

Good Shepherd Christian Academy

A Ministry of
The First Baptist Church of Duxbury
2 Tremont Street, Duxbury, MA 02332

2011-2012

Welcome to Good Shepherd Christian Academy!

Among the many blessings we experience at GSCA, we are most thankful for our wonderful families. Please take the time to read through this helpful guide to our school, so that your family can know all the great things God has planned for you here. As always, we are glad to answer questions that arise. Just make an appointment with me.

In Christ,

Dr. Jay Lowder
Principal

Phone: (781) 934-6007

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INTRODUCTION

Mission

Good Shepherd Christian Academy, in harmony with the home, provides a quality educational program in an environment that nurtures Christ-like character with a sound biblical foundation and challenging curriculum that will enable the students to achieve their God-given potential.

Vision

Good Shepherd Christian Academy in partnership with the family seeks to glorify Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in educating future generations through Christ-centered training, application and example.

History

The Good Shepherd Christian Academy is a ministry of the First Baptist Church of Duxbury. The school is governed by the Good Shepherd School Board. The school board operates under the constitution and bylaws of the church. The Good Shepherd Christian Academy, established 1997 is a continuation of the Good Shepherd Preschool and Kindergarten, which was started in 1976. During the 2009-2010 school year, the school began a middle school incorporating sixth and seventh grades. In 2010 GSCA completed its middle school expansion to 8th grade. Although there are no definite plans in place yet, the church will eventually build a family life center on the back of the property to accommodate the rapid growth of the church. This future facility will include additional classroom space and equipment that will allow Good Shepherd to begin a high school program.

School Philosophy

We believe that each child is a gift from God created with unique abilities, talents, strengths, weaknesses and learning styles. The approach of Good Shepherd Christian Academy is to develop the whole child by providing a strong academic education based on a Christian view of God and His world. We consider it a privilege to educate children in a small class size environment where the presence of the Lord is recognized and respected. We believe God has a plan for every child, and it is our goal that each student will learn to the best of his/her ability. Classroom management is based on mutual respect, fostered in a nurturing, yet structured environment established by teachers who communicate high learning expectations for their students.

Goals for Students

- Teachers will foster attitudes in students that show a sincere interest and liking for school. Students will develop the knowledge, skills, and learning techniques necessary for secondary education, and to acquire the skills to work independently and cooperatively.
- Teachers will help students develop communication and expression through language and creative arts.
- Students will develop listening and comprehension skills.
- Students will develop self-control, and will learn the acceptance of responsibility for their actions.
- Teachers will develop a level of independence appropriate for each child to make decisions and choices, so that children can think for themselves and stand up for their convictions under pressure.
- Teachers will help all children grow in their knowledge of God and His Word. It is our prayer that children will establish a deeply committed relationship with God and learn to seek God's plan for their lives through the teachers' examples of daily prayer and Bible reading.
- Teachers will present Biblical standards of morality and ethics as absolute truth, so that students will acquire a positive self-concept in relation to themselves and others and learn to care for the souls and human welfare of every person.

ACADEMIC STRUCTURE AND CREDENTIALS

Affiliation

The Good Shepherd Christian Academy is a member of the Association of Christian Schools International, an internationally recognized organization with over 5,300 member schools. Currently, the school is pursuing full ACSI accreditation through the rigorous multi-year STAR program.

Facilities

The Good Shepherd Christian Academy enjoys the use of the facilities at the First Baptist Church of Duxbury. The facility includes 10 classrooms and a large multipurpose room for weekly lunch, art, Spanish and inclement weather recess. The school uses the church auditorium for music and chapel. The school grounds also have outdoor play areas and a soccer field.

Hours

Preschool:	Teddy Bear's - 3yrs	Tues. & Thurs.	8:45-12:00 PM
	Panda's - 4yrs	Mon., Wed., Fri.	8:30-11:45 AM
	Lamb's – Pre-K	Mon. thru Fri.	8:30-12:00 PM

Academy: The doors open at 8:00 AM with classes beginning promptly at 8:15 AM. Students are late if they are not in the classroom by 8:15 AM, and will receive a tardy slip. Dismissal is at 3:00 PM.

Staff Credentials

Our school board consists of appointed members from the First Baptist Church plus the principal who meet at least once a month. They oversee the procedures and policies of Good Shepherd Christian Academy and plan long-range for the growth of the school. Preschool teachers and assistants are state qualified. All full time academy teachers either possess Massachusetts state certification or are pursuing it. In addition to their certification, our teachers must exhibit a godly lifestyle and be totally committed to the mission and the vision of the school.

Student Ratio

To ensure such an individualized nurturing atmosphere, GSCA seeks to maintain a student-teacher ratio of no more than 15:1 for grades kindergarten through eighth, although exceptions can be made to accommodate student and school needs. Each preschool classroom has a teacher and an assistant teacher with the ratio being 12:2 (or 6:1).

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Age Requirements

Preschool: A child may enroll in the three year old Teddy Bear class if they have turned three by October 31st. All four year olds in the Panda class must be four by December 31st. Children must be five years old by December 31st to enroll in our five year old Pre-Kindergarten Lambs class. *All preschoolers must be potty-trained by the first day of school. "Pull-ups" are not allowed.*

Academy: Students entering the Kindergarten must be five years old by August 31st. First graders must be six years old by August 31st.

New academy students must supply a copy of their birth certificate and an up-to-date immunization schedule.

Admission

Students are enrolled for the school year or for the balance thereof. The preschool registration (non-refundable) is \$75.00 or \$100.00 for families with two or more preschoolers. The academy registration fee (non-refundable) is \$100.00 or \$200.00 for families with two or more academy students. Families are responsible for full tuition payments scheduled for 30 days after withdrawal. Enrollment of new families begins at the Open House/Registration, which is held on the first Saturday in February. The office will receive applications from current families two weeks prior to our Open House.

Our first obligation is to currently enrolled students. From the base of returning students, we can determine the number of openings in each class. Priority in enrollment is also given to the members of the First Baptist Church and siblings of currently enrolled children. Remaining openings will be filled with new applicants. Enrollment continues until all spaces are filled or throughout the year for classes not completely filled.

Students who are transferring to GSCA must submit all transcripts – academic, standardized test scores, all testing results, guidance and psychological reports, and health records. The school shall admit students of all race, color, national and ethnic origins to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available.

