

Abilene Christian School

ELEMENTARY
PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK

2015-2016

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Revised July, 2015*

*Provisions of the handbook are subject to change at the discretion of ACS's administration. Therefore, there may be revisions to the handbook during the school year that revise, supersede or eliminate one or more existing policies. ACS will provide notice of any changes. Still, it is impossible to provide published policies that anticipate every situation that occurs. In the event there is a question regarding a principle or activity on which the handbook is silent, the administration reserves the right to make a decision that is equitable to the student, the parent, and the school.

INTRODUCTION

Abilene Christian Elementary School is a part of Abilene Christian Schools (ACS), which was established in 1906. It is a private independent Christian school for children in pre-kindergarten through grade five. ACS's secondary school offers grades six through twelve. **At ACS, our mission is to equip students to succeed academically, serve others, and walk faithfully with God.**

The curriculum follows the guidelines set forth by the Texas Education Agency and is accredited by National Christian School's Association and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Abilene Christian Schools also participates in the over 250 member Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools and is an official Core Knowledge School. Parents may learn more about the Core Knowledge curriculum by going to coreknowledge.org. In addition to the Core Knowledge curriculum, at ACS, our Christian faith intersects with every part of what we do and each activity that the school sponsors.

The information found in this handbook can answer many of the questions you may have with regard to procedures and expectations at the Elementary School. Please take time to read the material and discuss it with your child as appropriate. Should you have questions, please feel free to call the school office for clarification.

ACS is affiliated with the fellowship of the Churches of Christ and is controlled by a Board of Trustees, all of whom are members of the Churches of Christ, and is operated within the Christian-oriented aims and ideals and religious tenets of the Churches of Christ as taught in the Holy Scripture. As a Christian learning community, we value above all else God's will for us as educators of children. With His guidance, we look forward to partnering with you to help your child grow spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically and socially. We look forward to working with you and your family throughout the school year.

In His service,

Cindy Jinkerson
Elementary Principal

GENERAL INFORMATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

Abilene Christian Elementary School
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SCHOOL COLORS

Royal Blue, Black and White

SCHOOL MASCOT

Panther

SCHOOL SONG

We'll cherish thee, our glorious school,
Let Honor crown thy name.
We'll serve thee best and love thee most
and give thee Christian fame.
For the Panthers, blue and white,
we will fight with all our might.
We pledge to thee our loyalty,
Dear Abilene Christian High.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

ACS provides an educational choice emphasizing academic, spiritual, social, and physical development. Subjects offered are predominately from the liberal and fine arts. They are designed to prepare graduates to pursue higher education.

On the belief that each person is created in the image of God, ACS exists to provide the student an environment in which he may develop “in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52).

This philosophy is based upon acceptance and application of the Bible as the inspired Word of God and declares that Jesus Christ is the Lord of all the universe and is, therefore, the Lord of all the subjects taught at ACS. We reject the idea that religion or religious education can be compartmentalized and practiced only in organized chapel and Bible classes. As Paul says in II Corinthians 10:5, “...we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” With God’s help, ACS will make Jesus the Lord of the classroom in mathematics, history, science, and every other academic discipline.

At Abilene Christian Schools, our goal is to develop moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love in the young people with whom we have the opportunity to work. While the school can serve to reinforce Christian values, responsibilities, and conduct, it is mainly the parent’s obligation to help the child develop godly character traits. To accomplish these objectives, the parent:

- Teaches the child respect for the law, for authority, for the rights of others, and for private and public property.
- Shares with the child and with the school an active interest in the child’s schoolwork and personal development.
- Arranges for the child’s regular school attendance.
- Cooperates with the school in carrying out disciplinary action when such action is necessary.

Our role as a Christian school is to play an integral part in the development of the family, church, and school. Our mission is to compliment home and church in a manner which builds up and affirms our children’s faith in God and guides them in their service to our fellow man through the church, their family, and society.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF GOALS

Academic development will be attained by the following:

- Providing opportunities for logical thinking processes including analysis, evaluation, synthesis, and problem solving.
- Encouraging creative thinking processes in terms of developing new ideas and solutions.

