daily Announcements***

Teachers and students are to listen carefully to these announcements so that they will know what is happening at Capstone Classical Academy. Teachers should ensure an appropriate room environment, conducive to hearing the daily announcements, neither talking nor condoning talking during that time.

Adults, not students, should submit announcements. Announcements should be submitted in writing and preferably via email to the office by 3 p.m. the day before in order to be read the next morning.

## ***Study Halls***

Study halls are designed to support the academic success of students. Because there will be many different teachers facilitating study halls, it is important for each one to follow the policies set. Even though teachers can have the freedom to teach creatively in their content areas, study halls are different. All teachers should supervise their study hall students in the same way in order to make everyone's life easier. Study hall policies and practices are not negotiable.

A study hall is a class for which teachers are paid. It is not a planning period. Therefore, study hall facilitators should expect to be up, walking around, and noticing what students are doing. Study hall facilitators should hold students accountable for using the time productively.

Expectations:

1. In order to set the culture quickly, firmly enforce expectations within the first two weeks.
2. Facilitators will set a seating chart, if for no other reason than for a substitute.
3. Students must bring with them something productive to do—complete homework, study, read a book or the Bible, write course notes, write college essays, study for ACT, do leisure reading, journal, etc.
4. Facilitators may not allow students to sleep during study hall.
5. Study hall facilitators may determine whether students may have small snacks in study hall, but snacks should be small and quiet; and students must be responsible for cleaning up and taking trash out.
6. Classroom teachers may initiate a request for a study hall student to come work with him or her if that teacher has a planning period that coincides with study hall. However, teachers should not feel compelled to give up planning periods on a regular basis. Study hall students should be consistently in their assigned study hall room.

## ***Daily Campus Duties***

### ***General Guidance***

A conscientious fulfillment of campus duties is integral to the formation of school culture. Therefore, duties are not to be viewed as inconveniences but as a primary means for the teacher to fulfill his vocation as an educator at Capstone. Because of the legal and moral responsibility that we each hold regarding our students, each teacher must be regular and attentive in completing his or her daily duties. Some guidelines for daily campus duties are:

- The teacher should be at his or her assigned duty spot on time.
- Supervising students includes safety, dress code and disciplinary awareness, as well as ensuring that students keep the campus in order.
- If you are relieved at your spot by another teacher, please wait until that teacher arrives before leaving.
- Be prompt in relieving your colleagues from their duty.
- Teachers should not read while on duty or engage in tutoring or conversations that will diminish their ability to fulfill their duty obligation (teachers who monitor sports activities may play with the students as one healthy way to keep the majority of students there engaged, but should frequently interrupt this activity to observe all areas within their duty area).

The dean or a faculty or staff member will be assigned as duty supervisor to ensure that the duty coverage is consistent.

## ***Security***

Maintaining the security of Capstone's buildings and vehicles is every employee's responsibility. Employees must develop habits that ensure security as a matter of course.

## Criminal Background Investigation

As required by ND law, all faculty and staff are required to successfully pass a background check before beginning work with students and before working on campus when students are present.

## General Security Policies

- All doors—both inside and outside, must remain closed with the knobs in the locked position. Doorjamb magnets may be utilized to keep doors “unlocked” but will be instantly lockable by a simple pull of the magnet from the doorjamb.
- Employees should avoid using exterior side and rear entrances and come through the front door in order to reduce the likelihood of exterior doors being left ajar or unlocked.
- Employees should know the location of all alarms and fire extinguishers and be familiar with the proper procedure for using them.
- Employees leaving school premises should ensure that windows are shut and doors are locked. The last employee on the premises should make sure all entrances are properly locked and secured.
- Employees exiting the building after normal hours or on the weekend who leave a door unlocked will be held accountable for any consequences that follow their negligence.
- Employees who are given keys shall be responsible for the cost of lost keys and/or re-keying.
- Employees must notify the Headmaster immediately if they misplace a key or access card.
- Be watchful that no unauthorized or suspicious persons are on school property. Always check for identification badges on visitors and volunteers, and immediately report the presence of any suspicious persons to the Dean or highest ranking administrator on campus.
- Do not lend keys, security passes, or identification badges to anyone who is not authorized to possess them.
- Employees may not permit students, including their own children, to borrow keys to any areas in the building.
- Teachers must never keep money in their classrooms, even for a part of a day. All school and student money held by the teacher should be given to the office for safekeeping. Teachers will be held accountable for any money stored insecurely.
- The School is not responsible for loss or damage to personal property.

## Security Drills

Security drills will take place every school year and will always be announced. Drills will be used for AAE’s (Active Attacker Events) and events requiring evacuation. Drills will be conducted in a manner that does not introduce students to unnecessary trauma in preparation for events that will likely never occur. They are utilized to practice the script that will be followed in emergencies so that employees and students are much less likely to panic and can active with discernment and self-control in an emergency. They help us to find weaknesses in our plans and to improve them to enhance safety for all students and employees.

In the event a security issue arises, it is important for teachers to keep students calm, take attendance, and make sure that all students are accounted for. The Headmaster will decide when the building is safe and announce when to return to normal procedures. If the Headmaster is not present, the Dean will act in his stead. In the event of an AAE, law enforcement directives and authority overrule and supersede school administrator directives and authority.

Preparation for future threats begins with a well-managed classroom that practices the heart-shaping habit of obedience the first time. Respectful, obedient students are safe students and can trust and follow their teacher quickly and faithfully in emergencies. The best preparation is not the drills but the training of a classroom and school culture of respect for authority, personal responsibility, and teamwork. In an active attacker scenario, the class will have to work as a team, and students will have to play key roles in moving to lockdown, alert, and fight mode efficiently.

Maintaining a zero tolerance mindset for security weaknesses is also essential to preventing active threats on campus. This includes always checking to be certain outside entrances are locked and secured, always requiring identification and confirmation of appointments for visitors, and always expecting full cooperation from students and colleagues during emergency drills.

## Crisis Management Protocol

For this policy, a crisis is any circumstance under which there is potential for immediate harm to students, faculty, and staff. This could be precipitated by natural forces, suspicious or threatening persons, or other unforeseen causes.

Is there an active attacker on or adjacent to campus?

- If yes, immediately use the School Guard app to notify 911 and colleagues and follow the AAE protocol below.
- If no, ONLY call 911 immediately IF the threat is imminent and then report the threat to your supervisor or the Headmaster, whichever is easiest to reach. If the threat is not imminent, notify your supervisor or headmaster first, whichever is easiest to reach. **Do not use the SchoolGuard app for non-AAE scenarios.**
- If no, all employees who are not responsible for supervising students should report to their campus office to assist the dean, headmaster, or the designated leader with campus response and management.

For all non-AAE events, once notified, the campus dean immediately becomes the crisis manager for their campus under the direction of the headmaster. If the dean is absent, the headmaster, if present on campus, will manage the campus. If not, the headmaster will name the manager and direct him or her.

When notified, the headmaster will:

- Assume the role of General, working as strategist and commander and not as ground level management. Deans will be ground sergeants.
- Call 911 immediately if needed.
- Determine and announce any evacuation, early dismissal, delayed opening, or closure.
  - If before school hours, the headmaster will immediately call a 2-hour delay to provide time to assess or neutralize the situation.
  - If before school, the headmaster will
    - direct his executive assistant to initiate parent and employee communication using prepared templates for anticipated crisis scenarios and responses.
    - consult with first responders to best lead the deans and leadership team.
    - direct deans in their campus management role and mobilize the leadership team strategically.
  - If during school hours, the headmaster will
    - communicate the decision and any action to be taken to the deans and other members of the leadership team and will
    - direct the marketing and communications director to initiate parent and employee communication using prepared templates for anticipated crisis scenarios and responses.
    - consult with first responders to best lead the deans and leadership team.
    - direct deans in their campus management role and mobilize the leadership team strategically.

\*If the headmaster is not available, the north campus dean will assume the responsibilities of the headmaster. If the north campus dean is not available, the south campus dean will assume the responsibilities of the headmaster. In both cases, the dean will delegate to another employee their campus sergeant role for as long as they are serving in the headmaster's place.

When notified, the deans will:

- Assume the role of campus sergeant on the ground on behalf of the headmaster serving as the General.
- Notify the headmaster. If the headmaster is not available, will notify the other dean, with the north campus dean assuming the role of headmaster and delegating their authority to an employee on their campus. The south campus dean will assume the role of headmaster if the north campus dean is not available.
- If during the school day, communicate circumstances and instructions to their campus faculty and staff by FACTS Parent Alert texting and SchoolGuard Principal Push feature and in person as able.
- If before school, will take direction from the headmaster to help assess the situation and to provide direction to any employees and students already on their campus.
- Deans are responsible for directing all response activities on campus unless the headmaster relieves them and reassigns them to another role.
- Deans or the headmaster's designee in his absence, if safe to do so, will designate a staff member to direct and communicate with parents and others showing up to campus during the crisis event. This employee will most likely be posted at the main entrance.

When notified, the director of marketing and communication will:

- Before school, if necessary, direct the executive assistant to the headmaster to commence with Parent Alert communication with parents and employees. Otherwise, the director will execute this communication as directed by the headmaster.
- Before school and during school as needed, change the greeting on the school phone system to provide necessary messaging for callers since we may not be able to answer phone calls during an event. This can be delegated to the headmaster's executive assistant as needed.
- During school and after school, will be responsible for all communication to parents and other relevant community members as directed by the headmaster.
- Be available and ready for any new instructions from the headmaster or his designee in his absence.