When a parent/guardian signs a registration form, they are agreeing to pay tuition for the duration of the current school program. Tuition is paid in twelve equal payments from July-June. The first tuition payment is due in July. The final tuition payment is due in June, making twelve equal monthly tuition payments. For academy students, there is a book and activity fee of \$350.00 which will be divided by twelve and added to the monthly payments. Payments are made through the FACTS Tuition Program.

Tuition is an annual fee. It may be paid in full by July 1st for a 3% discount or in two payments due July 1st and January 15th for a 2% discount or twelve monthly payments from July-June. The tuition remains the same throughout the year regardless of holidays and vacations and is not reduced in case of absence. The cost of the school continues when a child is absent, and a place can be held only by continuous payment of the tuition fee. Snow days are not made up.

Even though the FACTS program ensures timely payments, we pledge to families that when there are mitigating circumstances, we will be happy to assist your family regarding tuition. If a family does not make a FACTS monthly payment due to insufficient funds or a credit card limit, then the company simply notifies the school. In this situation, we contact the family to work out a *temporarily* different arrangement. This company is *not* a debt collection agency.

Continued Enrollment Policy

It is a privilege for the teachers and administration of Good Shepherd Christian Academy to serve families by providing quality, private education that is distinctively Christian. At the same time, Good Shepherd is a private school and a student's enrollment and continued enrollment at the school is subject to the oversight and approval of the administration and school board.

The teachers and administration at Good Shepherd strive to maintain open and honest communication with parents about the successes, struggles, and potential of each student. However, there are different situations in which it could become necessary for the school board to dismiss students during the current school year or prohibit re-enrollment for the following year. For example, students might be dismissed due to excessively late tuition payments. Students can also be expelled as a disciplinary action necessitated by serious conduct that is harmful to other students, teachers, or the school environment.

In other situations, the school board might decide a student cannot continue at GSCA due to the school's inability to meet the student's educational need. This action would be taken *only for the sake of the student* if it is determined that he or she needs more academic support than the school can reasonably provide. The school reserves the right to require testing conducted by the public school system of the student's town, to be given the written evaluation and assessments that result from the testing, and to be given evidence that the family is utilizing the educational services offered by the district, especially those recommended in an Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.). In such cases, the school board may require compliance with the recommendation as a condition of continued enrollment. At other times, district testing might reveal learning disabilities and delays that prevent the continued enrollment of a student regardless of any supporting services that are offered.

The school board will also intervene to determine whether a student can continue to attend the school, if it is found that there is a clear pattern of ongoing disagreement and frustration between teachers, and/or the administration, and a student's parent. In the event that there are ongoing, unresolved disagreements, and frustration between a student's teachers and parents, the principal will inform the school board regarding the situation. If the school board determines that the involved teachers have made efforts to resolve the lingering disagreements and frustrations, the school board may decide that the student can no longer attend the school. In general, the school board reserves the right to dismiss students from the school under any other circumstances that hamper the mission and environment of the school. There is no toleration of communication to teachers that is overly hostile or threatening.

Preschool Tuition and Fees (2011-2012)

Registration Fees:	Enrollment:	\$75.00 per student \$100.00 per family with 2 or more preschoolers	
Tuition:	Teddy Bear's (three years old by 10/31) Tues. & Thurs.	\$187.50/monthly - \$2250/yr	8:45-12:00 P.M.
	Panda's (four years old by 12/31) Mon., Wed., Fri.	\$229.17/monthly - \$2750/yr	8:30-11:45 A.M.
	Lamb's - Pre-Kindergarten (five years old by 12/31) Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs., Fri.	\$333.34/monthly - \$4000/yr	8:30-12:00 P.M.
	Lunch Bunch Tues., Wed., Thurs., & Fri.	\$9.00 per session	ending at 1:30 P.M.

Academy Tuition and Fees (2011-2012)

Registration Fees:	Enrollment: \$100.00 per student or \$200.00 per family
Academy Tuition:	Kindergarten – Grade 5 \$5,120.00 per year - \$426.67 per 12 months
	Middle School – Grades 6 to 8 \$5,320.00 per year - \$443.34 per 12 months
Book & Activity Fees:	Grades K - 8 \$350.00 (added to annual tuition & divided by 12 monthly payments)

Tuition is payable in twelve equal installments with the first payment (non-refundable) due in July. Payments will continue through June 2012. All tuition paid is non-refundable.

Discounts on Tuition

- 1. Early Payment:** 3% early discount if yearly tuition is paid to GSCA office by July 1st.
2% early discount if paid to GSCA office by July 1st and half by January 15th
- 2. Multi-Child Discount:** 1st child pays full tuition, 2nd child receives 10% off their tuition, 3rd child receives 20% off their tuition, 4th child receives 30% off their tuition, etc.
- 3. Active Members of First Baptist Church of Duxbury:**
 - Tuition is reduced by 20% per year for each child (academy students only). Specific details are available in the school office.
A family must be a church member by June 15th in order for this discount to be applied to the upcoming year.
- 4. Referral Bonus:** A discount is offered to a GSCA family who refers a new family that has no prior affiliations with GSCA. The new family must enroll and stay through November. A check will be sent to you in December. **Referral discount:** \$200 for each new academy family, and \$100 for each new preschool family.

Late Fees and Other Fees

- There will be a \$30.00 late fee charged if payment is not received within thirty days from the month it was due.
- There is a \$30.00 charge for any returned checks.
- Report cards and records will be withheld at the end of the school year until 1) outstanding balances of tuition and dress code violations and, 2) money due from school property such as books not yet returned, have been paid in full.
- There is a \$10.00 charge for a Transfer of Record.

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Families who have submitted their student applications to GSCA and would like to apply for financial aid may do so on line at www.factstuitionaid.com. After the application has been submitted and reviewed, FACTS will then notify Good Shepherd Christian Academy of their recommendations. **Applications must be submitted on-line by April 15th to be considered.** Parents will be notified no later than June 1st of their acceptance or rejection to the program. Financial aid granted to families is subject to FACTS verification of paperwork required to support the on-line application.

Tuition Policies

Policy for families enrolled prior to July 1st:

1. Families must sign up with FACTS tuition program for 12 tuition payments (Tuition + Book & Activity fee) for 12 months. Facts will assess a \$41 enrollment fee at this time.
2. Families that indicate to GSCA their intention in writing by May 1st to pay the full amount by July 1st (3% discount of tuition + B&A fee) or to make two ½ payments by July 1st and January 15th (2% discount of tuition + B&A fee) do not have to enroll in the FACTS program or pay the FACTS enrollment fee of \$41.00.
3. All tuition paid is non-refundable, so there are no refunds for prior months of tuition payments in the event of withdrawal.