- Encouraging an understanding and appreciation for literature and the cultural arts.
- Providing opportunities for participation in the “fine arts” (art, music) and cultural programs.
- Recognizing the following steps to academic success:
 - High expectations - The course of study at Abilene Christian Schools is designed to prepare students to pursue college entrance and achievement.
 - Motivation and instruction - Teachers will strive to motivate and instruct all students toward these high expectations. Curriculum is the same for all students, regardless of individual weaknesses. Teachers, who continue to learn how to better serve their students, will employ a variety of methods to encourage and challenge students while guiding them to a higher level of skill, appreciation, and self-confidence.
 - On-campus tutoring - Teachers will be available to tutor any student experiencing difficulties in that teacher's subject area(s). These tutoring sessions may be requested or required by the student, parents, or teacher.
 - Counselor - Students may be referred to the counselor for an evaluation that may include the following: conference (student/teacher(s)/parents) or recommendation by the classroom teacher
 - Formal evaluation - Students may be referred for further evaluation and recommendations that may include the following: parent education on symptoms of learning problems and methods to use in helping equip a child for success in school; written plan for overcoming difficulties for the individual student; screening for learning disability/ADD/ADHD/etc. and appropriate follow-up; professional testing and diagnosis through AISD; or professional tutoring.
 - Relocation - Students who are unable to maintain an acceptable level of success, or who do not follow the steps above, may be asked to relocate.

Spiritual development will be achieved by the following:

- Promoting an understanding of the Christian faith and an appreciation of Christian values by participating in chapel, devotionals, and worship.
- Studying the Bible and learning scriptures that will provide needed strength in everyday living.
- Encouraging the internalization of ethical and moral standards, personal faith, and respect for devotion.
- Teaching skills for Christian living, including decision-making strategies, methods of communicating Biblical faith, acceptance of personal responsibility, and showing honor for those who are placed in authority.

Citizenship will be developed by the following:

- Exemplifying pride in our American heritage and encouraging a sense of patriotism through loyalty and service to one's country, community, congregation, school, and family.
- Examining other cultures and languages and stressing the importance of respect for the rights of others.
- Encouraging a sense of self-respect and worth.
- Providing current information on local, state, national, and world affairs, seeking through all available means to be well informed.

Physical development will be pursued by the following:

- Encouraging the achievement and maintenance of good health, wholesome habits, and physical fitness.
- Emphasizing the importance of physical fitness and interest in lifetime sports.
- Encouraging a healthy spirit of competition and sportsmanship through all athletic programs.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1.0 ADMISSION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The ACS admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

As a private institution, ACS reserves the right to deny admission or continued enrollment to any applicant it determines is unqualified for any reason including personal conduct, character, or academic preparation inconsistent with the purposes, objectives and religious tenets of the school. ACS may request additional information, including, but not limited to, testing, academic, character or behavioral references. Below is a list of criteria that may be considered before accepting or rejecting a student for admission to ACS. The student shall:

- be eligible for re-enrollment in school last attended;
- not have been suspended or expelled from school last attended;
- have a cumulative grade average no lower than 70 and score a minimum of 50% on standardized achievement tests;
- present a transcript of grades from present and past school year;
- have a favorable recommendation from last school attended;
- give authorization to school last attended to release needed information;
- be free of severe learning and/or behavioral problems;
- not be coming directly from any type of rehabilitation or inpatient program- i.e. drugs, alcohol, mental, etc.;
- present a current immunization record;
- participate in a parent/student interview, if requested;
- not be married or a parent (including pregnant or responsible for a pregnancy) and
- receive approval for enrollment from the ACS Admission Committee and Principal.

Admission is considered probationary for the first six weeks, and may be subject to review and reconsideration at that time.

2.0 REGISTRATION AND TUITION

All details concerning registration, tuition, and refunds are contained in the yearly enrollment contract. Because questions sometimes arise concerning tuition refunds, the policy is restated for your reference below. For any questions or more complete information, please contact the administrative offices.

Because financial obligations must be made for personnel and other expenses long before the school year begins, a financial strain is experienced when

students enroll and then withdraw before the year is completed. ACS has adopted a policy whereby parents or guardians are responsible for the entirety of the tuition and fees. **Therefore, ACS will not refund any tuition or fees on withdrawals, except with approval by Administration.**

It is further agreed that enrollment as specified within this Enrollment Contract, may be cancelled in writing, without penalty (except forfeiture of the deposit or registration fee) prior to July 1 of the contract school year. If the enrollment is cancelled after July 1, parents or guardians financially responsible for the students will be obligated to pay the full annual charges.

3.0 CLASS PLACEMENT

While the school values parental input about the needs, interests, and abilities of children, class placement will remain within the discretion of the school.