*There are two general security event protocols, AAEs and Evacuations:*

### **AAE (Active Attacker Event)**

These occur when there is an armed threat inside or immediately outside of the building.

In three (3) simplified steps, the most effective sequence of response to active attacker events is ADD:

AVOID (run)  
DENY (hide)  
DEFEND (fight)

**SOUND ALARM** while evacuating or securing room (airhorn and Schoolguard app/911), but never delay securing room or evacuating in order to use the app or call 911. Use the app/911 as soon as it is safe to do so.

**EVACUATE** to nearest safe zone off campus only if you confirm route is clear.

**OR**

If it is not safe to evacuate, **SECURE ROOM:**

1. Lock classroom door by pulling the doorjamb magnet, if not already locked.
2. Lock or secure door reinforcement apparatus (door reinforcement locks for inward swinging doors; cable/strap and carabiner for outward swinging doors; and fire hose for door closers).
3. Cover the door window and close the blinds while directing students to spread out in locations out of sight of the doorway.

4. Turn off the lights.
5. Barricade the door with available classroom furnishings.
6. Equip yourself and students with classroom weapons (scissors, heavy books, paperweights, baseball bats, chairs, staple guns, wasp spray, pepper spray, etc.)
7. Prepare fight plan, assigning jobs to students. Remind about zig-zag running and the escape route.
8. Throughout, as possible, use mobile phone group text to share intelligence with colleagues.

**Prepare To FIGHT:**

1. Arm yourself and assume position beside the door on the same side as the doorknob. Prepare to disarm and disable the attacker.
2. If appropriate, have select students go to the other side of the door and prepare them to help you to disarm and disable the attacker.
3. These assignments should be given: take out hands/attacker's weapon (usually the adult's job), take out knees/legs, attack groin, and take out head/face.
4. Never give up. Never back down. Do whatever it takes.

Fighting is not risky. It's your only hope if the attacker gets through your door. To do nothing is to surrender, and attackers will not be merciful. Fight to the finish.

**FOLLOW the orders of law enforcement.**

1. When law enforcement arrives in your room or zone, keep palms up and hands out where officers can see them and do what they tell you with total compliance.
2. Instruct students to follow the orders of law enforcement.
3. The officers are in an intense situation, and your cooperation ensures that there are no casualties due to misunderstandings. The threat may also not be fully eliminated as officers move you to another space. Full cooperation of staff and students is essential to getting to safety.

## Evacuation

For evacuations, the South Campus employees will walk the learners to Hope South Lutheran Church and shelter inside. North Campus employees will walk the learners and scholars to Northview Church and shelter inside.

The director of marketing and communication will send Parent Alert text message instructions and updates to parents and employees regarding instructions for reuniting parents with their children.

Whenever possible, the deans (or employee in the dean role) will relieve employees who are Capstone parents of their official role with the school so that they can fulfill their role as parents. This will be solely at the discretion of the dean or headmaster, and all Capstone employees who are also Capstone parents should first serve in their role as employee.

## Authority to Search

The School may exercise its right to inspect all classrooms, desks, and closed containers entering and leaving the premises. School rooms, furniture, and electronic devices are school property and may be subjected to searches at any time, with or without cause. Employee email accounts and other software-related tools purchased by the school are similarly the property of the school and may be subject to search.

## Music Policy

Music is an integral part of life at Capstone Classical Academy, and we are committed to making choices about our music selections based on what will honor God. Our policy about music selection is governed by these two passages of Scripture:

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”  
Colossians 3:16–17

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”  
Philippians 4:8

We want to be able to say about whatever music we use that it is pure, honorable, lovely, and praiseworthy. Like every part of our lives, we want our music to reflect Christ living in us.

All music selected for Capstone Classical Academy events must follow this policy. Music governed by this policy includes the following:

- Both live and recorded music
- Music used in videos
- Music performed by campus music groups or in musical productions
- Music used in athletic areas (games, fields, weight rooms, locker rooms)
- Music used at athletic events
- Music used for choreography

Music must be approved by the Athletic Director or supervising Dean. While it is impossible to list every consideration, keep in mind the following parameters:

- When a song or its official video has inappropriate lyrics, ideas, or imagery, it is not acceptable to use any part of that song.
- “Inappropriate” refers to more than just vulgar language. It also refers to racist, sexist, violent, or criminal references, for example.
- It is not acceptable to use a radio-text version of a song that would otherwise be inappropriate.
- Christian music is acceptable and encouraged, but there are many wonderful songs produced by secular artists that can be used in harmony with our faith.
- Instrumental versions of songs are acceptable unless the removed lyrics do not meet the standards defined in this policy.

## **Transportation to and from School Events**

School-sanctioned and supervised events such as curriculum-related field trips, academic competitions, athletic events, and social events that require transportation of students will have transportation provided by the academy or by family members or their designees. Drivers appointed by the academy will have provided the office with a copy of valid insurance, driver’s license, and been subjected to a state-mandated criminal record check. Whenever possible, school employees and contracted commercial drivers will be utilized to transport students. In cases where such drivers are not available, a parent or community member may drive if they meet the criteria above. No adult will transport students who are not their children to or from a school-sanctioned and supervised event without another school-approved adult in the vehicle or without the express permission of the parents of the unrelated children they are transporting. All adults in any vehicle commissioned by the school will be required to furnish valid insurance, license, and be subject to the state-mandated criminal record check.

The school does not authorize under any circumstances the transportation of its students by any means other than those described above. A parent may choose another transportation arrangement for their child. The school is not responsible for and will not govern decisions made by parents to utilize other adults or students to transport their own child to and from school-sanctioned and supervised events.



The school will not authorize, endorse, nor assign students to transport other students to and from school-sanctioned and supervised events unless those students are members of the same household and the parent has provided consent for one sibling to drive the other.

## **After Care Shuttle**

The school provides a shuttle to transport North Campus learners in grades 4 to 6 to the South Campus for after care. This shuttle is operated by a qualified, approved school employee at the direction of the Deans. There is no fee for this service other than regular after care fees. Scholars in 7th grade and above are not permitted to ride the shuttle nor to attend after care.

## **Overnight Trips**

Some student activities and clubs may require or offer trips that involve overnight stays. On such trips, all policies contained in the transportation section of this handbook apply as well as the following:

- Every hotel room or room utilized by students for sleeping or overnight stays will be supervised by two adults who have undergone state-mandated criminal record checks. If the adult chaperone is the parent or close relative of the students in the room, the two-adult policy may be waived.
- All parents or legal guardians for all students on the trip will sign a permission slip that includes express permission for their child to be supervised overnight by the assigned adult chaperones.
- Students may not be left in a room unsupervised, regardless of the age of the student(s).
- Students of different biological sex may not share a room unless they and every other person in the room are members of the same nuclear family.

## **Student Absences**

### ***Work Missed Due to Absences***

Teachers must work hard to support students when they miss school and must seek to minimize the stress that sometimes comes with absences. While the administration expects that teachers will do their best to help students with work missed, it is the student and parents' responsibility to secure missed work and to prepare well for planned absences.

Teachers should expect all classwork and assessments missed due to absence to be completed in a timely manner. In most cases, you should give students who have been absent additional days to complete assignments. Extra days provided should be proportionate to the number of days missed during which the student was unable to complete the work due to the nature of his or her absence. Absent students who could have completed work while out but chose not to should not be afforded additional days to complete their missed work. Teachers must exercise fairness and grace to help students who miss school get the most out of their education and to help them to learn content missed.

## **Medical Issues**

Capstone Classical Academy does not maintain a clinic. A student who is injured or who is too ill to attend class must wait in the office until a parent arrives to pick up the student.

Students who are ill or who need medication must check in with their teachers before going to the office. Students may not call their parents directly to pick them up. Students must go to the office when they are ill.

### ***Injury Reports***

Teachers must report all injuries that occur during the school day to the office. If there is any doubt as to the seriousness of any injury, teachers must send the student to the office immediately.

Before leaving school because of injury or illness, a student must be given permission by the office manager. Parents or guardians must give explicit permission before a student driver will be allowed to check out of school. No student who is ill will be dismissed from school without the knowledge of the office manager.

### ***Medications***

Capstone Classical Academy has implemented the following rules for assisting in the self-medication of students.

Please read carefully the following guidelines which will apply to the dispensing of any medications during the school day:

1. All medications, prescription or nonprescription, must be brought to the office in their original containers, correctly labeled. Prescription medicines must have a label from the pharmacy or from the physician's office. This label must include this information:
  - Student's name
  - Name of the medication
  - Strength of each unit of the medication
  - Dosage amount and time
  - Physician's name
2. Nonprescription (over-the-counter) medication must be in the original container and must be labeled with the student's name but in a manner which will not obscure the original container label.
3. Medications must be taken to the office.
4. Only medication provided with written authorization to dispense from the parent or legal guardian will be administered to a student.
5. Academy personnel may not administer any medication or perform any medical procedures. School personnel may only supervise the student as he takes the medication himself or performs the medical procedure himself.
 