Policy for families that enroll between July 1st and beginning of school:

1. Families must sign up with FACTS tuition program for the remaining tuition payments (full Tuition + Book & Activity fee) for 10-11 payments. Facts will assess a \$41 enrollment fee at this time.
2. Families that indicate to the GSCA office their intention in writing on the date of their application their intention to pay the full amount by September 15th (3% discount of tuition + B&A fee) do not have to enroll in the FACTS program or pay the FACTS enrollment fee of \$41.00.
3. All tuition paid is non-refundable, so there are no refunds for prior months of tuition payments in the event of withdrawal.

Policy for families that enroll after school starts:

1. The school office will calculate the tuition payment for the year (full tuition minus the number of school days missed x prorated cost/day) + Book & Activity fee. This amount due will be divided over the remaining months through June. Families will pay GSCA directly in person or by mail on or before the 15th of the month.
2. All tuition paid is non-refundable, so there are no refunds for prior months of tuition payments in the event of withdrawal.

Withdrawal Policy

Parents must inform the principal or office staff in writing of their intention to withdraw their student. Any scheduled FACTS payments or arranged payments to GSCA office within 30 days of the notification of withdrawal (not student's last day) will still be due. The exception to this rule pertains to families who have prepaid ½ of the school year and withdraw in December. They are scheduled to make their final ½ payment in January. In this case, the family is only responsible for one month's tuition. The student is still welcome to attend GSCA during the 30 days from the withdrawal notice.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Conferences

Preschool - Conferences are held in January. Written reports are issued in January and June. Additional conferences may be scheduled with the teacher and principal, as needed.

Academy - Conferences will be held in both November and April. Notices will be sent home with appointment times. *It is expected that in families with two parents, both parents will attend.* Parents may request a conference at any time during the school year.

Forms

Each month the preschool and academy children will bring home a calendar with important dates marked. The GSCA website contains an up-to-date calendar of events for the academy and the preschool. Our sidewalk sign will also note special events. During July, you will receive a newsletter, a yearly school calendar for the upcoming year, and the forms that need to be filled out and returned to Good Shepherd by *August 20th*. The summer forms the office will send home include:

1. Parent Newsletter
2. Yearly Calendar
3. Medical Forms
4. School supplies list
5. Various permission notices
6. Volunteer Form

School Cancellation Announcements

If Duxbury public schools cancel school due to inclement weather, Good Shepherd Christian Academy and Preschool is automatically closed. Check WATD FM (95.9) and the internet (thebostonchannel.com and whdh.com) specifically for Good Shepherd only in the event we cancel school and Duxbury does not. *You can also register online with the stations to receive an email with the school cancellation.* Also check our website at www.goodshepherdchristianacademy.com.

Name & Address Publication

Academy: We will publish a school address book for grades Kindergarten-8th Grade that is distributed to all students. The listing includes each student's name, address and telephone number and is distributed to each student.

Preschool: Each child receives a preschool address book with all preschool classmate's name, address and telephone numbers.

If you *do not wish* to have your child's name published in the address book/class list, you must notify the office with your request within the first week of school.

Photography

From time to time, the classroom teachers like to snap photographs of their students during school. Sometimes the photos are displayed in school and sometimes they might be given to the students to keep. *If you would prefer your child's photo not be taken, you must notify the school office within the first week of school.* Also, photos are taken that may be used for the website and advertising/promotional purposes.

School Pictures

Pictures are taken both individually and as a group in the fall. This is a parent's choice; the cost and description of the packages are sent home in advance of the picture-taking day. Checks must be made out to the photographer and brought to school the day the pictures are taken.

EXPECTATIONS FOR GSCA STUDENTS AND PARENTS

All parents are expected to enter the building through the school doors and sign in and out at the school office.

Preschool Arrival and Pick-Up

The parent or responsible adult will use the traffic pattern in dropping off or picking up their child. At the close of school when your child is brought to your car, *please move your car up and to the side to buckle your child's seatbelt.* This allows the traffic line to proceed more quickly.

Arrival/Dismissal – Teddy Bear Class: 8:45 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Panda Class: 8:30 A.M. - 11:45 A.M.

Lamb Class 8:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Doors will open 10 minutes before classes are scheduled to start.

Lunch Bunch: Dismissal at 1:30 PM following the usual preschool dismissal procedures.

Academy

Arrival - The doors open at 8:00 AM. The car line goes around the back of the school and stops at the rear door. Five cars will let their children out at a time. (Please be very cautious when moving forward to insure child safety.) School doors close at 8:15 A.M. Students are counted tardy if they are not seated in their classrooms by 8:15 A.M. Entering the school door by 8:15 does not guarantee that a child will not be tardy. **Students arriving after 11:00AM will be considered absent for the entire day.**

Dismissal – All cars must wait in a single line in the rear parking lot. Classes will line up by 3:00 PM on the grass on the west side of the parking lot. In inclement weather we will have all classes in the sanctuary and will bring students out by families.

**Parents will not be allowed to park and enter school to pickup their child unless there is an extreme circumstance and the office has been notified prior to dismissal.*

Carpools

Some families may wish to carpool. If this is a rare occurrence, please send a note identifying the parent who will pick up, the date, and the time of dismissal. If this will be on a regular basis, please send a note designating the carpool driver. Please sign and date this letter. Also, please add the carpool person to the list of people who are authorized for pick-up on the Authorization and Consent Form.

Attendance and Absences for Academy Students

Students are expected to attend school each day school is in session unless ill. **If your child is out sick, please call the school office by 10:00 A.M.** Vacations scheduled during school days are not encouraged. Most students cannot afford to miss days of instruction. All class work and homework is to be made up in a timely manner: one day absence, one day to make up work; two day absence, two days to make up work etc. If a student misses school due to a family vacation, all assigned homework is due the day the student returns. Tests will be made-up as soon as possible upon a student's return.

Absent Note: The day a student returns to school they must come into the school office with a signed note from the parent or doctor.

Parents of students who have accumulated 15 days of absence during the school year without a signed medical excuse will be sent a letter informing them of excess absenteeism. When a student has been absent 20 days, a conference will be scheduled with the principal. Parents of students who miss more than twenty days of school without a signed medical excuse from a medical doctor will be informed that their child may not receive credit for the current year's scholastic work.