4.0 DRESS AND GROOMING

Modesty in clothing (tightness and/or length of certain pieces) and grooming should be taken into consideration by all students attending ACS. This is required to foster a positive educational environment and encourage a Christ-like attitude and behavior. Both parents and students should take an active role in determining what visually presents appropriate dress and grooming.

Clothing must be purchased from CFJ Manufacturing and should follow the prescribed ACS uniform dress code. Brochures are available in the office and on our website. Uniforms are to be worn during the official school day, Monday through Friday. Administration may declare certain days throughout the school year “spirit wear” days. These days will require uniform bottoms (shorts, skirts, pants, etc.) and an ACS shirt/sweatshirt.

4.1 Young Men

- Hair is to be maintained so that it is not extreme. Hair should be neat and well groomed.
- No stripes, designs or letters cut in hair.
- Hair should be no longer in the back than the bottom of the collar, nor be longer than the bottom of the ear on the sides. Hair should not fall below the eyebrows.
- Hair color and any highlights must be of a natural hair color.
- Students must be clean shaven with sideburns worn no lower than the bottom of the ear lobe.
- All shirts (with the exception of the dri-fit shirt) must be tucked (not rolled) into pants or shorts.
- A black, brown, royal blue, grey, or khaki belt must be worn with shirts that are required to be tucked in to pants or shorts (3rd-12th).

- Casual shoes, including cowboy boots, should be neutral or school colors that coordinate with the uniform. Dress shoes should be traditional black or brown. All shoes should have closed toes and closed heels. Cowboy boots may only be worn with long pants, and students are not allowed to tuck the pants into the boots. Cowboy boots are the only boots that meet the ACS dress code.
- White, black, grey or royal blue socks (of the same color) are to be worn with shorts. The majority of the sock should be solid in one of the approved colors.
- All undershirts must be solid white, grey, royal blue, or black.
- Tears, rips, embellishments, and “bling” do not meet the ACS dress code.
- All pants must be worn at the natural waistline.
- Hats, toboggans, headgear, hoods, bandanas, and sunglasses are not allowed.
- No visible tattoos will be allowed.
- No earrings, clips, studs, spacers, protectors, wire, or anything in a piercing may be worn to school or school-sponsored activities.

4.2 Young Women

- Hair color and any highlights must be of a natural hair color.
- Length of dress or skirt must be no shorter than 3 inches above the top of the floor when student is in kneeling position. This includes both the front and back of the skirt.
- Modesty shorts (black, grey, or royal blue) should be worn underneath all skirts.
- All shirts and blouses are to be tucked (not rolled) into shorts, pants, and skirts. The exception to this is the women’s shirt with the “Academic A” new in 2015.
- Casual shoes, including cowboy boots, should be neutral or school colors that coordinate with the uniform. Dress shoes should be traditional black or brown. All shoes should have closed toes and closed heels. Cowboy boots may only be worn with pants, and students are not allowed to tuck the pants into the boots. Cowboy boots are the only boots that meet the ACS dress code.
- A black, brown, royal blue, grey or khaki belt must be worn with shorts and pants (3rd-12th).
- White, black, grey, or royal blue socks (of the same color) are to be worn with shorts, pants, or skirts. The majority of the sock should be solid in one of the approved colors. Solid color tights or leggings in white, grey, royal blue, or black may be worn with skirts. The tights and leggings should be devoid of lace and/or designs.
- All undershirts must be solid white, grey, royal blue, or black.
- Tears, rips, embellishments, and “bling” do not meet the ACS dress code.
- Hats, toboggans, headgear, hoods, bandanas, and sunglasses are not allowed.
- No visible tattoos will be allowed.
- Visible body piercings, with the exception of the ears, is not allowed.
- Accessories should be neutral or school colors that coordinate with the uniform.

4.3. Outerwear

Only outerwear purchased from CFJ Manufacturing will be allowed and includes the following items:

- Grey and Royal sweatshirts.
- Black pullover sweaters and sweater vests.
- Men's and Women's PA pique fleece jacket (black)
- Men's and Women's 3 in 1 Colorblock (black)
- Youth team jacket (royal blue)
- Youth thermo jacket (grey)

Elementary students must wear tennis shoes to participate in PE. Students may be subject to a grade reduction for multiple offenses.

Solid white, grey, royal blue, or black undershirts may be worn underneath the sweatshirts and sweaters. Students choosing this option must keep the sweatshirt or sweater on during the course of the school day. One of the uniform polo shirts must be worn underneath the sweater vest.