For example, school personnel may not break prescription pills (they may split Tylenol and ibuprofen), may not mix medications (such as that used to treat asthma), and may not perform blood sugar tests. We are required to inform parents and/or guardians in writing that the school and its employees are not liable as a result of any injury sustained by the student from self-administration.
6. Medication of an invasive nature for emergency action (such as the pen used for allergic reactions) may be administered by academy personnel only under these conditions:
  1. Parents/guardians must arrange for school personnel to be trained.
  2. Physician's orders and instructions for this medication must be on file in the school office.
7. Students are permitted to carry Epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPens) with them.
8. Prescriptions for long-term medications must be renewed annually. When the duration of a medication is complete, the parent/guardian is responsible for picking up the remaining portions of the medication.
9. No student will be allowed to carry any medication (either prescription or over-the-counter) with him during the school day. Neither will a student be allowed to take any medication except under the supervision of school personnel or of his parents. The only exceptions will be for students who use asthma inhalers and EpiPens.
10. We urge you to try to arrange for all medications to be given outside the school day. You may want to check with your physician about changing a dosage schedule. Please send to school only those medications which absolutely must be given during school hours.
11. We will not be able to assist with any medication if these guidelines are not followed for that medication.

## ***Sick Child Policy***

In an effort to prevent the spread of sickness at school, Capstone Classical Academy asks parents to use the following guidelines in determining whether to keep students home from school.

Parents have been instructed to keep their children home if any of the following are present:

- Fever of 100° or higher — must be fever-free for 24 hours *without the use of fever-reducing medications*
- Respiratory symptoms/breathing difficulty that makes student uncomfortable (severe or uncontrollable cough, productive cough, difficulty breathing, wheezing)
- Nausea/vomiting — must be symptom-free for 24 hours
- Diarrhea/abnormally loose stools — must be symptom-free for 24 hours
- Eyes/ears/nose/throat (unusual drainage, discomfort, or pain)
- Skin (undiagnosed or contagious rash, sores or skin changes, excessive itching or scratching)
- Lethargy and/or body aches (an abnormal decrease in activity, increase in sleep activity, out of character complaining)

Teachers should stress to their students the importance of basic hygiene:

- Wash hands thoroughly and often — 20 seconds of scrubbing.
- Use hand sanitizer when soap-and-water washing is not available.
- Keep hands away from eyes, nose, mouth.
- Sneeze and cough into the crook of the elbow, not the hands.
- Do not drink or eat after other people.
- Blow noses away from other people.
- Stay away from sick people.
- Be aware that viruses are airborne. Standing near someone who sneezes provides an opportunity to pick up a virus.

## ***Lice (Pediculosis Captitis)***

- Teachers who suspect lice should send the affected student to the office for examination.
- Students with head lice must stay home from school until the day after treatment begins. Head lice must be treated with medication (depending on doctor's advice, could be prescription or over-the-counter). Before the student returns to school, the parent must send the box top and receipt for the OTC medication or a doctor's note to the office.

## **Safe Arrival and Departure**

Every August before school starts, the school provides employees and families with the policies and protocols for safe pedestrian and vehicular traffic on campus. Teachers and staff are also provided with the policies and protocols for their responsibilities during arrival and departure and are expected to follow these policies with the greatest care and fidelity.

All employees, parents, and student drivers are responsible for adhering to these policies and procedures out of concern for the safety of all Capstone community members and guests to campus. Employees who violate these policies and procedures will be subject to discipline. Each August, the safe arrival and departure policy will be updated, added to the current faculty-staff handbook on the employee forms webpage, and posted in the Family Portal at [factsmgt.com](http://factsmgt.com). Every employee is responsible for reviewing this policy before the first day of classes.

Parking is permitted only in marked spaces. No vehicles should be parked along any curb adjacent to the building or along the side of the building itself as these are restricted fire lanes. The school is not responsible for any damage to vehicles parked on campus or for their contents.

## **Principles for Student Conduct**

School rules exist to create a community in which God is honored because people are treated with love and respect. While rules may change over time, the principles inherent in those rules will always be biblical and will be rooted in love for God and love for others. All students are expected to follow the "Golden Rule": Do unto others as you would have them do unto you (Matthew 7:12). Teachers and staff may have additional class rules to which students must adhere. An Honor Code has been established to provide general principles to guide conduct.

### ***Honor Code***

The honor code will be recited in morning exercises first period/homeroom in Grammar School and in House meetings in Upper School.

All students are expected to learn and to live by the Capstone Classical Academy Honor Code:

- I will conduct myself in a manner that honors the mission of our school.
- I will treat my classmates as I wish to be treated.
- I will be honest and hardworking.
- I will report to a parent, teacher, or the Headmaster any behavior that threatens the safety and integrity of our school community.

### ***Universal School Rules***

1. Students will maintain decorum conducive to a productive classroom.
2. Students will treat each other with respect.
3. There will be no running in the hallway.
4. Students will follow teachers' and staff members' instructions and directives.
5. Students will be good stewards of school property.
6. There will be no throwing of any objects other than balls in physical education classes and recess.
7. No student may go outside the building at any time unless accompanied by an adult.
8. Language used must be wholesome and good for building others up according to their needs.
9. No means no and stop means stop.
10. Students will not go anywhere in the building without permission from their teacher or appropriate staff person.
11. All students must use the bathrooms designated for their biological, genetic sex confirmed at birth.
12. All students will be called by traditional binary pronouns corresponding to their biological, genetic sex confirmed at birth.

### ***Playground Rules***

1. Students must stay within the boundaries (cones and fencing) designated by the supervising staff.
2. Students may not throw wood chips, sand, rocks, or toys not specifically designed for safe throwing.
3. Students may not get on top of or climb equipment that is not designed for safe climbing.
4. Students will line up immediately when the supervising staff member gives the designated signal (whistle or bell).

### ***Student Public Display of Affection***

While on campus or at school-sponsored events, students are not permitted to engage in behaviors such as holding hands, kissing, embracing, hugging, sitting on each other's laps and so forth. Students should maintain an appropriate distance from each other.

## **Acceptable Use of Technology**

### ***Basic Rules Regarding the Use of Technology***

- Students may not use food or drinks near school devices.
- No Internet-capable device may ever be used without staff or faculty supervision.
- All technology owned by Capstone is to be used in a manner consistent with the mission and established policies of Capstone. Accordingly, any use of technology for purposes other than education or school-sponsored co-curricular activities is prohibited. All use of technology must be consistent with biblical morality.
- Hardware may not be modified in a manner that affects its performance or appearance. Intentional defacement or sabotage of hardware will be treated as vandalism.
- No software owned by Capstone may be copied and used elsewhere without permission from the Headmaster or technology coordinator.
- No software (including downloaded shareware, freeware, and plug-ins) may be installed on a Capstone device without permission from the technology coordinator or Headmaster.
- Any act intended to cause equipment failure, loss of data, modification of other people's data or disruption of school activities is prohibited.
- Any attempt to defeat security systems or to log in to another person's account or device is prohibited.

### ***Communications and Computer Systems Security and Usage***

Capstone's communication and computer systems are intended for business purposes and may be used only during working time; however, limited personal usage is permitted if it does not hinder performance of job duties or violate any other school policy. This includes the voicemail, e-mail, and Internet systems.

Users have no legitimate expectation of privacy in regard to their use of the systems. School administration may access the voicemail and e-mail systems and obtain the communications within the systems, including past voicemail and e-mail messages, without notice to users of the system, in the ordinary course of business when leadership deems it appropriate to do so. The reasons for which Capstone administration may obtain such access include, but are not limited to, maintaining the system; preventing or investigating allegations of system abuse or misuse; assuring compliance with software copyright laws; complying with legal and regulatory requests for information; and ensuring that academy operations continue appropriately during an employee's absence.

Further, Capstone may review Internet usage to ensure that such use with academy property, or communications sent via the Internet with academy property, are appropriate. Since school communication and computer systems are intended for business use, all employees, upon request, must inform administration of any private access codes or passwords. Unauthorized duplication of copyrighted computer software violates the law and is strictly prohibited. No employee may access, or attempt to obtain access to, another employee's computer systems without appropriate authorization.

### ***Devices Not Permitted on Campus***

Students are not permitted to bring to class: handheld electronic games, portable music players, recorders (unless required for a class), smart watches, mobile or cellular telephones, laser pointers, and such items. No student will be permitted to wear a smartwatch or other watch that is set to beep or alarm. These items must be confiscated by the teacher and turned over to the Headmaster. Parents may arrange to pick up the item from the Headmaster.

While cellular phones, smart watches, and other smart devices are permitted on campus, they must remain in students' lockers or cubbies and turned off during school hours. Use of cell phones or other smart devices is only permitted after school hours, with the request and approval of a faculty member, or if needed in a true emergency.

Unauthorized use of cell phones or other smart devices during school hours will result in confiscation of the device and potential disciplinary action. Electronic devices are not permitted to be used as cameras in

any private areas such as rest rooms or locker rooms. Taking video or pictures of faculty, staff, and students without their permission is forbidden. Inappropriate pictures found on and/or distributed via cell phones or other smart devices will result in confiscation and disciplinary action commensurate with the offense.

### ***Policy for Use of School Google Workspace Accounts***

All students in grades 7-12 are provided a Capstone Google Workspace account with Capstone email addresses. All students are expected to read and sign (with their parents) the agreement for these accounts, which is provided to them prior to issuance of login credentials. Consequences for failure to comply with the agreement are included in the agreement and in this handbook in the discipline policy.