Tardiness

Academy: *For any student who is late three times in a calendar month there may be a \$10.00 fee assessed (\$25.00 per family). Tardiness upsets the class and interrupts the activity that has already begun.*

Early Dismissal for the Academy

If a child is to be dismissed, the parent must send a note in the morning so that when a child leaves, he or she leaves with all necessary homework. Parents must sign the “dismissal clip board” in the office with the date, the time and the reason for dismissal. Time out of class is not to be encouraged nor are dismissals for doctor’s appointments etc. that should be made after school.

Celebration of Holidays

As a Christian school we have the privilege and responsibility of remembering Jesus in all our celebrations including holidays. Accordingly, we need to emphasize the biblically significant truths that are the true reason for the existence of these celebration times. We do this through our Bible lessons, bulletin boards, program themes (etc.) related to each holiday.

Veteran’s Day - All teachers are encouraged to explain the meaning of Veteran’s Day and to have a special prayer emphasis for our country and for the men and women who serve in the armed forces.

Halloween - As a Christian school we do not commemorate Halloween. It is our policy that no witches, goblins, black cats, etc. be made or displayed by faculty or students. Costume parties are not permitted.

Thanksgiving - There is no school on the Wednesday or Friday of Thanksgiving week. The *preschool* commemorates Thanksgiving by having a special celebration on the Tuesday prior to Thanksgiving Day.

Christmas - It is the policy of GSCA that we celebrate Christmas as distinctively Christian as possible. We teach the biblical account of the birth of Christ as described in biblical passages such as Luke 2. We do not teach or celebrate the secular meaning of Christmas (Santa, Rudolf etc.).

Valentine’s Day- Valentines may be exchanged, and teachers may plan parties. Students bringing in valentines must have one for every member of their class.

Easter - Easter is another distinctively Christian holiday designed to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Easter bunny is to be left out of the school celebration of this event. Great emphasis is to be placed on the reality of our risen Savior who triumphed over death for us all. The new birth for each believer may be shown with the symbols of spring (flowers, eggs, baby animals etc.).

Columbus Day, Martin Luther King Day, President’s Day, and Memorial Day - These are school holidays and should be celebrated by praying for our country’s leaders, thanking our Lord for the men and women who founded our country and who fought for our freedoms. Children should be taught the significance of each holiday.

Vacations During School

1. Vacations when school is in session are not encouraged.
2. When a student misses school days due to a family vacation, the parent assumes responsibility of all missed work for their child.
3. When teachers are given a full week's notice, they will try to put together the work the student will miss while the student is away. Because teaching is not an exact science, the teacher's plans often change to meet the needs of the students. You may find that even with a teacher's best effort in putting together a packet, your child may or may not be at the same place the class is when you return from vacation.
4. Please make sure all directions are followed.
5. All the work the student is given must be fully completed to the best of his/her ability and submitted to the classroom teacher on the day he/she returns to school. Please make sure the papers reflect the child's work and not the parents.
6. Work submitted late (one or two days) will receive a "reduced" grade.
7. Work submitted three or more days late or not at all will receive a failing grade.
8. *Missed quizzes, tests and Bible verses will be given the day the student returns.*
9. Parents must pay for lost books.
10. Hardback textbooks are not allowed to be taken on vacations. The parent must photocopy reading assignments before the vacation.

Principles of Discipline for the Preschool

In minor matters of misbehavior, the teachers or assistant will speak to the child. If the child continues with unacceptable behavior, the child would be asked to sit in "time-out" for a minute or two. The teacher will make sure that the child understands why the behavior is unacceptable and then the child will return to classroom activities. A repeat of the offense would necessitate a return to the "time-out" chair and a repeat of the above. After that, if the problem persists, the teacher will notify the principal of the problem. The principal will also observe, make notes and telephone the parents to inform them of the child's behavior. Our goal is to work with the parents to correct the situation.

For unusual behavior problems, the teacher will work with the child, document the behavior and inform the principal. The principal will also observe the child in the classroom and document the behavior. The principal will contact the parents regarding the situation. A conference will be arranged with the parents, teachers and principal. If the problem cannot be resolved, the school board will make the decision to have the parents withdraw the child from the school. This would be a last resort.

At no time would the teachers use unusual or abusive treatment, either verbally or physically on any child for any reason. At no time would a child be denied a snack as a form of punishment. No child shall be embarrassed or punished for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet. GSCA works to show God's grace at all times.

Principles of Discipline for the Academy

Each teacher will be responsible for managing a classroom based on mutual respect. Class rules will be written and agreed upon by each class. The teacher will implement appropriate discipline in keeping with the maturity level of the student and the degree of the offense. Offenses of more serious nature will be referred to the principal. With severe repeated behavior problems, consequences can include:

Student Sent Home: Behavior that is defiant, disrespectful, dangerous to themselves or others, disruptive or unwilling to cooperate will result in the student being sent home for the remainder of the day.

Suspension: The purpose of suspension is to give both the student and parents an opportunity to correct a serious problem. After a student has been sent home three times, the principal has the authority to suspend a student immediately as a consequence of misbehavior. Suspensions will range from one to five days. All schoolwork missed by the suspended student will receive a “0.” The student may not return to school until the parents, student, principal and member(s) of the school board meet and come to an agreement regarding expectations for the student’s behavior.

Expulsion: Expulsion is a last resort for serious breaches of conduct, or after repeated attempts to bring a student into harmony with the goals and spirit of the school. Prior to expulsion, the principal will meet with the student, parents and school board member(s). A student may apply for re-enrollment no earlier than one year (365 days) after expulsion.

Appeal Process: Any disagreement with disciplinary action must be presented in writing to both the principal and the school board. The school board is the final authority in all-disciplinary action.

Health

When a child is accepted into GSCA, a medical form must be filled out and signed by the physician and returned to school. State regulations require that each child *entering* school have a complete record of immunization on file and a complete physical examination within one year prior to admission. *This shall be renewed annually for all preschool, kindergarten, first grade, and 7th grade students.*

Immunizations – “Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 76, Section 15,” requires certification that all children attending school are successfully immunized against Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Mumps and Rubella, unless exempted for medical or religious reasons. A booster MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) is required in sixth grade.