Students are allowed to wear ACS letter jackets and jackets purchased for a specific team/sport (i.e. cheerleading team jacket) as approved by administration.

PE uniforms must be worn for PE, for off-season, and for practice for any sports that do not provide their own practice gear. Students not in uniform may be subject to a daily grade reduction.

4.4 Consequences for Dress Code Violations

Students violating dress code policies may be removed from class (with loss of credit during time missed) until the standards are met. Multiple infractions will result in progressively serious consequences at the discretion of the responsible administrator.

If a student is in doubt about wearing something that may not meet the dress code standards, he/she should not wear it. Administrators are happy to discuss, in advance, what is acceptable attire for school and school-related activities.

As with all discipline policies, these dress and grooming regulations cannot define the entire scope of these complicated issues. Administrative discretion will be used where policy statements are not definitive.

5.0 ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Daily attendance and punctuality are essential to academic achievement and total student development. While ACS realizes that absences are sometimes necessary due to illness, death, and other emergencies, unnecessary absences should be avoided. Class will be open at 8:05 and will begin promptly at 8:15. **All students are expected to be on time.** Tardies are most often caused by bad habits and poor planning. Since they are very distracting to classroom instruction, you are urged to have your child at school on time each morning.

5.1 Tardies

1st – 5th grade students tardy to school will be required to report to the office to receive a slip to enter the classroom. Consequences for multiple tardies per semester are as follows:

- 3rd Tardy – letter from the principal
- 6th Tardy – letter from the president
- 10th Tardy – meeting with the principal and contract

Tardiness due to doctor's appointments do not count toward the aforementioned consequences.

5.2 Absences from School

If a student must be absent from school, parents should notify the building secretary. In cases where a student will miss several days, the teacher needs to be contacted as soon as possible so that make-up work can be planned with the parent and student.

1st – 5th grade students are allowed 8 absences per semester (excused and/or unexcused). After the 8th absence, a doctor's note must be presented to excuse the absence. Failure to provide a doctor's note will result in the absence being coded as unexcused, and zeros will be given for all work assigned the day of the absence.

5.3 Dismissal Times and Early Release

In the afternoon, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students will be dismissed by 3:00 p.m. First, second, and third, fourth and fifth grades will be dismissed at 3:15 p.m.

There will be an early dismissal at 11:30 a.m. at various times of the school year. See your school calendar for the exact dates. No lunch will be served on these days, and there will be no after-school care provided.

6.0 DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Drop Off:

When entering the parking area from Judge Ely Boulevard, use the north entrance and follow the arrows to the Elementary side of the campus. There are 2 traffic lanes to drop off children. Please encourage your child to leave your car quickly and safely as possible and then clear the lane by moving out through the south exit. Most days an adult will be available to help your child once he/she has left your vehicle. Please do not stay in the drop off lanes and watch your child walk to class.

If you wish to watch or accompany your child to the classroom, park in the designated parking spaces. **DO NOT** park and leave your vehicle in the drop off lanes. Please be considerate of those behind you.

A speed limit of 10 mph will be in effect for all vehicles on campus at all times.

Pick Up:

Each family will receive 2 cards with their last name printed in on it. Please make use of the two traffic lanes while waiting for your child and put your name card on the visor or dashboard.

Teachers will be on hand to call names of children forward to be loaded into your car.

ALL parents and students need to use the cross walk to cross to waiting cars or the parking lot. For safety reasons, **DO NOT** walk between cars.

We will load the first 2 cars in each lane first. If your child is not ready, you may be asked to pull forward behind the buses to clear traffic flow.

If you need to get out of your car and drop something at the office or talk to your child's teacher, please park in a designated parking space.

If your child is to ride home with someone other than his/her usual ride, please contact the office or send a note to the teacher. Students will not be allowed to ride home with other students or adults without parent or guardian permission.