## **Discipline Policies**

The school's discipline policy exists to support the mission of the school. The school believes that the student is best served when home and school work cooperatively in these matters. Ideally, the spirit of cooperation among faculty and students will be such that discipline will be self-imposed rather than forced. Capstone believes that parents are the primary disciplinarians of their children. By sending their children to the academy, parents do not surrender their duties to discipline their children for misconduct that takes place during school hours. The academy will look to the parents to provide the most effective response and discipline to their own children when they misbehave not only out of school but in school. Parents will be invited into the discipline process to help the school to determine the best way to help their children learn and grow into virtuous and wise young people.

Discipline is a vital part of teaching our students to love God and to serve him by loving others. It is therefore intimately related to our school mission and should be embraced. Discipline is a sacred responsibility for every parent and teacher. We administer discipline because we love our students. This is a biblical principle as Proverbs 13:24 declares, "He who loves him disciplines him diligently." God himself disciplines those he loves (Hebrews 12). Education without discipline is incomplete and fails to produce fruitful disciples of Jesus. Disciplinary practices at Capstone are intended to shepherd the hearts of children, not to control behavior. We will always seek to provide discipline that gets to the heart of the child's actions. Discipline that simply manipulates a child into meeting our expectations does not lead to a disciplined, abundant life after graduation. Most schools use behaviorist models for discipline. While this can create an orderly school, it does not create a pure heart. The scriptures teach that the heart is the wellspring or source of life (Proverbs 4:23). Jesus declares, "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thorn bushes, or grapes from briars. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks." (Luke 6:43-45)

Fair is not always equal. Because we endeavor to shepherd the hearts of students, the discipline given one student may differ from another based upon each student's individual needs. Every child deserves the discipline he or she needs to develop a pure heart. While our discipline policy provides some guide for types of disciplinary responses that may be utilized in hypothetical situations, the school is not bound to those examples since every student is different, and since the motives behind and attitude after any two infractions may vary greatly. We will always endeavor to do what is just for each student when he or she is in need of discipline.

This policy applies to all students whether on school or off school property, including but not limited to before and after school, attendance at school-sponsored events, co-curricular activities, field trips, and transportation to and from school. Behaviors that occur off campus and outside of school activities but that violate the honor code or have a detrimental effect upon the mission of the school will be considered school matters and are subject to the school's disciplinary measures.

Students are expected to live by the Capstone Honor Code, which summarizes Christ-centered conduct that complements the mission of Capstone Classical Academy.

The school has established three levels of misconduct to help students, parents, faculty, and administrators work through discipline situations effectively on behalf of the students and the Capstone community. Determination of the level of misconduct is at the discretion of the academy, and the descriptions below are just a general guide. The academy reserves the right to classify each incident of misconduct independently of the classification of other incidents and the right to assign consequences that differ despite apparent similarities between incidents. Each incident is full of nuance created by the differences in student motive, maturity, history, detailed circumstances, and immediate and greater context. Fair is not always equal, and the academy reserves the right to use its best judgment in working with parents to prayerfully shepherd individual students and the Capstone community in partnership with the parents involved with each incident of misconduct.

### ***Sending Students to the Dean's Office***

Level two and three misconduct requires the teacher to refer the student to the Dean and typically requires that the student be sent to the Dean's office immediately. These behaviors, outlined in more detail below, are any behaviors accurately characterized as:

1. Purposeful reckless words
2. Physically harming others
3. Rebellion
4. Dishonesty
5. Obscene language
6. Vandalism

### ***Level 1 Misconduct and Possible Responses***

Level 1: Minor misconduct on the part of the student that impedes orderly classroom procedure or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. These are handled by the teacher within the classroom and do not require the intervention of a Dean or Campus Minister.

Examples of Level 1 infractions include but are not limited to the following:

- Classroom or in-school disturbance
- Repeated classroom tardiness
- Repeated behaviors that distract or frustrate peers
- Failure to follow prescribed procedures or directives from staff
- Repeated inappropriate attire (see Dress Code Policy)
- Disrespectful language or gestures
- Inappropriate display of affection
- Minor unwanted teasing (not bullying)
- Profanity
- Occasional minor misuse of technology

#### Procedure:

- The teacher will log the incident and consequence in FACTS SIS behavior records.
- The teacher will email the incident record to the parents, Dean, and Campus Minister.
- The teacher will administer a developmentally appropriate consequence as warranted. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - Loss of classroom privileges
  - Loss of recess or lunch privileges
  - Assigned chores
  - Written or oral apologies

- Reflective exercises such as conferences with the teacher, dean, or headmaster or written reflection for older students
- Changed seating assignments
- Phone calls and emails home
- Parent chaperone with the student during the school day
- If the consequence requires after-school attendance, at least 24 hours' notice will be given to parents before the assigned consequence must be served.

Upon the ninth level one offense for pre-k through 3rd grade or the sixth offense for 4th-12th grades:

- The student may be placed on behavioral probation (see Behavioral Probation) at the discretion of the Dean.
- The decision to place a student on behavioral probation will be based upon the nature of the infractions leading up to the triggering offense and the student's attitude toward discipline.

### ***Level 2 Misconduct and Possible Responses***

Level 2: Misbehavior on the part of the student that tends to disrupt and detract from the learning climate of the school. These behaviors are categorically defined by the five (6) descriptors of behaviors that require a teacher to refer a student to the Dean:

1. Purposeful reckless words
2. Physically harming others
3. Rebellion
4. Dishonesty
5. Obscene language
6. Vandalism

Examples of Level 2 infractions include but are not limited to the following:

- Serial Level 1 infractions that are not curbed by Level 1 disciplinary responses
- Public display of affection
- Vulgar language and use of the Lord's name in vain
- Cheating or lying
- Failure to serve a disciplinary consequence
- Forgery
- Gambling
- Minor intentional irritation of other students
- Reckless behavior or horseplay
- Inappropriate pranks
- Insubordination
- Repeated or serious misuse of technology
- Mild violations of the honor code
- Minor physical scuffles
- Disruptive behavior
- Skipping class
- Leaving the building or campus without permission
- Minor or careless vandalism

#### Procedure:

- Level 2 infractions are reported to the Dean.
- The Dean will lead the shepherding process...
  - Investigate the incident.



- Process the situation with the student.
- Discuss the incident and its damage to relationships and community.
- Help the student pray and reconcile with God.
- Call the parent (preferably father) to inform and reconcile with the parent.
- Help the student reconcile with offended individual(s).
- Administer a consequence (When appropriate, an after-school detention, in-school, or out-of-school suspension may be scheduled.)
- Record in FACTS behavior log, copying the campus minister and reporting faculty-staff member.
- Follow up with email to parents through FACTS, summarizing and bringing closure.
- The student will...
  - Reconcile with God, parent and offended individual(s).
  - Complete home reflection exercise.
  - Meet with the campus minister following administered school consequence.
- The parents will...
  - Administer appropriate family consequence.
  - Complete home reflection exercise with their child.
- The Campus Minister will...
  - Follow up with student about reflection exercise
  - Discuss virtues and Bible verses as appropriate
  - Communicate with parents

After four Level 2 infractions, the student may be expelled (see Expulsion) from school for at least the remainder of the school year (by the decision of a five-member committee assembled by the Headmaster, comprising the Headmaster, the Dean, and three objective faculty members, and over which the Headmaster presides as a voting member).

Level 2 infractions count as two level one infractions in the progression toward behavioral probation. Two Level 2 infractions may result in behavioral probation.

Behavioral Probation: A six-week period during which a student...

- will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities.
- will lose classroom and campus privileges as determined by the teachers and Dean.
- may be expelled for any Level 2 or 3 misconduct (by the decision of a five-member committee assembled by the Headmaster, comprising the Headmaster, the Dean, and three objective faculty members, and over which the Headmaster presides as a voting member).

NOTE: If after completing the period of behavioral probation, the student commits any level of behavioral infraction, he/she will again be placed on behavioral probation and may be considered for expulsion at the discretion of the Headmaster.

### ***Level 3 Misconduct and Possible Responses***

Level 3: Acts directed against persons or property, which endanger the spiritual, physical, or emotional health or safety of others in the school

These acts may be considered criminal, and may involve contacting local law enforcement agencies. These offenses are not calculated in the cumulative disciplinary measures taken with Level 1 and 2 offenses. Level 3 infractions are addressed independently of other infractions.

Examples of Level 3 infractions include but are not limited to the following:

- Fighting
- Sexual immorality and misconduct, including sexting and use or distribution of pornography

- Bullying (repeated behavior against peers that is socially, emotionally, physically, or spiritually isolating, hurtful, or harmful).
- Blatant disrespect for authority
- Threats to others
- Sexual harassment of students or employees
- Sexting and other pornographic conduct
- Assault/battery
- Any attempt to do bodily harm to a staff member
- Vandalism (depending on the extent of damages and intentions)
- Extortion
- Hazing
- Repeated/unmodified misconduct of any level
- Arson
- Bomb threat
- Serious or serial violation of the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy
- Phone tampering
- Possession/use/transfer of explosive devices
- Possession/theft/sale of stolen property
- Possession/use/transfer of tobacco and smoking materials
- Possession/use/transfer of dangerous weapons
- Possession/use/transfer of unauthorized substances and/or paraphernalia (drugs, alcohol, mood-altering substances, etc.)
- Possession/use/transfer of fireworks
- Possession/use/transfer of "look-alike" substances
- Use of cell phone cameras in private areas (lockers, rest rooms, etc.)