- Exemptions:**
1. A signed note from a doctor stating medical reasons
 2. A signed note from a parent claiming religious reasons

Lead Poisoning: Children ages three through six must be screened for lead poisoning. If they have not been screened, they must do so within thirty days of admission. We can make *no* exception to this rule unless a parent signs a statement that their religious beliefs forbid medical treatment. Failure to have these tests and documentation on file (except for those who are exempt based on religious belief) will prevent your child from continued attendance at the school. See the school office for exemption forms.

Sickness

Students are to be kept home if they are not feeling well. The following is a guideline of symptoms for knowing when to keep your child at home:

1. Temperature is 99 degrees or higher orally
2. Vomiting within 24 hours
3. Sore or discharging eyes or ears or profuse nasal discharge
4. An undiagnosed rash
5. A hacking cough
6. Your child may return to school at least 24 hours after having had a fever, stomach upset or the commencement of taking an antibiotic
7. A child diagnosed with strep can return 48 hours after beginning taking medication

If a student becomes ill during the day, the parent (or adult on the emergency form) will be called to take the child home. *The school is staffed and equipped to handle well children only.* Report to the principal any contagious diseases suffered by your child so other families in our school can be notified (lice, chicken pox, strep etc.)

Injuries

In case of an accident, First Aid supplies are kept at school for simple cuts, scrapes, and abrasions. With serious accidents, the parent will be notified immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, the next step will be decided according to the circumstances or the seriousness of the situation. These steps may include any or all of the following:

1. If the parent is unable to be reached, call the person(s) listed on the emergency form.
2. If necessary, the child will be transported to the Jordan Hospital by ambulance.
3. If a child is transported to the hospital, information from the child's medical form will be brought to the hospital if no parent is available.

The Authorization for Emergency Medical Services Form signed by the parent must be kept on file at the school. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the school informed and updated regarding all names, addresses and telephone numbers changes. We particularly need to be aware of allergies, but staff members are trained in First Aid.

Medications for Chronic Conditions

Prescription medication can be administered to children who have chronic conditions only. For children needing cough syrup etc. they should receive the medication before they come to school. For a child with a need for prescription medicine to be administered at school, the following steps must be met so prescription medicine can be administered during school hours. *All medications are to be brought to the school offices upon arrival, following this procedure:*

1. Parents must turn in a letter from the physician to allow the student to self-administer prescription medication including dosage and frequency with which the medication is to be administered.
2. Parents must also write a letter giving permission to the school office to give access of the medication to the child at the appropriate time. *Otherwise, the parent must come to school to give the child the prescribed medication.*
3. The medicine bottle must be given to the school office with the safety cap on it.
4. The original prescription label on medicine container should be visible, including date, physician, etc.
5. In the case of severe allergies, parents must provide TWO epipens with the prescription.

Homework for the Academy

The purpose of homework is to reinforce skills, supplement classroom learning, and to develop and extend discipline, initiative and responsibility. In helping children complete unfinished classroom work, parents also receive the opportunity to participate in their child's academic learning process. In addition to homework assignments for grades one through eight, thirty minutes of recreational reading at home is also required.

Lunch and Snacks

Preschool - Children will be served a snack with juice or milk mid-morning. Once a month the children will prepare their snack. We call this "Fun with Food".

Academy: Students are to bring snacks and lunches from home either in lunch boxes or bags clearly labeled with their name. *"Fast food" lunches are not allowed to be brought to school for any student.* No glass containers are allowed. Juice boxes may be brought from home; soda is not allowed. Students will have an opportunity to order lunches on specific days each month. Order forms will be sent home via the students backpack. Students are not to share lunches, drinks or snacks with their classmates.

Uniform Requirements

At Good Shepherd Christian Academy we dress in a uniform to limit outward distractions and to learn to respect one another as persons. School colors are navy, white, and burgundy. The school uses Lands' End for the school uniforms. Uniform requirements are available in the school office.

Please be sure to put your child's name in their clothing.

Non-Uniform Days

Birthdays, Early Release Days and last week of school

Neat looking jeans, jean shorts, sweatpants, cargo pants and cargo shorts are allowed.

(No rips, tears or fringe)

T-shirts and/or sweatshirts are allowed. Only positive logos are permitted.

Students shall not wear anything irreverent to the Lord.

Kindergarten - Eighth – No spaghetti straps or muscle shirts are allowed.

Skirts must be no shorter than top of the knee.

Shorts must be no shorter than mid-thigh.

THE FOLLOWING IS NOT PERMITTED

Clogs, sandals, heels higher than 2"

Hats and other head coverings are not to be worn in the school building

Light-up sneakers

No character backpacks

Tattoos or body painting, either temporary or permanent, are not allowed

Earrings may not extend more than 1" below the lobe

Jewelry piercing of other body parts

No pajamas (unless classroom theme day)

Hairstyles

Traditional hairstyles are required.

No neon-sprayed, colored or tinted hair is allowed.

Boys' hair should be clean, combed, and neatly trimmed. **Hair must not be touching the ear or collar.**

Boys should not have sculptured looks, laser cuts or unconventional hairstyles.

Shorts – Shorts may be worn from May 1st – October 31 only.

Accessories

Girls: Age-appropriate jewelry can be worn. However, caution should be taken as jewelry sometimes causes injury during recess, and gym.

Boys: Boys may not wear jewelry except for watches.

Uniform Violations - All students must adhere to the uniform requirements. Students and parents will be notified of a uniform violation through a form signed by the principal. This form is to be returned and signed by the parent.

Belongings

GSCA is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from distraction. Cell phones are disruptive. The school recognizes the value that parents place on allowing their child to have a cell phone for emergencies and easy communication. Therefore, students are allowed to bring cell phones to school but they are to be off until 3:00 p.m., and must be kept in their lockers. Students must not bring in electronic devices, such as ipods, etc. Please make sure that any personal items are labeled and stay in lockers during school hours.

Students having a phone or device visible during school hours:

1st offense – the device will be given to the office and may be retrieved by the student at the end of the school day.

2nd offense – the device will be given to the office and may be retrieved by the parent at the end of the school day.

Students needing to use a phone may come to the school office with their teacher's permission.

Dress for Preschool

Preschool: Children should be dressed in self-help clothing they can manage with a minimum of help. Too many layers of clothing or difficult fasteners make it hard for the child to be independent in his/her toileting and are conducive to more accidents. Dress children in comfortable clothes and sneakers to play indoors or out. Remember children crawl, climb, paint etc. at school. If little girls wear dresses, they will be more comfortable with tights or sweatpants under their dresses as they may sit on the ground or climb on the jungle gym or tumble on the carpet.