7.0 BEFORE AND AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

Students may not arrive at school before 7:30. Those who arrive between 7:30 and 8:05 a.m. should report to the cafeteria, or early morning room for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students, where teachers will be on duty to supervise students. At 8:05 a.m. students will be released to report to their classroom teacher. As described below, after school care is provided from 3:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. at a minimal cost:

- Your child's teacher will release your child from the front of the school each day to either go home with you, or your appointed person, or go to after-school care. **If your child has not been picked up from the school within ten minutes of dismissal time, he/she will be sent to after-school care and charges will begin. No children will be left waiting unattended in front of the building.**

- Please notify your child’s teacher, or the elementary office, if your child normally attends after-school care and will not be there, or if you are sending your child to after-school care and he/she does not normally attend. It is important for us to know which children to expect in after-school care each day.
- Students will be charged by the hour beginning at the time they are dismissed from school and continuing until they are picked up, rounded to the nearest quarter hour. If prior arrangements have been made with the business office, parents may choose to pay a reduced monthly rate. Please talk to the office about all applicable rates.
- When it is time for your child to be picked up from after-school care, he/she will be released only to the people named on the student’s information card unless we have received specific written instructions from you to do otherwise. Please do not ask anyone else to tell us that it is O.K. for your child to go with them—**for your child’s protection we must hear it from you.**
- If a student is involved in scout meetings which begin immediately after school is dismissed, he/she will be charged for after-school care beginning at the time of the student’s arrival in the after-school care room. Please notify the elementary office in writing if your child will participate in this activity.
- In order to eliminate an extra trip to school, and as a service to our parents who have more than one child attending ACS, students are not charged for the time in after-school care while they are waiting for an older brother or sister to be dismissed from school. **This does not include time spent in participation of athletics or other after-school activities.** If the younger child is not picked up within **ten** minutes after the oldest sibling has been dismissed, he/she will be charged for the **full time** that they have been in after-school care, not just the time they are there after the older student is dismissed.

8.0 INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS

School closing or delays due to inclement weather will be announced via e-mail, text alerts, social media, and TV stations by 6:30 a.m.

9.0 EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Emergency and crisis situations can quickly escalate into a school-wide catastrophe if not dealt with immediately and effectively. Knowing what to do when a crisis occurs can minimize the chaos, the rumors, and the impact of the event on students and the community. For this purpose, ACS has developed a Crisis Management Plan, which is also available to parents. We encourage you to review it. Additionally, we will conduct fire and tornado drills during the year.

10.0 CLOSED CAMPUS

ACS is a closed campus. **All visitors must report to the principal's office.** Parents wishing to make an extended visit to the classroom will need to make prior arrangements with the principal. Generally, to avoid disruption of classes, only those students who are applying for admission may visit ACS classes.

11.0 LUNCH

A nutritional hot meal is served each day in the school cafeteria. A school menu will be regularly provided to the students. Students may bring a sack lunch if preferred. If packing a lunch, please do not send glass containers or any items with very sharp edges, which can be dangerous. Paper and pull-tops are fine if your child is able to handle these independently.

12.0 CHAPEL

Some of the most rewarding school experiences are the twice-weekly chapel services. Chapel is in the cafeteria at 8:20 a.m. on Tuesday and Thursday (for PreK and Kindergarten) and Wednesday and Friday for 1st through 5th grades. It is attended by all elementary students, pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Parents and guests are always invited. Since chapel is viewed as an important time of praise and reflection, we ask that you have your child to school on time so he/she may participate and chapel is not unnecessarily interrupted.

13.0 NEWSLETTER

News will be sent via e-mail to inform parents of activities and provide information, which will aid in planning family schedules. It is important that parents and students read these newsletters, so that they will be properly informed about school activities.

PK3-2nd grade will send weekly newsletters.
3rd-5th grades will send bi-monthly newsletters.

14.0 WEBSITE

This handbook, the school calendar, and other information about ACS may be accessed through our web site at www.abilenechristian.com and www.renweb.com. Certain information about students attending ACS is considered directory information and may be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects in writing to the principal prior to the beginning of school. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in activities and sports, rosters of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, most recent previous school attended, and other similar information.

15.0 FIELD TRIPS

Field trips that enhance classroom activities are encouraged. At the beginning of each year, parents will be asked to sign a "Field Trip Permission Slip" that will cover all trips during the year. All field trips will be listed in the weekly newsletter.

16.0 PARTIES

A limited number of class parties will be held throughout the year. Please see your child's teacher for an opportunity to help. Invitations to private parties should not be passed out on campus unless all of the boys, all of the girls, or all students in your child's class receives one. Too many feelings are hurt needlessly when children are excluded.

17.0 TELEPHONE USAGE

In order to limit personal calls, students are asked to make arrangements for school activities, needed materials, etc. before leaving home. Parents are encouraged to refrain from sending cell phones to school with elementary students. If a parent feels it is absolutely necessary to send a cell phone with a child, it should be given to the teacher to keep until the school day is over. Cell phones used during the day without teacher permission will be taken up by the teacher. The business phones may be used by students for emergency purposes or whenever the teacher deems it necessary. Students should seek permission from a teacher or administrator before using the phone.