Procedure:

- The student may be immediately removed from the classroom.
- The Headmaster initiates disciplinary action by investigating the infraction, meeting with the parents, and conferring with staff and parents on the extent of the consequences.
- The student will be suspended during the investigation and the duration of the discipline committee hearing and may be expelled by the decision of a five-member committee assembled by the Headmaster, comprising the Headmaster, the Dean, and three objective faculty members, and over which the Headmaster presides as a voting member.
- If necessary, the Headmaster will contact the local law enforcement agency, and restitution for property and damages will be required.

When appropriate as deemed by the committee, the typical level 2 shepherding process will be followed in conjunction with the committee's work, either before, during, or after the conclusion of its work.

In determining what disciplinary action will be taken in response to Level 3 offenses, the discipline committee will meet with the student's parents and may consider the student's discipline record from previous school years in addition to the current school year.

***Drug Testing***

Drug testing may be required at the discretion of the administration in the case of suspected use of illegal substances. All individual results will be confidential, and specific information will only be known by the Headmaster and the faculty/administrators on the disciplinary committee. All possible steps will be taken to ensure privacy for the individuals being tested. A decision to drug test is not an accusation or

assumption of guilt but rather prudent response to symptoms that often are associated with illegal substance use.

Indicators of drug or alcohol use may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Uncharacteristic behavior that reflects the individual could be under the influence
- Possession
- Unusual or excessive discipline problems
- Sudden or marked decline in academic progress
- Excessive or unaccounted-for absences
- Reliable substantiated information indicating consumption

All students are presumed innocent until they test positive. A refusal to be tested will result in expulsion from Capstone Classical Academy. Enrollment of their students in Capstone Classical Academy constitutes the parents' consent for and cooperation with drug testing at the discretion of the administration.

### ***Harassment (Bullying)—Students***

Capstone Classical Academy students are entitled to an environment free from all forms of discrimination and from conduct that can be considered harassment, intimidation, or bullying of any kind. Capstone expects that all of its students will treat each other with courtesy, dignity, and respect. Capstone does not tolerate violation of Federal and state laws prohibiting harassment.

Bullying means any of the following acts that substantially interfere with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance that takes place on or off school grounds, online or in person, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, or at any school-designated bus stop:

- Criminal acts such as physical violence, use of a weapon, serious threats of injury, stalking, kidnapping or detainment, loss of or damage to property. In such cases, the police will be contacted and parents notified.
- Acts that involve aggression, dominance, and persistence. If all three of these criteria are not met, the incident may be classified as a different kind of serious infraction (i.e. fighting) but not as bullying.

Harassment may also be classified as bullying and includes but is not limited to the following:

- Physical, verbal, or emotional bullying
- All forms of offensive remarks about race, religion, gender, sexuality, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, disability, or sexual orientation, including oral, written, or printed or electronically transmitted remarks or images
- Threats, intimidation, or coercion in any form
- Unwelcome physical contact, telephone calls, texting, email, social media postings

Students who believe that they are a target of harassment, intimidation, or bullying should report such conduct immediately to any teacher, counselor, or administrator. A prompt and thorough investigation of the alleged incident will be conducted, and appropriate corrective action will be taken. To the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action, any complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying will be treated as confidential.

Retaliation against any student who, in good faith, reports a claim of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or who cooperates in the investigation of any such claim, will not be tolerated and will in itself be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## Employee Dress Code

Employees of Capstone Classical Academy are professional servants who dress not out of a sense of self-expression or to please themselves but in an effort to create a learning atmosphere conducive to the fulfillment of the academy's mission and vision. As classical Christian educators, we seek to teach students through word, deed, and cultural liturgies. One of our cultural liturgies (habits of doing community together) is the school uniform and employee dress code. These silent "teachers" reinforce particular dispositions or attitudes in our students. By dressing and maintaining personal appearance with modesty, neatness, and professionalism, the faculty and staff cultivate:

- a disposition of respect from student to teacher.
- an aura of seriousness with regard to learning (serious can be fun!)
- a perception that the teacher feels that what he or she is doing is important.
- respect from parents and visitors toward the faculty and staff.
- an impression of excellence in professional practice.
- an unspoken commitment to quality in our work.

All employees should abide by the foundational principles and to the personal appearance portion of the student dress code policy. While the administration certainly trusts that each employee will use good judgment in how he or she dresses for work based upon the philosophy stated above, the following guidance may be helpful. These are not legalistic policies but rather guidelines to help us achieve a particular atmosphere that helps to shape our learning climate. Employees should feel free to use their own discretion. Fashion is fluid and language about it imprecise. The administration simply asks that all employees attempt to honor the spirit of this dress code.

- All employees should take special care to dress modestly, ensuring that clothing is not too form-fitting and is of modest length. When in doubt, find something else to wear.
- Jeans, cargo pants, sweatpants, yoga pants and other form-fitting pants and leggings should not be worn.
- With a sport coat to "dress up" jeans, jeans may be appropriate.
- Tattoos should communicate a theme or message clearly consistent with the school's vision and mission and should be covered if there is any doubt about appropriateness.
- The preference is that men wear khaki style or dress pants with an Oxford style shirt and tie.
- A sport coat can cancel the need for a tie.
- Women should wear khaki-style or dress pants, modest skirts, or dresses.
- Women's tops should be business-appropriate (business casual or formal) blouses and tops or conservative sweaters (not themed or whimsical) with appropriate tops.
- Sneakers, tennis shoes, work boots, flip flops, and casual sandals are generally not appropriate unless special activities are planned that would necessitate the wearing of such.
- On Upper School dress-up days, all faculty are required to dress equivalent to or more formal than the student dress-up attire.

## Student Uniform and Dress Code Policy

Capstone Classical Academy sets a high standard for students in their dress and appearance to express reverence for God and for the task of education and to demonstrate respect for one another. While preschool students do not have a uniform, they should be dressed comfortably to participate in daily activities and appropriately for outdoor play consistent with seasonal requirements.

The academy employs a uniform policy for grammar and upper school students in an effort to foster a sense of community and unity as well as to promote a positive work ethic and modesty. Students are expected to be in uniform when on campus unless a rare occasion has been designated by the

school administration. Students will also wear their uniforms on most field trips and outings that occur during a typical school day. The uniform is governed by the following biblical principles.

The academy encourages parents to hold their children accountable for adhering to the uniform and dress code policy. When teachers must address infractions, precious time reserved for education is wasted. Uniform policy adherence is primarily the responsibility of the family at home.

1. The way we dress can honor God by reflecting respect for our bodies and for others or can dishonor God by showing disrespect for our bodies and others. (1 Corinthians 6:20)
2. We should not dress in a manner that draws self-gratifying attention. Instead we should be Christ-like in both conduct and dress. (Romans 13:14)
3. We should not view our physical appearance or beauty as the source of our value, but rather should see that our value is inherent as God's unique creation. We should strive to let our attractiveness emanate from a Christ-like spirit and good conduct. (1 Peter 3:3-4; 1 Timothy 2:9-10; Colossians 3:17)
4. All students must dress in uniform clothing designated by the academy for their biological, genetic sex confirmed at birth. (Genesis 1:27; Deut. 22:5)

Students are encouraged to honor the stated and implied principles of the uniform. We strongly discourage the practice of looking for loopholes and of applying a legalistic approach to the uniform in both practice and enforcement. Teachers do not enjoy reprimanding students and find even more distasteful debating with them over the uniform standards. Let's work together to make the uniform a useful tool.

### ***Uniform Guidelines***

Students must wear clothing and accessories provided by the school's designated vendor when attending classes or on school-sponsored trips except in the case of any exceptions outlined below or in cases of special events for which the Headmaster has granted permission for variance from the uniform policy. Uniforms may be ordered from the academy's website. All accessories sold by our vendor on Capstone's vendor website are permitted (such as hair bows, crossover ties, ties for K-6 boys, etc.).

#### ***K-6 Girls***

1. Options for bottoms include the plaid jumper or skirt and the khaki pants.
2. Options for tops include the Peter Pan blouse, the navy knit polo, the navy 1/4 zip performance sweatshirt, and the navy cardigan sweater. 6th graders also have the option of a white Oxford shirt. **All tops but the Peter Pan blouse and Oxford must be purchased with the Capstone logo.**
3. The Oxford or Peter Pan blouse is required for grade 6 on designated formal days.
4. Navy leggings (optional) and navy modesty (bike) shorts (required) for wearing under the jumper and skirt are also provided by our supplier but may be purchased elsewhere.
5. Navy or white socks and tights are available from our provider, but may be purchased anywhere.
6. Brown or black belts are available from our provider but may also be purchased elsewhere.
7. Girls may select our plaid crossover tie but it is not a required item until 7th grade, where it is worn on designated formal days.
8. Shoes may be purchased anywhere, must be closed toe and heel (for safety), and may include tennis shoes, business casual, or dress shoes. Flip-flops, sandals, and crocs are prohibited.
9. Business casual or dress shoes are required for designated formal days for grade 6. Tennis shoes or Hey Dudes (or similar style) may not be worn on formal days.
10. Accessories such as hair bows and crossover ties are optional and may be purchased from our provider or elsewhere but must be only in navy and white patterns or solids.