Weather is unpredictable so please send your child appropriately dressed. *Put your child's name in any sweater, jacket or removable clothing brought or worn to school.* Show your child where you have placed his/her name in helping them recognize their own clothing. A complete change of clothing needs to be left in your child's "cubbie". Include underwear, socks, pants, and top all folded in a *resealable plastic bag*. Please write the child's name on the bag. The plastic bag will be used to return soiled or wet clothing that need to be laundered. Please return clean clothing promptly, again in a clean plastic bag for emergency use. Also, some mornings students may have "rest time". Please send in a child-sized blanket or towel that can be left at school for this purpose.

Visitors

All visitors are expected to enter the building through the school entrance. Before going to any classroom you must sign in and out at the school office.

Parents are welcome at the school and in the classrooms; however parents must schedule visits in the classroom with teachers *in advance*. Unless otherwise indicated by a teacher, parents should not drop into classrooms or have even brief conferences with teachers in the hallways from 8:00-9:00AM . This is a very busy time while academy and preschool students are entering the building and beginning their day. The safety of our students is always important to us. Parents should also schedule *after school* meetings as well. Questions about class structure, curriculum, school policy, or personnel should be directed to the principal. Formal classroom observations are not permitted except by permission of the school board.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

Chapel

Chapel service will be held weekly for the academy and the preschool. Each academy classroom is required to present two chapels per year. During chapel, academy and preschool students gather to praise God and learn the principles and promises of His Word. It is a time where we turn our attention from ourselves to the Lord and others. **Each week an offering will be collected and will support a needy child overseas sponsored by ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International).** Parents are always welcome to attend chapel services.

Special Activities/Field Trips

Preschool: Permission slips will have to be signed by the parent or guardian to allow the child to attend. Parents are always invited to accompany us on our field trips.

State Law: *All children riding in passenger motor vehicles must be in a federally approved child passenger restraint seat that is properly fastened and secured until they are 8 years old or over 57" tall.*

Parents are asked to volunteer to drive or accompany us on a field trip. The requirements for the drivers are that they carry only the number of children that they can buckle into individual seatbelts, that their vehicle be free of any dangerous objects and that their license and insurance be current. **No child will be permitted to ride in the front seat.**

Students will be charged the cost of the trip including admission to the event. *Please send cash only.*

Academy: During the course of the year, special events may be planned for our students. Permission slips will be sent home for any field trips we may arrange. The student activity fee will cover costs. Chaperones will be expected to pay their own way.

Special Needs

Good Shepherd Christian Academy presently does not have a special needs program and is unable to meet the needs of children known to have learning disabilities. Conferences will be arranged for parents of children enrolled in the academy who are evidencing difficulty in the classroom. If necessary, and with the permission of the parent, testing will be arranged through the public school system in the town where the family resides. Decisions on how to best educate the student will be made by the academy staff and parent after the recommendations of the public school team conference are submitted.

OUR FOUNDATION IN CHRIST

GSCA Statement of Faith

- A. **The Word of God:** We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in its original manuscripts. It was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct (John 17:17; Romans 15:4; II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:19, 21).
- B. **The True God:** We believe that there is one living true God, eternally existing in three persons. All three persons fully share the same divine nature and fully possess each divine perfect attribute. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit work together to accomplish the redemption of human beings from their fallen, sinful condition. (Matthew 28:19; John 1:1-14; I John 5:7).

- C. **God the Father:** We believe in God the Father, infinite and personal; perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men; that He hears and answers prayer and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ (John 3:16; John 4:24; John 17:5).
- D. **God the Son:** We believe in Jesus Christ, second person of the Trinity, God's only begotten Son. We believe in the virgin birth, His sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and His personal, visible return to earth. (Isaiah 7:14; John 1:15; Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 1:2-3; I John 1:7).
- E. **God the Holy Spirit:** We believe in the Holy Spirit, co-equal with the Father and the Son, whose work is to execute the divine will with relation to humanity. He came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He regenerates, indwells, and seals every believer in Jesus Christ at the moment when he or she is born again. He guides, teaches, comforts, and gifts each believer so that they can serve in the church and care for others. (John 14:26; John 16:7-15; Romans 8:14-17; Ephesians 1:13, 14; I Corinthians 2:4-12; Romans 12:6-8).
- F. **Regeneration:** We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice, and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust Jesus Christ as savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit (John 1:12, 13; John 3:3, 16, 17; Acts 20:21; Ephesians 2:1-9; Titus 3:5).
- G. **Eternal Security:** We believe in eternal security of the believer. We believe that God preserves us, His saints, unto the day of glorification by His faithfulness. As an act of our faith and trust, we daily confess our sins and renew ourselves, maintaining a present dependence on Christ (I Peter 1:5; John 10:27, 28; Romans 8:15; II Timothy 4:18; Hebrews 6:11, 12).
- H. **The Church:** We believe in the Universal Church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the Head and of which all regenerated persons are members. We believe that the church becomes visible when an assembly of believers in Jesus Christ associates for worship, work and fellowship. We believe that these visible churches have been given the responsibility by God for building one another toward maturity as followers of Jesus Christ, so that a lost world might be persuaded to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and to follow Him as Lord. We believe that human betterment and social improvement are the evident results of an effective ministry of the church (Matthew 28:19, 20; Ephesians 1:19, 23; Ephesians 4:11-16; I Timothy 3:1-15). We believe that the scripturally designated officers are elders (pastors) and deacons.
- I. **The Ordinances:** We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the church; baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of the believer into water and in the Name of the Triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. Each ordinance should be administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41, 42; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 11:23-32).
- J. **The Last Things:** We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal joy of righteousness, and the eternal suffering of the wicked (John 5:29; Revelation 20:1-15; II Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 25:31-46).

Good Shepherd's Approach to Christianity and the Bible

Families with different religious and non-religious backgrounds are welcome at Good Shepherd Christian Academy. At the same time, the school administration and staff are distinctively Christians in their doctrinal views. The school serves all families while at the same time proclaiming that God's good plan of human beings is rooted in the Father's saving work accomplished through the death and resurrection of His Son. All teachers are required to affirm the statement of faith that specifies general, essential truths of the historic Christian faith while allowing freedom for interpretation on smaller, less essential views.