Emergency calls and important messages received for students will be promptly delivered.

18.0 IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

Please click on this link <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm> for the current Texas Minimum Vaccine Requirements for Students in **Grades K-12**. ACS requires all students to be in compliance with the state of Texas immunization requirements.

Please click on this link <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/default.shtm> for the current Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Childcare Facilities: K3 and K4.

Please be aware that students without the proper documentation of the required immunizations or a valid exemption will not be allowed to attend school. If you have any questions related to immunization requirements, you may contact the school nurse at 672.1200.

19.0 STUDENT ILLNESS AND MEDICATIONS

The school nurse, principal, secretary, and/or teacher(s) will make the determination of the child's needs when an illness or accident occurs. Parent(s)/Guardians will be called if consultation is deemed necessary.

Any student who has a fever of 100.0 degrees or more, who has vomited, has diarrhea, or who has any other communicable illness may not remain at school. When this occurs, a parent will be called to pick up the student from school as soon as is possible.

Students must be FEVER FREE, without the use of medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.

The school is not allowed to give any type of medication (prescription or over-the-counter) to students without written consent from the parent. If it is necessary that a medication be given during school hours the following requirements must be met:

- Medication will not be administered in school or during school-sponsored activities without a **Medication Authorization Form** being signed by the parent(s) or guardian.
- Prescription medication must be brought to school in the current original container with pharmacy label intact. The label must have the student's name, name of medication, dosage, and time to be given. If the medication is not properly labeled, it will not be given.
- Over-the-counter medications must be in an unopened original container. Student's name must be written on the box/bottle. The dosage and frequency to be given must be consistent with the label instructions.
- Medications will not be accepted in baggies or envelopes.
- Medication must be brought to the school by the parent(s)/guardian, not with the student.
- Students may self-carry emergency medications with proper forms signed by physician, parent(s)/guardian, and school nurse

If a student is unable to participate in physical education due to any medical or physical condition, the student must bring a written statement from a physician.

20.0 LIBRARY AND BOOK CHALLENGES

All ACS students have access and are encouraged to use the campus library which has a section especially for the elementary students. Classes are scheduled a library time weekly. The ACU library is also available to our students. Please check at the ACU library information desk for details on getting your child a library card.

The following procedure will be followed in the event that a parent challenges an ACS library book. The parent will be asked to fill out a **Book Challenge Form** stating the title of the book and the specific objections. One member of the library staff, one ACS teacher, and one library review volunteer will read the book in question. The reviewing teacher will be chosen from the student's appropriate school level (i.e. elementary, middle school, high school). Library review volunteers will be selected at the beginning of each school year. These volunteers will consist of at least one elementary parent, one middle school parent, and one high school parent whom the administrators deem to

be capable of fair and unbiased reviews. After reading the book in question, the library staff member and the library review volunteer will each fill out a **Book Challenge Reviewer Form**. The library staff, in conjunction with school administrators, will review the **Book Challenge Form** and the **Book Challenge Reviewer Forms** and determine what should be done with the book in question.

One of the following will be done with the book: it will be left on the shelf in its current location; it will be left on the shelf, but be moved to a more age-appropriate location; or it will be removed from the ACS library. The parent who presented the challenge will be informed of the decision regarding the book in question, and the reasons that particular decision was reached.

21.0 ACTIVITY CARD

All students at ACS are issued an ID card which entitles them to admission to all ACS athletic events with the exception of TAPPS sanctioned play-off games. See the office for more details.

22.0 INSURANCE

A student accident insurance policy is offered to parents at the beginning of the school year. This policy is provided as a service and is not mandatory.

23.0 GRADING AND REPORTING

Report cards will be emailed at the end of each six-week reporting period. Progress reports will be emailed each week. Grades may be viewed via RenWeb daily. A combination of letter and numerical grades will be used according to each class and subject. The explanation of grades for first through fifth grade is as follows:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
below 70	Not Passing
E	Excellent
S+	Above Average
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs to Improve
U	Unsatisfactory

First graders will not receive a report card at the end of the first nine weeks grading period.

24.0 HOMEWORK

Homework is designed to reinforce newly-mastered skills, provide opportunity for independent work, and enhance personal responsibility. The amount of time a child needs to do homework varies with the individual. Parents will be given advance notice if a child's presence is required after school to finish assigned work. Students will be provided bags for their notebook, books, folders, etc. Students are not allowed to use their own bags/backpacks.