**7th-8th Girls**

- Options for bottoms include the khaki pants, the plaid skirt, and the plaid jumper (if it meets length requirements delineated in rules for appearance below).
- Options for tops include the white Oxford, the Peter Pan blouse, the navy 1/4 zip performance sweatshirt, the navy blazer, the navy cardigan, and on designated casual days only, the navy knit polos. **All tops but the Oxford and Peter Pan must be purchased with the Capstone logo.**
- Navy leggings (optional) and navy modesty (bike) shorts (required) for wearing under the skirt are provided by our supplier but may be purchased elsewhere.
- Navy or white socks and tights are available from our provider, but these may also be purchased elsewhere.
- Brown or black belts are available from our provider but may also be purchased elsewhere.
- The plaid crossover tie is required for designated formal days.
- Shoes must be brown, navy, or black business casual or dress shoes. Tennis shoes are only permitted during PE and athletics—not for all-day wear. Flip-flops, sandals, and crocs are prohibited.
- The Capstone PE uniform must be worn during PE classes. (Once in permanent campus)
- Accessories such as hair bows and crossover ties are optional and may be purchased from our provider or elsewhere but must be only in navy and white patterns or solids..

**K-6 Boys**

- Options for bottoms include khaki pants and khaki shorts.
- Options for tops include navy knit polos and 1/4 zip navy sweatshirts for all boys in K-6, with the addition of white Oxfords for grade 6. **All tops but the Oxford must be purchased with the Capstone logo.**
- The Oxford shirt is required for designated formal days for grade 6.
- Navy, khaki, and brown socks are available from our provider but may be purchased anywhere.
- Brown or black belts are available from our provider but may also be purchased elsewhere.
- Our uniform tie may be purchased from our provider but is not required for boys until 7th grade on designated formal days.
- Shoes may be purchased anywhere, must be closed toe and heel (for safety), and may include tennis shoes, business casual, or dress shoes. Flip-flops, sandals, and crocs are prohibited.
- Business casual or dress shoes are required for designated formal days for grade 6. Tennis shoes or Hey Dudes (or similar style) may not be worn on formal days.

**7-8 Boys**

- Options for bottoms include khaki pants and khaki shorts.
- Options for tops include the white Oxford (daily wear), the navy cardigan, the navy 1/4-zip performance sweatshirt, the navy sweater vest, the navy blazer, and on designated casual days only, the navy knit polos. **All tops but the Oxford must be purchased with the Capstone logo.**
- Navy, khaki, and brown socks are available from our provider but may be purchased anywhere.
- Brown or black belts are available from our provider but may also be purchased elsewhere.
- A tie is required for designated formal days and may be purchased from our provider. If the plaid uniform tie is selected, it must be purchased from our provider. A purple and gold awning striped tie may also be worn on formal days and may be purchased from any provider.
- Shoes must be brown, navy, or black business casual or dress shoes. Tennis shoes are only permitted during PE and athletics—not for all-day wear. Flip-flops, sandals, and crocs are prohibited.
- The Capstone PE uniform must be worn during PE classes. (Once in permanent campus)

**Rules for General Appearance for Boys and Girls**

- Hair should be neat and clean. Hairstyles that draw undue attention and distract students from learning are prohibited. Hair must be kept out of the eyes and may not be dyed in colors that are not naturally occurring in the human genome.
- Hats may not be worn in the building.

3. Girls may only wear two earrings per ear, and boys may not have any ear piercing. Nose rings and studs must be subtle and not unduly large or bold. All other piercing is prohibited.
4. Tattoos, real or play, are discouraged and must be covered.
5. Excessive jewelry is prohibited. One necklace, bracelet or anklet may be worn per appendage.
6. Students may be asked to remove certain types of jewelry that do not meet the tone or intent of the uniform guidelines.
7. Shirts must be buttoned up to just below the neck.
8. Clothing must always be modest enough to cover the midriff, back, and all undergarments in any range of motion.
9. As a general rule, skirts and shorts should extend beyond the finger tips when arms are resting at one's sides. Parents and students should use their own best judgment when clothing that meets this guideline is immodest with certain styles and body types.
10. Starting in 3rd grade, boys must tuck in shirts and wear a belt.
11. Socks must be worn (for safety). Permitted sock colors are listed in the uniform guidelines above.

For both on-campus and off-campus events sponsored by the academy and not requiring uniform clothing, the following rules apply.

- Tight, form-fitting apparel such as yoga pants and skinny jeans are not permitted.
- Clothing with rips or tears are not permitted.
- Shorts should be finger-tip in length and skirts and dresses should reach the top of the knee.
- Text or images should not appear on pants or shorts bottoms.
- Tank tops are not permitted.
- Tops with plunging necklines, revealing the belly or midriff, or are tight to the skin are not permitted.
- Any writing or images should be "G-rated" and should not state or imply messages that would be in conflict with the school's mission.
- When applicable, two-piece or male speedo bathing suits are not permitted.

### ***Designated Formal Days***

Formal days are for all students in grades 6-12. For events that occur in the evening, formal attire should be worn during the school day as well as for the event itself, unless otherwise specified.

- Convocation Day
- Grandparents Day
- Thanksgiving Feast and Poetry Exhibition
- Christmas Band Concerts (wear formal uniform to school; wear attire specified by teacher for the concert)
- Christmas Choir concerts (wear formal uniform to school; wear attire specified by teacher for the concert)
- 119 Day
- State of School Day
- Young Authors Day
- Easter Band Concerts (wear formal uniform to school; wear attire specified by teacher for the concert)
- Easter Choir Concerts (wear formal attire to school; wear attire specified by teacher for the concert)
- Theater Production
- Teacher Appreciation Assembly
- Art Show
- Thanksgiving Worship Day
- Barnabas Day

## Teacher-Staff Enforcement of Dress Code

Employees shall enforce the dress code with consistency but with a spirit of grace. Never publicly correct a student with regard to dress code. Dress code infractions are often sensitive topics for students and parents, and there are many reasons why a student may be out of compliance. The cause is not often insubordination or disrespect. Infractions should be handled matter-of-factly and pleasantly.

- Take the student aside and let him know that he is out of compliance.
- If the issue can be corrected (such as tucking in a shirt, putting on a belt that is in a cubby/locker, etc.), ask the student to correct the infraction, thanking him for his assistance.
- If the issue cannot be corrected but the student is both safe and modest, simply remind the student to correct the issue in the future.
- Always end the conversation by expressing thanks for the student's help and by affirming by your countenance and body language that all is well.
- Record all dress code reminders and corrections in FACTS SIS in the behavior section of the student record and copy the parents.

## Lost and Found

Parents should label all of their children's belongings with their name in permanent marker. This will assist school staff in keeping track of everyone's belongings. Because we have limited storage space for lost and found items, we will hold lost and found items for two (2) months. After this time, they will be given to the needy in our community or offered for sale via the school's Parent Fellowship (CPF) used clothing program.

## Interscholastic Sports Code of Conduct

We believe that our athletic pursuits must submit to the call of Colossians 3:17, "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Even in athletics, our goal is to glorify God.

The purpose of the Capstone Classical Academy athletic program is to provide students with an opportunity to glorify God in the athletic arena by:

- Exhibiting the splendor of God's creative power evident in the unique capabilities of the human mind, body, and spirit. (Gen. 1:27) Athletic pursuits are a testament to man's supremacy over all creation. The superiority of the mind, body, and spirit of man point to the Creator who made us in his own image.
- Developing and exhibiting a strong work ethic. (Col. 3:23-24) Athletes must learn to give every practice and game their best efforts as though working for God in their pursuits.
- Developing and exhibiting exceptional unity and teamwork. (1 Cor. 12:12, John 13:35) All players will learn to work together as a team, valuing the contributions of others and seeking to benefit the team rather than himself/herself.
- Developing and exhibiting self-control. (Gal. 5:22-23) Students will learn to be self-controlled in even the most heated competition.
- Loving the opponent. (Rom. 12:16, 17; Gal. 5:26; Eph. 4:29) Students will hold the opponent in higher esteem than themselves, seeking to promote peace, to look first to the needs of the opponent, and to speak only words that encourage him/her.

Although one of the collective goals of our sports programs is to win games, and although we expect that players, coaches, and fans should eagerly desire to win, the desire to win games will never supersede the principle purpose stated above. For we are convinced of what the Lord teaches us in 1 Timothy 4:8 and 1 Corinthians 9:25. "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. . . Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever."



### ***Sports Disciplinary Policy***

All fans, athletes, coaches, and staff are expected to exhibit commitment to the principles outlined above while in attendance or competition at all interscholastic sporting events. Failure to honor these principles will be taken seriously by the coaches, athletic directors, and administration of Capstone Classical Academy.

In an effort to encourage all fans, athletes, coaches, and staff to keep a Christian focus on athletic competition, the following disciplinary strategies will be implemented when an individual fails to live up to the high standards of the Capstone interscholastic sports program.

Due to the dynamic nature of athletic competition, an exhaustive list of infractions can not possibly be printed below, but the following will serve as a guide for coaches, the athletic director, and the administration to implement appropriate disciplinary strategies in response to any infractions that may unfortunately occur. These are in addition to the general school behavior policies, which are, of course, also applicable in the athletic arena.

#### Minor Offenses:

These offenses and consequences are applicable to all athletes, fans, and staff members. Negative behaviors include but are not limited to: Obvious displays of arrogance, temper, rudeness, dishonesty or disrespect such as facial expressions, quiet comments, or physical gestures that are not flagrant but violate the code of conduct nonetheless. Such infractions might only be noticed by a few players or fans and the coach or officials but might not even be deemed by the officials as offenses worth penalizing.