There is no doctrinal requirement for parents and students; however, parents agree to allow their children to be taught all academic subjects including Bible class from a broadly Evangelical viewpoint. The principal, Dr. Jay Lowder, holds a Ph.D. in Christian Philosophy. He welcomes all questions from current and prospective parents regarding the specific views of the school and the gentle approach to Christian teaching modeled by the staff. In the school body, there are students from many different denominational backgrounds including Catholic, Lutheran, Congregational, Methodist, Assembly of God, Vineyard, Community churches, Bible churches, Baptist churches etc.

PARENTAL RIGHTS

"Chapter 28A, Section 10 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts" mandates to the Office for Child Care the legal responsibility of promulgating rules and regulations governing the operation of daycare centers (including nursery school). In accordance with this law, the Office for Child Care published the requirements now in effect since March 31st, 1977. These regulations must be complied with by the license in order to ensure a minimum level of care for the children serviced by the daycare center and/or nursery school. The licensee (daycare center owner) is required to inform all parents regarding "the rights of parents" as stated in the regulations at the time of admission of their child to the center. These rights are as follows:

Parent Involvement

7.05 (12) Parent Visits. The licensee shall permit and encourage parents to visit the center and the child's room while their child is present.

7.05 (13) Parent Input. The licensee shall have a procedure for allowing parental input in the development of center policy and programs. The licensee shall provide an explanation to the parent(s) when a parent makes suggestions as to the program or policy of a center and the licensee does not adopt the suggestions. If the parent requests a written response, the licensee shall respond in writing to the parent.

7.05 (14) Reports to Parents. The licensee shall periodically but at least every six- (6) months prepare a written progress report of the participation of each child in the center's records. The licensee shall provide a copy of each report to the parent(s) or meet with them at least every six (6) months to discuss their child's activities and participation in the center. In addition:

- a.) for infants under 15 months of age, the licensee shall complete a written progress report of the child's development every three- (3) months and provide it to the parent(s);
- b.) the licensee shall bring special problems or significant developments particularly as they regard infants to the parent's attention as soon as they arise.

7.05 (15) Parent Conferences. The licensee shall make the staff available for individual conferences with parents at parental request.

7.05 (19) Confidentiality and Distribution of Records. Information contained in a child's record shall be privileged and confidential. The licensee shall not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without the written consent of the parent(s). The licensee shall notify the parent(s) if a child's record is subpoenaed. The child's parent(s) shall, upon request, have access to his child's record at reasonable times. In no event shall such access be delayed more than two (2) business days after the initial request without the consent of the parent(s). Upon such request for access the child's entire school record regardless of the physical location of its parts, shall be made available.

The licensee shall establish procedures governing access to, duplication of, and dissemination of such information; and shall maintain a permanent written log in each child's record indicating to any person to whom information contained in a child's record has been released. Each person disseminating or releasing information contained in a child's record, in whole or in part, shall upon each instance of dissemination or portions of the record which were disseminated or released, the purpose of such is disseminated or released. Such log shall be available only to the child's parent(s) and center personnel responsible for record maintenance.

7.05 (20) Charge of Copies. The licensee shall not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information contained in the child's record.

7.05 (21) Amending the Child's Record.

a.) A child's parent(s) shall have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant materials to the child's record;

b.) A child's parent(s) shall have the right to request deletion of amendment of any information contained in the child's record. Such request shall be made in accordance with the procedure described below:

1. If such parent(s) is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in the child's record, he shall have the right to have a conference with the licensee to make his objections know;

Allegations of Abuse Against a Child or Staff Person

Regarding a child...

1. Good Shepherd Preschool, Kindergarten & Academy shall protect children from abuse and neglect in our care and custody.
2. All staff will report suspected abuse or neglect to the principal.
3. The principal will notify the Department of Social Services to file a 51A.
4. The staff will cooperate with investigations of abuse and neglect, including identifying parents of children currently or previously enrolled, providing consent for disclosure to the office of information from and allowing the Office to disclose information to any person/agency the office may specify as necessary to prompt investigation of allegations and protection of children.

Regarding a staff member...

1. If a staff person of Good Shepherd Preschool or Academy has been accused of some form of abuse against a child while in the school's care and custody, the principal shall immediately be notified. The staff person will be removed immediately from the classroom. The principal shall call the Department of Social Services and file a 51A.
2. The staff person will be reassigned to a paid non-teaching position until the allegations are proved or disproved.
3. If proven, the staff person will suffer immediate loss of job with no further monies to be paid.
4. If disproved or unable to be proven, the staff person will continue in his/her position until the expiration of his/her contract. The school board will then make a decision whether this person shall be issued a new contract for the following year.

GSCA BULLYING POLICY

It is the desire of Good Shepherd Christian Academy to comply with the new Massachusetts state law regarding bullying (<http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2010/Chapter92>. TITLE XII EDUCATION CHAPTER 71 PUBLIC SCHOOLS, Section 37O “School bullying prohibited; bullying prevention plans” - <http://www.malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/partItitleXII/Chapter71/Section37O>)

At the same time, the school board and administration of GSCA continues to seek to train, correct, and restore students with detrimental behavior using biblical principles such as law, grace, sin, justice, forgiveness, and Christian responsibilities in society. This bullying policy has been created to seek a balance between the requirements of serving God and the requirements of serving our government (Matthew 22:15-22).

Review of Existing GSCA Dismissal Policy

(Section of 2010-2011 Handbook called “Continued Enrollment Policy”)

(adopted spring 2009)

“It is a privilege for the teachers and administration of Good Shepherd Christian Academy to serve families by providing quality, private education that is distinctively Christian. At the same time, Good Shepherd is a private school and a student’s enrollment and continued enrollment at the school is subject to the oversight and approval of the administration and school board.

The teachers and administration at Good Shepherd strive to maintain open and honest communication with parents about the successes, struggles, and potential of each student. However, there are different situations in which it could become necessary for the school board to ask parents to withdraw students during the current school year or prohibit re-enrollment for the following year. For example, students might be withdrawn due to excessively late tuition payments. Students can also be expelled as a disciplinary action necessitated by serious conduct that is harmful to other students, teachers, or the school environment.”

Section One: Description of Bullying

Common Definitions of Bullying:

1. *“Bullying involves a desire to hurt + hurtful action + a power imbalance + (typically) repetition + an unjust use of power + evident enjoyment by the aggressor and a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim.”*

Dr. Ken Rigby, “Why Bullying? Defining Bullying: a New Look at an Old Concept.”