25.0 PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences between parents and teachers are important to good communication. There will be one conference held during the first semester with each student's parents. PK3-K5 will also have a conference during the second semester. An additional conference will be scheduled in the spring with the parents of students who have scored below the 50th percentile on NWEA testing.. Other conferences are welcome and may be scheduled with the teacher.

26.0 DISCIPLINE

In order for effective teaching to occur, order must be maintained in the classroom. Teachers make every effort to handle their own discipline. They have full authority and responsibility to correct student behavior whenever such correction is necessary. The following procedures will be followed for the handling of situations involving school discipline:

- **Teacher addresses the conduct with the student.** If necessary, privileges are taken away such as recess, cafeteria seating with class, etc.
- **Note/phone call to parents.** No student will be sent to the principal's office prior to the teacher visiting with and soliciting the aid of parents (with the exception of severe disciplinary matters such as profanity, fighting, etc.).
- **Conference with principal.** When a student is sent to the office, disciplinary action will be determined by the principal. Decisions will be based on the nature and seriousness of the offense.

All corrective measures will be administered with fairness and consistency dependent upon the offense and the number of prior offenses. Very serious or repeat violation of rules cannot be tolerated and may result in suspension, or dismissal.

If preliminary facts suggest **the possibility of out-of-school suspension or expulsion**, the parents/guardian will be notified. Facts are gathered and confirmed by the appropriate principal. If needed, the student may be sent home during the investigation phase. If the decision is made by the principal to suspend or expel the student, the student and the parents of the student are informed of that outcome (if appropriate, a withdrawal may be suggested).

Once a discipline decision is made, other than suspension or expulsion, any questions regarding the decision should be directed to the person who made the decision. The decision of the principal on discipline matters is final (except expulsions where appeal may be made to the President as discussed below).

Following the notification of an expulsion, parents have 24 hours to request an appeal in writing and submit it to the appropriate principal. If an appeal is requested, the President will review the situation and talk to all parties involved to the extent possible and within reason. Moreover, the President may ask the parents, student, and appropriate principal or faculty to meet and discuss the situation. The decision of the President to uphold, overturn, or modify the administration's decision is final. All relevant parties will be notified of the outcome.

27.0 PLAYGROUND RULES

- No throwing mulch, sticks, rocks, sand, etc...(this includes bringing it to the top of equipment and letting it “rain” down)
- Slide down slides – on bottom only, one student at a time
- No climbing “up” the slides
- No one slides down a slide until the person before them is completely off the slide
- No roughhousing on the top sections of the playground equipment
- Swing on swings on bottom only
- Students may not push other students on the swings – unless older kids are requested to push younger ones – for example- 5th graders come out to play and interact with pre-k, then they could push their swings
- Students are not allowed to twist swings or swing from side to side
- Pre-K-2nd only are allowed on the “bouncy” equipment or in the caterpillar
- The shorter playground piece is intended for Pre-K-1st, the larger for 1st-5th
- All students can play *under* all pieces

28.0 GRIEVANCES

As a Christian community, it is expected that all grievances will be handled in keeping with a Biblical model (Matthew 18) as set out below:

- (1) **Go to the person and address your grievance with them.** Grievances are handled most satisfactorily at the level at which they occur. Therefore, if a parent has a staff- or faculty-related grievance, an attempt must be made to settle the matter first with the staff/faculty member.

- (2) If no satisfactory solution is reached, **direct the grievance to the next level above the person with whom you have the problem.** At this level, a record of the grievance will be made.
- (3) Finally, if the grievance remains unresolved, **communicate to the President**, who may refer items of concern to the ACS Board Grievance Committee.

This way, we hope we can resolve any concern in a cooperative, Christian atmosphere. In this spirit, we will model peacemaking for each other and for our children.

29.0 GUIDANCE COUNSELING

Our guidance counselor is a wonderful resource available to students upon need or request. Students on their own or by teacher or parent referral may schedule individual appointments.

30.0 TECHNOLOGY NETWORK USAGE

Elementary students are provided access to computers in their classrooms, the library, and the computer lab. Using computers is a privilege, and students are expected to abide by certain rules of conduct. Students participate in computer orientation sessions; and parents are asked to review the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy, which is available on the ACS website. ACS has taken available precautions to restrict access to controversial and inappropriate materials however, it is impossible to totally prevent access to such material. Students who seek such materials or damage equipment deliberately will be disciplined.