Disciplinary action to be administered by the coach (or Athletic Director if the coach is the offending individual) may include any and/or all of the following:

1. Verbal reprimand by coach, Athletic Director, or administrator.
2. Time out of or away from the game.
3. A more difficult practice regiment at the next team practice.
4. A meeting with the fan, athlete, or staff member and the Athletic Director or Dean.

#### Major Offenses:

These offenses and consequences are applicable to all athletes, fans, and staff members. Negative behaviors include but are not limited to:

Flagrant displays of arrogance, temper, rudeness, dishonesty or disrespect such as yelling or shouting with the intent to berate, insult, complain, or discourage any athlete, official, coach, or opposing fan. Also included would be behaviors resulting in a response from the officials such as a technical foul in basketball and any physically threatening gestures or violence.

Disciplinary action will include all of the following. #1 and #2 may be initiated by any coach, Athletic Director, or administrator on the premises, depending upon who committed the offense (coaches should primarily take action with players, administrators or Athletic Directors with coaches or fans, etc.).

1. Removal from the game or bleachers.
2. The individual(s) may be asked to leave the premises.
3. A written or personally delivered apology to any deemed by the coach, Athletic Director and Headmaster to have been offended by the infraction.

Disciplinary action to be administered by a committee consisting of the coach, Athletic Director, and Dean may include any of the following pending a majority vote of the committee:

1. Suspension from playing in or attending future game(s).
2. Removal from the team for the remainder of the season.
3. Individual may be banned from attending games for the remainder of the season.

### ***Eligibility***

Please read the eligibility standards for co-curricular activities in this handbook for regulations regarding academic performance and athlete eligibility to attend practices and games.

### **Student-Related Searches**

By law, a school's standards for searches differ from those under which the police or other law enforcement officials must operate. A student's vehicle, locker, backpack, bag, iPad, or clothing is subject to search by the administration if there is a reasonable suspicion that drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons, pornographic materials, or other contraband are being concealed by the student.

The administration retains the right to search, at any time, any vehicle parked in the school parking areas. Teachers are not permitted to conduct searches unless directed to do so by the Headmaster or Dean and must never conduct a search without another employee witness.

### **Weapons Prohibition**

ND state law prohibits the possession of lethal weapons on any school campus. As an added precaution, employees and students are not permitted to bring fake or toy weapons to school.

### **Use of Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco**

Capstone's campus and all events sponsored (hosted, funded, or marketed by employees in fulfillment of their official duties for the school) will be alcohol-free and tobacco-free. This means that the possession or consumption of alcohol or the use of tobacco in any form will be prohibited in, on, or around all campus properties, owned or leased. The same prohibition applies to all Capstone vehicles, whether on or off campus, and to all Capstone-sponsored (hosted, funded, or marketed by employees in fulfillment of their official duties for the school) events or programs, wherever they are held.

Capstone Classical Academy is a drug and alcohol-free workplace. Drug and alcohol use by faculty or staff members is not tolerated on school premises. A conviction of an alcohol or drug related crime will result in termination. Employees are responsible for notifying their supervisor or the Headmaster, within 24 hours of any arrest or conviction.

Smoking is prohibited in the building and on the property, including the parking lot. Faculty and staff are expected to set a positive example for students concerning the use of tobacco by following the school and state laws regarding tobacco possession and its use.

If drug use is suspected while an employee is at work or at any school-related event, the school may require a drug test. If an employee refuses the test, he or she may be terminated.

### **Employee Benefits**

The benefits listed in this handbook are subject to change. When there is a discrepancy between the benefits and policies listed in this handbook and those listed on your signed job offer and job description, the benefits and policies outlined in your personal employment documents supersede those in this handbook. The benefits below are for full-time employees only.

## 10-Month Full-Time Employees

- The school will pay 90% of the employee's premium for the school health insurance program. At this time, the school does not contribute toward the premiums for the employee's family members.
- School holidays labeled on the Capstone Master Calendar as "School Closed" and that are not designated as in-service days shall be paid vacation days.
- 10 sick days per school year. Sick days may only be used for employee illness or illness in the employee's family. For all employees, unused sick days carry over each year up to a limit of 30 days. No employee may hold more than 30 sick days at a time. Saved days over the 30-day limit are null and void.
- 3 personal days per school year. Personal days should be considered emergency days and should not be used for vacation.
- The school will provide a 403B retirement plan and will match, dollar-for-dollar, employee contributions up to 3% of the employee's annual salary during each contract year.
- Employees will receive priority consideration for tuition support for their children to attend Capstone. To receive support, the employee must complete the FACTS financial aid application.

## 12-Month Full-Time Employees

- The school will pay 90% of the employee's premium for the school health insurance program. At this time, the school does not contribute toward the premiums for the employee's family members.
- School holidays labeled on the Capstone Master Calendar as "School Closed" and that are not designated as in-service days shall be paid vacation days.
- 12 sick days per calendar year. Sick days may only be used for employee illness or illness in the employee's family. For all employees, unused sick days carry over each year up to a limit of 30 days. No employee may hold more than 30 sick days at a time. Saved days over the 30-day limit are null and void.
- 5 personal days per calendar year. Personal days should be considered emergency days and should not be used for vacation.
- 15 paid vacation days the first 2 years; 20 paid vacation days year 3 and following
- The school will provide a 403B retirement plan and will match, dollar-for-dollar, employee contributions up to 3% of the employee's annual salary during each contract year.
- Employees will receive priority consideration for tuition support for their children to attend Capstone.
- To receive support, the employee must complete the FACTS financial aid application.

## Personnel Files

It is your responsibility to keep your personal contact information up-to-date. If you have a change in any of the following items, please be sure to notify the business office as soon as possible:

Legal name  
 Home address or mailing address  
 Home telephone number  
 Emergency Contact  
 Number of dependents  
 Marital status  
 Change of beneficiary  
 Driving record or status of driver's license, if you operate any school vehicles  
 Military or draft status  
 Exemptions on your W-4 tax form  
 Any other matters that will affect your status as an employee.

The school requires official transcripts and evidence of relevant licensure to be on file. You may review your personal personnel file if you wish (unless information is restricted by law), and

you may request and receive copies of all documents you have signed. To obtain these, please make arrangements with the administrative staff.

## **Professional Growth**

As teachers at a classical Christian school, Capstone educators must model the habits of lifelong learners and must demonstrate their own pursuit of the good, the true, and the beautiful in word and deed. It is the administration's expectation that every employee of Capstone Classical Academy is engaged in reading, attending events, studying, writing, and discussing with colleagues and mentors content in the classical liberal arts as well as best pedagogical practices. Capstone does not require employees to report a specific number of credits or hours to be logged in verified professional growth experiences per calendar period, but supervisors will regularly assign faculty reading, discussions, peer observations, conferences, seminars, and other opportunities for the faculty and staff to grow professionally as classical and Christian educators and ministers to families.

All teachers and employees for whom a annual personal professional development plan is appropriate will be directed by their supervisor to draft and implement such a plan on an annual basis. This plan will typically be submitted to the employee's supervisor in May-June and will be implemented throughout the academic year.

All employees can expect that the leadership team will lead the faculty in a school-wide professional development reading and discussion plan annually, and all employees are expected to participate fully in this valuable experience.

## **Performance Evaluation**

The Capstone professional practices self and organizational evaluation and desires specific feedback regarding her performance of her duties. The faculty and staff are characterized by a growth mindset, seeing weaknesses and underdeveloped skills and competencies as opportunities to learn and grow in excellent service to students, parents, and colleagues. As an organization, Capstone Classical Academy is in a continual state of evaluation of its own practices, policies, and performance, and desires specific feedback to help it fulfill its mission with excellence to the glory of God and the benefit of its community.

Due to this disposition, the following practices are normative for the Capstone Classical community:

- Formal classroom observations followed by formal written evaluative feedback.
- Regular formal assessments of the performance of professional duties.
- Informal and formal peer observations followed by informal and formal written feedback.
- Semester and end-of-year written self-assessment.
- Annual and multi-year personal professional development plans.
- End-of-semester and end-of-year student surveys (grades 8 and up).
- End-of-semester and end-of-year parent surveys.
- Annual performance reviews with direct supervisors.
- Professional improvement plans when areas of weakness are identified by a supervisor.
- Written, formal employee assessments of supervisor's performance.
- Written, formal employee assessments of organizational performance.

## **Harassment and Discrimination**

Harassment and discriminatory behavior are not tolerated at Capstone and will be handled in accordance with school policy. The Board of Directors affirms the right of all students and staff to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm, and harassment.

Behavior that denies civil rights or access to equal educational opportunities includes comments, name-calling, physical conduct, or other expressive behavior that demeans an individual or group. It likewise

includes behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or demeaning environment for education. Individuals or groups on school property or at school activities are in violation of this policy if they:

- Make demeaning remarks directly or indirectly, such as name-calling, racial slurs or “jokes.
- Physically threaten or harm an individual.
- Display demeaning visual or written material or deface school property or materials.
- Threaten to or actually damage, deface, or destroy private property of any person.

Anyone who believes that he has been the subject of harassment or discriminatory behavior should report the incident immediately to the Headmaster or his designee. Confidentiality regarding all reports will be maintained whenever possible. The Headmaster or designee will investigate reports about harassment or discriminatory behavior immediately. Anyone who has witnessed harassment or discriminatory behavior should report the incident immediately to the Headmaster or designee. Confidentiality regarding all reports will be maintained whenever possible. Reports about harassment or discriminatory behavior will be investigated immediately.