<http://www.kenrigby.net/define.html>

<http://www.mentalhealthce.com/courses/contentSV/secSV15.html>

2. *“A negative behavior involving (a) a pattern of repeated aggression, (b) deliberate intent to harm or disturb a victim despite apparent victim distress, and (c) a real or perceived imbalance of power (e.g., due to age, strength, size), with the more powerful child or group attacking a physically or psychologically vulnerable victim” (Bully Beware Productions, 2003). Bullying consists of a series of*

repeated, intentionally cruel incidents between the same children who are in the same bully and victim roles.”

Definition of the Council on Scientific Affairs of the American Medical Association

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/no-index/about-ama/14312.shtml>

<http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1332>

3. *“The repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school”*

<http://www.malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/partI/titleXII/Chapter71/Section37O>

GSCA Definition of Bullying

1. “Negative behavior involving:
 - 1 a pattern of *repeated* aggression witnessed by *at least one* neutral bystander, parent, students, or staff, or staff member.
 - 2 a deliberate intent to harm or disturb a victim despite apparent victim distress (*i.e. not mutual teasing or childish foolishness*)
 - 3 a real or perceived imbalance of power (e.g., due to age, strength, size), with the more powerful child or group attacking a physically or psychologically vulnerable victim" (*While bullying can occur within the same group, GSCA will be particularly sensitive to aggressive behavior that crosses natural , ordinary boundaries of groups. Ex. Older-younger students, different genders, different socio-economic groups, different ethnicities etc.*)
 - 4 a hostile environment at school for the victim;
 - 5 an evident enjoyment by the aggressor or awareness of aggressor (*after one verbal warning and/or disciplinary action, any aggressor will be considered cognizant of the situation and thereby “enjoying” the behavior.*)
 - 6 the same children in the same roles of bully and victim in the *repeated* incidents.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet.

GSCA strongly prohibits bullying and cyberbullying.

Section Two: Procedure for Reporting Bullying

“A member of a school staff, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, or other staff member . . . shall immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the principal” in writing, followed by a scheduled, verbal report of what has been witnessed. Upon receipt of such report that meets the GSCA definition of bullying, the principal will begin an investigation into the instance of bullying.

Parents should report suspected cases of aggression that might qualify as bullying directly to the principal. The principal will then determine whether the alleged aggression meets the school's definition of bullying. Parents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the school's policy and definition of "bullying" before reporting suspected "malignant bullying." Careless and reckless use of the term "bullying" for more common behavioral issues, especially in younger children, can unnecessarily damage a child's reputation.

The staff of GSCA will exercise care and discretion in the use of the terms "bully" or "bullying," so that more general forms of misbehavior or foolishness are not causally labeled "bullying." The term "bullying" will be reserved for specific cases of bullying that meet the established definition.

There will be no retaliation against students making a true claim of "bullying" to a staff member. However, false claims of bullying will themselves be viewed as a form of aggressive, deviant behavior and will result in disciplinary actions.

Section Three: Publication of the Bullying Policy

The bullying plan will be posted on the school's website in conformity with the requirements of the state law. It will also be printed in the parent/student handbook and the teacher handbook of the school. The principal will train the staff annually regarding this policy and will revise this policy at least biennially. Parents are welcome to provide feedback, comments, and suggestions regarding this policy to the principal and/or school board in writing.

Section Four: Responsibility Party

The administrator (principal) of Good Shepherd Christian Academy is responsible for the implementation and supervision of this process. All questions about this policy should be directed to the administrator. The administrator *may* inform the GSCA school board about alleged cases of bullying and *will* inform the board of all confirmed cases of bullying. This will allow the school board to perform its proper function. As with all discipline cases, the school board may approve or modify (to strengthen, weaken, or reject) any disciplinary actions taken by the principal.

The principal will report any bullying incidents that may constitute criminal acts to local law officials. In addition, the principal will take steps to ensure that any student reporting bullying is not encountering retaliatory behavior.

Section Five: Disciplinary Actions for Bullying

Upon determining that bullying has occurred (as the result of an investigation), the principal will determine the appropriate disciplinary actions for the offending student ("aggressor".) As with all discipline at the school, the *goal* will be to *deter further offenses* and to *provide training in the righteous behavior* that was not practiced by the aggressor. *Aggravating* circumstances that *may* increase the severity of the punishment will include but not be limited to past history of aggression, past non-conformity to school rules and culture, lack of honesty during the investigation, and older age. *Mitigating* circumstances that *may* decrease the severity of the punishment will include but not be limited to a lack of past history of aggression, a younger age, honesty during the investigation, genuine sorrow, and understanding of the "bullying" actions and their consequences.

Disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to:

Loss of school privileges (lunch recesses and/or enrichments activities).

Mandated non-professional counseling sessions with the administrator\

Suspension of 1-5 days

Required professional family or individual counseling as a condition of continued enrollment.

Expulsion

The principal will inform the family of a bullying victim of the situation and the steps taken to protect the student from further distress without violating the privacy of the aggressor. The family of the aggressor will also be informed of the results of the investigation and any disciplinary actions taken.

Section Five: Support for the Victim of Bullying

The school will recommend counseling and support for any family of a bullying victim that desires additional support. For all school families, the school will provide a list of recommended resources on the topic of bullying (see Section Seven).

Section Six: Creating a Positive Environment

The teachers of Good Shepherd Christian Academy *already* emphasize positive character traits and corresponding behaviors through their ASCI Bible curriculum. As part of the GSCA's new bullying policy, each teacher will discuss bullying in the context of their existing Bible curriculum at least *twice a year* as they find opportunity starting in the 2011-2012 school year. These applications of positive biblical character traits to the issue of bullying and bystander intervention will be noted in the teachers' lesson plans.

Section Seven: Recommended Resources

"Confronting Bullying Using Justice and Love" - <http://www.acsi.org/Resources/PublicationsNewsletters/ChristianSchoolEducation/tabid/681/itemid/4325/Default.aspx>

"Cyberbullying" - <http://www.acsi.org/Resources/PublicationsNewsletters/ChristianSchoolEducation/tabid/681/itemId/4352/Default.aspx>

"Cyberbullying: A Guide for Parents". <https://webhost.bridgew.edu/marc/marc%20cyberbullying.pdf>

"When Your Child is Being Bullied: A Guide for Parents". <https://webhost.bridgew.edu/marc/marc%20bullying.pdf>