31.0 RESPECT OF OTHERS

As a Christian community, ACS seeks to promote a safe environment where all involved may participate in educational and extra-curricular activities without compromising their health, safety, and welfare. Therefore, **ACS prohibits bullying, physical or verbal assault, hazing, abuse, or harassment, and regards such acts as serious discipline offenses.** These rules pertain regardless of the medium, in direct personal interactions, in any electronic or voice communication, and on blogs, social networking sites, web forums or other online sites. In addition, **ACS will not tolerate retaliation against any person who reports improper behavior, provides information during an investigation, or witnesses or has reliable information about misconduct.** Students knowingly in the presence of these rule violations add support by their presence and may also be held accountable. Examples of prohibited behavior include but are not limited to:

31.1 Bullying

Bullying is defined as negative conduct intended to intimidate, demean, or systematically exclude one or more persons, and he or she has difficulty defending him or herself. The conduct must be severe, persistent or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile or abusive educational environment or disrupt or interrupt the educational environment. Bullying also typically involves an imbalance in power. Bullying may include physical,

written or verbal expression, such as threats to self or property, taunting, confinement, assault and ostracism and often involves power differentials. Bullies may even use electronic communications, a practice referred to as cyberbullying.

31.2 Hazing

Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health, or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any student group, organization, or team. "Endanger the physical health" shall include, but not be limited to, any brutality of a physical nature or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual. "Endanger the mental health" shall include any activity that would subject an individual to extreme mental stress such as forced conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity even if a student willingly participates.

31.3 Child Sexual Abuse

In addition to any other reporting required by this policy, suspected abuse of a child under the age of 18, including sexual, physical or emotional abuse, **MUST be reported to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at 1800-252-5400.** Current law requires that professionals such as teachers must make a verbal report **within 48 hours.** Failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment of up to 180 days and/or a fine of up to \$2,000. **Reporting suspected child abuse to your principal, school counselor or superintendent will NOT satisfy your obligation under this law.**

Faculty and staff behavior with respect to students must be above suspicion. Faculty and staff should avoid even the appearance of an improper relationship with students. Moreover, under no circumstances will a sexual relationship between an adult member of the ACS community (someone over 18 not in the status of student) and an ACS student be construed as consensual. Any employee suspected of abuse will be subject to civil and criminal prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

31.4 Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual assault or exploitation, when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or participation in a program or activity; submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decision affecting the individual; or such conduct is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with or limits the

individual's work or educational performance or one's ability to participate in or benefit from ACS's educational program or activity.

Sexual harassment of an individual student, an employee or a group of students includes, but is not limited to: letters, notes, telephone calls, e-mail, distribution or display of materials of a sexual nature; deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering or pinching; sexually suggestive looks or gestures; pressure for sexual favors; pressure for dates; or sexual teasing, jokes, remarks or questions.

31.5 Discriminatory Harassment

Discriminatory harassment is verbal or physical conduct or other detrimental action based upon sex, religion, race, color, national origin when such conduct is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with or limits the individual's work or educational performance or one's ability to participate in or benefit from ACS's educational program or activity or creates a working or learning environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

31.6 Reporting Misconduct

Students: Any student who feels that he or she or any other student has been the victim of any such misconduct or retaliation is strongly encouraged to report the matter promptly to the principal or President if the principal is not available. A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Parents/Guardians: ACS urges the parents or guardians of a student who is the target of bullying or of a student who has witnessed or otherwise has relevant information about misconduct or retaliation to promptly notify the principal or President if the principal is not available.

Faculty and Staff: All administrators, teachers, and staff - every person who is employed by the School in any capacity - must immediately report any single action of misconduct that the person has witnessed or otherwise become aware of to the principal or President if the principal is not available. An employee who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation or who fails immediately to report an instance of bullying or retaliation of which they are aware shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Because information must be shared in order to conduct effective investigations, ACS cannot promise strict confidentiality. However, ACS will normally release information concerning complaints only on a legitimate need to know basis.

31.7 ACS Response

Once any allegation of misconduct is received, an investigation of the charge will be conducted by principal pursuant to the process set out on pages 17-18 or possible suspensions and expulsions. ACS will also notify relevant authorities where required. The principal will also notify local law enforcement if he/she believes that criminal charges may be pursued against a perpetrator.