Any staff member who violates this policy by engaging in discriminatory conduct will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any conduct that could be considered criminal will be reported to law enforcement, and the administration will cooperate fully with any subsequent investigation conducted by law enforcement.

Capstone Classical Academy maintains a working environment free from sexual harassment and abuse and insists that all faculty, staff, and students be treated with dignity, respect, and courtesy. Harassment and abuse on the basis of sex is a violation of federal law. In addition to being illegal, sexual harassment and abuse will be considered a breach of professional conduct. Any conduct or communication which constitutes sexual harassment or abuse is strictly prohibited. Any faculty or staff member guilty of such conduct will be disciplined appropriately with consequences up to and including termination.

Sexual harassment/abuse is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and any other conduct of a sexual nature whereby:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person’s employment or educational development.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions, including decisions to hire or terminate, promote or demote, or grant or deny privileges or benefits.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Prohibited conduct will include but not be limited to:

- Repeated, offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions, verbal “kidding,” abuse, or harassment;
- Continued or repeated verbal remarks of a sexual or demeaning nature;
- Graphic verbal commentaries about an individual’s body;
- Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual;
- Displays of sexually suggestive objects or pictures;
- Sexually explicit language or jokes;
- Pressure for sexual activity;
- Unwelcome touching of any kind;
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one’s grades, employment status, or similar personal concerns.

A faculty or staff member may file a report of sexual harassment with the Headmaster, or if the concern is with the Headmaster's conduct, with the Board of Directors. Students may report a case of sexual harassment/abuse to a teacher, Dean, or Headmaster. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible.

Reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status or affect future employment, work assignments, or grades. The school strongly encourages faculty and staff who believe they have been sexually harassed to report such incident using the following procedure. All faculty and staff, including those who file complaints, as well as those accused but found to be innocent, will be afforded protection from retaliation within the work environment.

- A faculty or staff member believing that he has been sexually harassed should immediately report the incident to the Headmaster. If the Headmaster is the alleged cause of the problem, or seems unwilling to resolve the issue, the faculty or staff member should contact the Board of Directors, preferably in writing.
- Every reported incident of sexual harassment will be thoroughly and promptly investigated by the Headmaster. The Headmaster and all faculty and staff involved in the investigation will respect the confidences and sensitivities of all persons involved in the incident. All involved individuals are expected to cooperate.
- If, after investigation, the Headmaster determines that the charges of sexual harassment are substantiated, appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken up to and including termination.
- The Headmaster will promptly communicate to the faculty and staff involved the results of the investigation.
- If the alleged victim or the accused disagrees with the results of the investigation, an appeal may be made to the Board of Directors by following the Conflict Resolution Policy contained in this handbook.
- All faculty and staff members who suspect sexual harassment or abuse of a student are required to report it to child protective services by **calling 1-833-958-3500**, North Dakota's toll-free Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Line to report suspected abuse or neglect. The state's reporting form, [SFN 960](#), is also available at local human service zone offices (formerly called county social service offices).

## Intellectual Property Rights

Capstone Classical Academy uses curricula, resources, and training from the Hillsdale K-12, and these are provided through a licensing agreement. The materials themselves are the intellectual property of Hillsdale College and other publishers and should be treated accordingly.

In the course of work at Capstone, teachers will develop curriculum maps, syllabi, assessments, and various other materials for use in their classrooms and the school community. With the exception of a teacher's own notes (e.g. lecture notes), these materials are the intellectual property of Capstone. When teachers are no longer employed at the school for any reason, they must turn in copies of all such materials to the Headmaster or his designee. Teachers wishing to keep and/or use these materials outside of Capstone should consult with the Headmaster.

The purpose of this arrangement is twofold: first, to establish that paid work done on behalf of Capstone is the property of the school, not the individual staff, faculty, or consultant; second, to ensure that the school builds on its institutional knowledge and experience each year despite faculty turnover.

## **Budgets and Funding**

The school's operating budget provides funding for instructional materials and some routine office and classroom supplies. Major purchases should be requested in writing by submitting a purchase order to a direct supervisor as far in advance of anticipated need or implementation, preferably by December of the year prior to implementation.

Minor purchase orders should be submitted to a direct supervisor, but long-term planning is less important with such purchases. Providing two weeks for approval will usually result in timely receipt of materials ordered.

Purchase order forms are completed online and can be accessed through the employe dashboard or the employee forms webpage. No purchases should ever be made without a purchase order form signed by both the direct supervisor and the business manager unless the employee intends to pay for the order as a gift to the school or for personal use.

Annual textbook inventory and orders are conducted by the administrative team. All faculty members are expected to maintain a detailed inventory of textbooks and to report losses and damage to the designated administrator when placing orders for the next school year. The annual inventory collection and orders will take place in May of each academic year and will be prompted by communication from the Deans.

## **Maintenance Work Orders**

Any faculty or staff members recognizing a need for maintenance work or repairs to be done in his/her classroom or in other parts of the building or grounds, should complete a maintenance work order form on the employe dashboard online.

## **Special Funding Requests**

All functions or projects for fundraising by clubs or classes must be submitted in writing to the appropriate administrator. Upon approval by the school administration it will be placed on the activity calendar in the school office. All money collected by any school group or employee must be delivered to the business office on the day the money is received. Teachers are responsible for funds in their possession until submitted to the business office. Supplies and funds needed for special projects must be obtained through the business office in accordance with the board-approved budget, and not from the cash received for the project. All cash and checks must be accounted for. Every effort should be made to collect all funds prior to the event or completion of the project.

Reimbursement for materials and supplies purchased directly by staff with administrative approval cannot include tax. Tax Exemption Forms are available in the school office. The individual, not the school, will pay for purchases made not following these procedures.

## **Outside Employment**

The School expects that a full-time position at the school is the employee's primary employment. Any outside activity must not interfere with the employee's ability to perform properly the job duties at the school.

## **Tutoring, Private Coaching, and Private Lessons**

Capstone is a challenging school, and parents often ask teachers if they are willing to provide tutoring, private lessons, or individual athletic coaching outside of school hours. There are several types of tutoring available. If you would like to make yourself available for tutoring, please notify the Dean. Please see below for guidelines.

- Tutoring from a teacher to a student enrolled in that teacher's class or on the coach's team: If a teacher or coach makes him or herself available before or after school to provide extra help with that teacher's curriculum or activity, he or she may not charge the parent for providing that service, even if the parent offers to pay for it. Tutoring or coaching of this kind should always happen on campus or at the location of normal athletic practice.
- Tutoring from a teacher to a student not enrolled in that teacher's class: If a teacher is not responsible for grading a student, that teacher may accept money in exchange for tutoring or coaching the student as long as there is no other conflict of interest. Teachers may provide this service to students, but generally not on campus. They may secure permission from the Headmaster to conduct these sessions on campus. They may charge the parent for the service. If you are interested in making yourself available for private tutoring please let your Dean know, and she/he will add your name to the list of tutors available at the front office.
- Private tutoring from other students: Successful Capstone students in grades 9-12 may make themselves available for private tutoring on or off campus. To apply to be a private tutor the student must first secure permission from the Dean.
- After permission is granted the student's name will be added to the tutoring list available at the front office. The recommended rate for student tutoring is \$15/hour.

## Non-Disparagement of the School

As an employee of Capstone Classical Academy, faculty and staff members have a special responsibility to represent the school to our community and beyond, and disparaging comments made by employees about the school are likely to substantially hurt the school's reputation. The Capstone Board and administration therefore expect that employees will not directly or indirectly defame, disparage, or publicly criticize the services, business, integrity, or reputation of the school, its Board, or its employees. Employees and former employees acting in violation of this expectation will be met with disciplinary consequences and/or legal action. Employees with grievances should follow the Conflict Resolution Policy explained in this handbook and in the Parent-Student Handbook.

## Non-discriminatory Notice

Capstone Classical Academy admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin. Also, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Capstone does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities or employment except where necessitated by specific religious tenets held by the institution and its controlling body.

Any employee who believes they have been discriminated against may file a complaint of discrimination with:

Capstone Classical Academy  
3910 25th St. S.  
Fargo, ND 58104

Program Civil Rights Office  
North Dakota Department of Human Services  
Legal Advisory Unit  
600 E. Boulevard Avenue, Department 325  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0250  
Phone: 701-328-2311  
TTY: 1-800-366-6888  
Fax: 701-328-2173  
Email: [dhs1au@nd.gov](mailto:dhs1au@nd.gov)

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
Office for Civil Rights  
200 Independence Avenue SW HHH Building,  
Room 509-F  
Washington, DC 20201  
Phone: 1-800-368-1019  
TTY: 1-800-537-7697  
Fax: 202-619-3437  
Email: [ocrmail@hhs.gov](mailto:ocrmail@hhs.gov)

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
Office for Civil Rights, Region VIII  
1961 Stout Street, Room 08-148



Denver, CO 80294  
Phone: 1-800-368-1019  
TDD: 1-800-537-7697

Fax: 202-619-3818  
Email: [ocrmail@hhs.gov](mailto:ocrmail@hhs.gov)

## Signature Page

I have read and understand the policies of Capstone Classical Academy as outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook. I have reviewed the school's health policies, and will follow them. I agree to abide by and implement these policies to the best of my ability. Furthermore, I understand that this policy manual may be updated without notice and that the most current edition can be found on Capstone's employee forms webpage.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee First and Last Name (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature