

Parent and Student Handbook

Grace
Episcopal
School



2021-2022

Grace Episcopal School

Parent and Student Handbook

Mission Statement	1	• Financial Aid	
School Philosophy & Character Pledge	1	• Tuition Insurance	
Non-Discriminatory Policy	1	• IRS Tax Identification Number	
School Prayer	1	• Credit Card Usage	
Honor Code	2	• Other Fees	
Partnership for Educational Excellence	2	Food Policy	12
Administration and Faculty	3	Dress Code	13
School Board	4	What to Bring to School	15
Parents Association	4	Discipline	16
• Officers and Program Coordinators		Academic Policies	17
• Room Parents		Technology Policies	18
School Hours	6	General Policies	21
Attendance Policy	6	• Custody of Children	
Unexcused Absences	6	• Parent Communications & Feedback	
Snow, Weather & Other Emergencies	7	• School Projects, Homework & “Show and Tell”	
Office Hours	7	• Screenings, Transcripts & Reports	
Arrival & Dismissal	7	• Progress Reports and Conferences	
• Safety & Security		• School Psychologist and Learning Resource Teacher	
• Traffic & Parking		• Lost & Found and Accident Insurance	
• Arrival and Dismissal		• Supervision of Children and Visitors	
• Pets on Campus		• Abuse Reporting	
• Early Pick-up		Health Policy	23
• Going Home with a Friend		Parental Forms Checklist	26
• Family Emergencies		Parent Participation	27
Finances	9	Special Events and Activities	27
• Financial Policy		School Publications	28
• Tuition		Crisis Management Plan - Overview.....	29
• Extended Care		Dept. of Social Services Statements	30
• Smart Tuition Management Program			
• Accounts			

Distance Learning Option	30
Extended Care Handbook	32
Faculty and Administration Voicemail	33
COVID-19 Mitigation Plan	34

Dear Grace Families,

With hope and optimism, we embrace the 2021-2022 school year in an on-going global pandemic. This year promises to put numerous challenges in our path, yet our mission to serve children remains steadfast. Although we all must agree that we cannot mitigate all risks for our students and families, the school will take comprehensive steps to offer the most safe and successful school year that we can.

All parents are reminded that the success of our school must be a community effort. We need to support and take care of one another. We count on parents to follow our guidelines and require their children to do the same. If we put the needs of the greater community above our own, we are truly living the character keys of Grace and have a much better chance of success and continued good health as we reopen our school.

Thank you for taking the time to review our handbook. If you have further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me (pculbreth@graceschoolalex.org). Together, we can meet our mission and offer a successful school year where children begin with Grace, grow with Grace and lead with Grace.

God bless Grace,

Patti Culbreth

Head of School

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Grace Episcopal School is to honor the gift of childhood.

We accomplish this mission by inspiring a passion for learning, teaching the power of goodness, and valuing every individual as a child of God.

We are committed to outstanding teachers, small classes, and an intentional focus on early and elementary education.

PHILOSOPHY

Founded in 1959, Grace Episcopal School is charged by the Vestry of Grace Episcopal Church to provide a Christ-centered, co-educational school. Grace Episcopal School is a small school by design. Its size and educational philosophy enable the faculty and staff to develop fully the individual potential of each of the students – academically, socially, and morally – in a loving, nurturing environment. Individual attention to our students is stressed throughout an academically challenging curriculum.

Grace Episcopal School is also one of the ways in which Grace Episcopal Church serves its surrounding community. The students and faculty of this co-educational school represent a variety of racial, ethnic, economic, and religious backgrounds. We value and encourage this diversity as we seek to help each child to discover the same in other students and faculty at the school.

Grace Episcopal School seeks to build a strong cognitive foundation in its students that will help prepare them for a lifetime of challenges and continued academic success in future schools. Moreover, as an Episcopal Church School, it also seeks to accomplish something more: a strong spiritual and ethical base relevant to each child's age, provided in partnership with the families of the student and drawing on the traditions of the Episcopal Church.

CHARACTER PLEDGE

We, who are members of the Grace Episcopal School Community, seek to live lives of Christian values and good character. We believe that good character grows from daily acts of honesty, respect, responsibility, compassion, and courage. We pledge ourselves to develop these ideals with integrity, striving to do what is right at all times.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Grace Episcopal School 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, and further, 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, or otherwise discriminate in violation of federal, state or local law.

SCHOOL PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, we thank you for all the goodness you send to us; our homes, health, food, families, and school. We give thanks for time to rest and play. Help us to act with kindness and goodness to others. Give us your guidance in all that we do. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

HONOR CODE

At Grace Episcopal School, emphasis is placed not only upon intellectual and physical development, but also upon the development of personal character and integrity. This commitment promotes an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect, an atmosphere vital to the school's pursuit of intellectual and spiritual growth. Students learn the value of honorable conduct and reap the benefits of living among honorable individuals.

Students at Grace Episcopal School are expected to grow in responsibility as they progress through the grades. Students are expected to respond positively and demonstrate increasing maturity from grade to grade. With the encouragement, care, advice, and support of the faculty and parents, students at Grace can grow in self-awareness, self-confidence, and independence.

We hold all students to high standards of behavior and we encourage all students to pay attention to the feelings of others. We endeavor to create a culture of care, a spirit of trust, and mutual support for all. Lying, cheating, stealing, and physical and verbal aggression will not be tolerated.

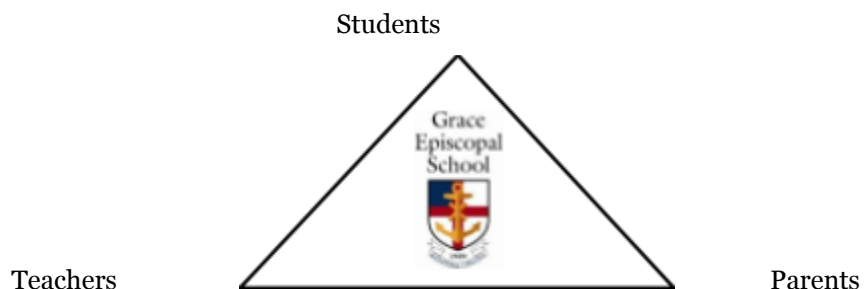
GRACE PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The Students' Role is to aim high, work hard, and achieve to the best of their abilities. Grace Episcopal School students take responsibility for their own studies and character building, and also contribute positively to the experience of all others in the school. Students contribute to school spirit and the learning environment of Grace Episcopal School, and are not merely served by it. They complement the work and dedication of their parents and their teachers.

The Teachers' Role is to create a positive environment for learning, offering a high quality program of study and stimulating the students' efforts through encouragement and support for hard work. Teachers strive to use the students' unique talents to help them build character and self-esteem. They are dedicated to their students and the school both in the classroom and beyond.

The Parents' Role is to be partners in the learning and growing process, fostering in their children the attitudes and work habits which lead to academic and personal success. Parents help children develop judgment, sensitivity, and an appreciation of the diversity of beliefs and cultures in our communities and in Grace Episcopal School. They make school work a top priority and insist on diligent effort, supporting their children in times of difficulty and rejoicing in their successes.

The Parents and Teachers respect each other's integrity and authority, and always uphold each other in the presence of other people, especially students.



Partnership for Educational Excellence

ADMINISTRATION & FACULTY

2021-2022

ADMINISTRATION

Head of School	Patti Culbreth
Assistant Head of School	Amanda Hungerford
Chaplain	The Rev. Anne Turner
Director of Finance and Operations	Beth Calaman
Director of Admissions	Julia Byrnes
Director of Auxiliary Programs	Alison Kindler
Director of Early Childhood Programs	Mary Kate Holland
Director of Development	Susan Miller
Facilities Manager	Ben Strohl
Front Desk Administrative Assistant	Ashley Entwisle
Psychologist	Dr. Rene Hackney

FACULTY & STAFF

Preschool Lead Teacher/EC	Pierina Battifora
Early Childhood Assistant Teacher (PS)	Kamila Mukushova
Junior Kindergarten Lead Teacher	Mary Kate Holland
Early Childhood Assistant Teacher/EC	Thalia Orellana-Montano
Early Childhood Assistant Teacher/EC	Susu Mohammad
Early Childhood Aide	Teara Sayles
Kindergarten Teacher	Heather Vogus
Kindergarten Assistant Teacher	Debbie Salisbury
Grade 1 Teacher	Claire Lynch
Grade 1 Assistant Teacher	Mosheh Garbla
Grade 2 Teacher	Lyndi Cotes
Grade 3 Teacher	Diane Johnson
Grade 2/3 Teachers' Aide	Kayla Heraud
Grade 4 Teacher	Ashley Brittingham
Grade 5 Teacher	Cindy Mitlo
Grade 4/5 Teachers' Aide	Hannah Wheeler
Art Teachers, Kindergarten - Grade 5	Julia Byrnes; Elisabeth Fraley
STREAM Teacher, Kindergarten - Grade 5	Dani Duncan
Music Teacher	Jennifer Mon
P.E. Teacher, Kindergarten - Grade 5	Miguel Palacio
Religion Teacher, Grades 1 & 2	Dani Duncan
Religion Teacher, Grade 3	Amanda Hungerford
Religion Teacher, Grade 4	Patti Culbreth
Religion Teacher, Grade 5	Rev. Anne Turner
Spanish Teacher, Preschool - Grade 5	Aida Longo Knowles

SCHOOL BOARD

The policies and procedures of Grace Episcopal School are the responsibility of the School Board, a group of dedicated volunteers empowered by the Vestry of Grace Episcopal Church to govern the school and its operations. The School Board meets monthly. In addition, regular meetings are held between the School Board Chair, the Rector of Grace Episcopal Church and the Head of School.

The School Board's fourteen (14) members include parents, parishioners, and designated Vestry representatives. The Board's committees provide oversight and review of the school. The School Board By-Laws may be viewed on the Grace Episcopal School website: www.graceschoolalex.org.

2021-2022 Officers

<i>School Board Chair</i>	Jan Wolff
<i>Vice Chair</i>	Suzanne O'Malley
<i>Treasurer</i>	Jennifer Long
<i>Secretary/Parent</i>	Rebecca Prosser

2020-2021 Board Members

Paul Bellantoni
Keith and Sheng Davis
Jenni Faires
Paul Hanley
Diana Jarrett
Cheryl Nally
Evan Robinson
Jen Scott

Patti Culbreth, Ex officio
Rev. Anne Turner, Ex officio

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

The GES Parents Association (GESPA), composed of all parents, is led by a leadership team and class representatives from each class (Room Parents) and serves as a liaison between parents and school administration and faculty. An additional role of GESPA is to foster camaraderie and fellowship ("fun-raising") between families.

In past years, this goal of "fun raising" was achieved through annual community events. Due to health and safety guidelines during this pandemic, GESPA must alter former plans; however, GESPA will work to develop meaningful ways for parents to feel a part of the greater Grace community. Food collections for the Grace Food Pantry, deliveries for the Carpenter's Shelter Dinners and Zoom Social events will all be considered in this challenging year.

Supporting the Development Office is another key function of the Parents Association. Families are asked to consider donations to our Annual Fund and our Financial Aid Program throughout the year. The Grace Gala has been a wonderful community event in the past, and this event may move to a virtual opportunity in the spring. GESPA also supports our efforts in an Art to Remember program.

In the past, Room Parent representatives coordinated class activities and/or delegated responsibilities to other classroom volunteers who focused on class parties, field trips, etc. This year, a Room Parent will serve as a liaison between school and families and create opportunities for camaraderie as appropriate.

The Parents Association By-Laws may be viewed on the school website: www.graceschoolalex.org.

GESPA Board, 2021-2022

Presidents

Keith and Sheng Davis

Vice President

Kati Deschler

Secretary/Treasurer

Hillary Beightel

Parent Leadership

Art to Remember

Erin Kara

Preschool

Meredith Robinson

Jr. Kindergarten

Jen Woodard

Kindergarten

Viju Dilley

Grade 1

Kati Deschler

Grade 2

Robin Merriweather

Grade 3

Erin Kara

Grade 4

Terry and Laura Haines

Grade 5

Carol McCormack

SCHOOL HOURS

A. First Two Days (Sept. 7 and 8)

School Day 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
Preschool through Grade 5

B. Regular Day

Morning Care 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
School Day Begins 8:30 a.m.*
Preschool and Jr. Kindergarten 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.*
Kindergarten - Grade 5 8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.*
Extended Care up to 4:30 pm.

C. Final Day of School

Chapel Service and Graduation 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.*
Dismissal of All Classes 10:30 a.m. No After-School Extended Care

*Parents will be asked to follow a staggered drop off and pick up schedule prepared by the School to allow for proper traffic flow.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to arrive within the carpool window of drop off (8:20-8:35) sent to families before the first week of school. The goal is to have students settled in classrooms no later than 8:45 a.m. The learning experience that takes place during class time cannot be duplicated. When children begin their day tardy, it impedes their ability to learn.

- When a student is absent, parents must contact the school office by 9 a.m. to report the absence.
- Chronic tardiness will result not only in lower grades, but may ultimately void the enrollment contract.
- Classes begin as soon as students arrive from the carpool drop off line. Students in grades K-5 will be marked tardy/absent after 8:45 a.m.

ABSENCE OR TARDY

The School understands when a child is absent, arrives late to school or leaves early from school because of an illness, doctors' appointment, family emergency or religious observance. These absences and tardies are unavoidable and are excused. Parents assume the responsibility for any academic work missed from absences or tardies. Teachers cannot be expected to provide extra help, make-up work or tests to students who miss school for non-essential reasons. The teacher will decide when missed work will be given to the student (before or after the absences). The days right before Christmas vacation and Spring Break should not be used to supplement vacation time. Multiple absences and tardies can affect a student's achievement. Therefore, parents should make medical appointments after school and make vacation plans within the defined schedule of the school calendar.

If a student must quarantine for an extended period due to covid restrictions, we will offer virtual learning opportunities. However, for students who are absent due to childhood illnesses (allergies, pink eye, flu, etc.), our teachers will use our traditional "make up work" system of leaving work for parent pick-up in the school office and/or work with children to make up work upon return to school. The school will not offer virtual opportunities to children whose families choose to pull students from school to work remotely. We believe in-person learning is the best way to serve our children, and we encourage parents to plan for vacation times and/or remote working locations around our school calendar.

SNOW DAYS, WEATHER AND OTHER MAJOR EMERGENCIES

Grace Episcopal School will post a notice on their website (www.graceschoolalex.org) and will contact you via “ParentREACH”, an automated notification system (text and email) in the event we must delay the start of school or close for the day due to inclement weather. We will do our best to make decisions by 7:00 a.m.

In the event we must close early due to inclement weather, we will contact you via “ParentREACH” to alert you to the early dismissal. Please follow the instructions given in the communication regarding early closure and pick up.

OFFICE HOURS

The School offices are open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Please be sure to speak directly with school personnel if you have an emergency message or if you have a change in transportation plans. Do not rely on email or voice mail - keep calling until you talk to school personnel.

If there is a dire emergency and no one answers the school telephone (703/549-5067), call the church office at 703/549-1980 between 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

To schedule an appointment with the Head of School, another School Administrator or your child’s teacher, please contact them directly using the school’s email system. (We request that you do not call faculty and staff at home.)

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

A. Safety and Security

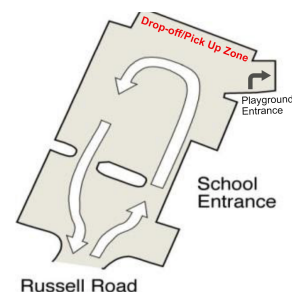
We will begin the 2021-2022 school year with no parents or visitors allowed beyond the school office (except in the case of an emergency) while students are in attendance.

A security camera is installed at the main entrance to the school with monitors located in the School Offices, the Extended Care classrooms, and the church office. To gain entrance to the school, you must “buzz” the school office button outside the glass doors. School personnel will then meet you at the entrance and try to help you with your concern without having you enter the building. If you are cleared to make your way to the front office, school personnel will take your temperature first and then escort you to the school office to conduct only critical business. We hope to limit adult traffic to only school personnel to the highest extent possible.

B. Traffic and Parking

When entering or leaving the parking lot, please follow the one-way arrows around the island (pictured) and observe the following rules:

- Drive slowly.
- Obey the counterclockwise traffic flow.
- Be especially careful backing up.



- Drive to the top of the parking lot where safety cones will outline the drop off zone. Pull all the way forward (toward the dumpsters) to allow for more cars to enter the drop off zone.
- Obey all directions from school traffic supervisors during drop off and pick up.
- Parents are asked to stay in the car and let school personnel assist with car doors. Parents will be requested to exit the car and assist with the car seat if necessary.
- Once a student is dropped off, we ask that parents carefully drive away following the traffic pattern above.
- In the case of a hardship (child very upset, car seat troubles, etc.), we ask the parent to circle the route one more time and try again OR pull into a parking spot and carefully walk WITH THE CHILD to the bottom of the brick walkway for school personnel to help with the situation.

Please do not park in the school/church parking lot all day. Any other use of the lot except for dropping off and picking up children must be cleared with the school office. The school and church will enforce towing of vehicles parked in the lot without authorization.

C. Arrival

Our carpool lane drop off will begin promptly at 8:20. Please use the following schedule to drop off your child:

8:20- 4th/5th Grades

8:25 - 2nd/3rd Grades

8:30 - K/1 Grades

8:35 - PS/JK

Families with multiple students should drop off all children with the youngest child's rotation.

No child should be dropped off at the school building before 8:20 a.m. (The exception is the student who has been pre-registered for morning care. In this case, parents will park and walk the child to the glass doors. Buzz the school office and school personnel will come to the door to greet the child, take his/her temperature and escort him/her to class accordingly.

D. Late Arrivals

The late arrival of a child interrupts classes already in progress, is inconsiderate of others, and is unsettling for the child. Please do everything you can to ensure that your child arrives at school on time. Your cooperation is essential. If your children arrive at school after 12:15 p.m., please be sure that they have eaten lunch. All students arriving late must be escorted to the front glass doors by a parent. Parents should "buzz" the school office and school personnel will come to the door to greet the child, take his/her temperature and escort him/her to class accordingly.

E. Dismissal

Dismissal will be similar to our carpool style drop off (please note the traffic pattern/ plans above). Please do your best to follow this schedule:

12:00 Dismissal of PS and JK

3:00 - PS/JK Students from After Care

3:10 - Grades K and 1

3:15 - Grades 2 and 3

3:20 - Grades 4 and 5

Families with multiple students should pick up all children with the oldest child's rotation.

School personnel will help your child get into your car. Parents should exit the car only if assistance is needed with car seats.

4:30 - Students from After Care - Parents must park and come to glass doors. Buzz the school office and school personnel will bring the child to the door to meet his/her parent/guardian.

F. Pets

We ask parents to leave pets at home during the drop off/pick up process and not bring pets to campus. We do not want treasured pets to escape a car and find themselves in harm's way.

G. Early Pick Up

If early pick up of your child is required, for any reason, the parent must buzz the school office and wait for the child to be delivered to the glass front doors of the building. We ask parents to alert the school beforehand so that teacher/child/school can be ready at pick up time.

H. Going Home with a Friend

Due to our cohort guidelines, we do not encourage play dates outside of school at this time. Children will only be released to those adults listed on their Emergency Information Form.

I. Family Emergencies

If you have an actual emergency and are unable to pick up your child at the designated time, you are required to call the school office and indicate someone listed on your Emergency Information Form to pick up your child.

If a person designated as an alternate on the Emergency Information Form is to pick up your child, written or phone permission is required. In a serious emergency only, when advance written permission is not feasible, call the school office so that your child's teacher can be notified of the change in pick-up plans. If the office does not recognize a parent's voice, the school retains the right not to release the child. If the teacher does not know the identity of the person picking up a child, even though the person is listed on the Emergency Information Form, the person picking up the child may be requested to show a picture ID card.

FINANCES

A. Financial Policy

All parents of enrolled children have signed a contract for the entire school year. You will be held to the agreement if a space has been reserved for your child.

Report cards will be held by the school at the close of any trimester during the school year or at the end of the year if your account is not current.

B. Tuition

The signed contract is for the full school year and is payable in one lump sum or in ten (10) equal payments. The nonrefundable deposit (one-tenth of the annual tuition) and the re-registration fee (\$75 per year) are due with the enrollment contract. Contracts become enforceable for the full year on June 1. The second tuition payment is due on June 1; and the remaining eight (8) payments are due each month August through March.

Tuition for 2021-2022 is as follows:

	Yearly	Monthly
Preschool	\$ 11,430	\$ 1,143
Junior Kindergarten	\$ 11,430	\$ 1,143
Kindergarten - Grade 5	\$ 22,840	\$ 2,284

Supply/Activity Fees are due no later than June 1 and are as follows:

Preschool - Grade 5	\$ 500 per year
Tuition Insurance	1.9% of annual tuition

C. Extended Care

Due to safety guidelines and protocols, we are not able to offer a full extended care program this year; however, we will reassess in January 2022.

To begin the year, we can only offer extended care to those children whose parents pre-registered them. We cannot accept drop ins.

Children in all grade levels will be offered after care until 4:30 pm each day.

D. Smart Tuition Management Program

Grace Episcopal School participates in the Smart Tuition Management Program. The program is designed to increase the efficiency and accuracy of monthly tuition payments, including Extended Care fees. The program is mandatory for all families who pay tuition on a monthly basis. Enrollment forms for each family will be distributed in the early spring of each year, and must be returned to the office by June 1.

For families enrolled in Extended Care (not drop-ins): If Extended Care fees are not paid in full by June 1st, families are required to pay these fees through Smart Tuition Management.

Tuition must be paid in a timely manner. If this tuition policy is not followed, your child may not receive a report card and may not be allowed to attend school until the delinquency is paid in full.

E. Accounts

Please call the Business Office or Smart Tuition (1-888-868-8828 or parents@smarttuition.com) directly if you wish to discuss your account. Good communication between parents and the business office can help avoid confusion. Any discussion concerning financial matters is confidential.

F. Financial Aid

Awards are based on need as determined by the impartial judgment of Student and School Services by NAIS (SSS). All aid decisions are independent of admission decisions. All requests for financial assistance must be submitted online via SSS at www.sssbynais.org. The financial aid analysis is completed by SSS and will be sent to the school. The financial aid committee determines the final award based on need, number of

requests and available funds.

Please contact the Admissions Office to receive financial aid information. All applications for financial aid for 2022-2023 must be submitted to SSS by February 10, 2022. Current financial aid recipients must reapply each year. The financial aid budget is limited. All information is confidential.

G. Tuition Refund Plan/ Withdrawal from Grace Episcopal School

The enrollment contract is a legally binding document and parents are responsible for payment of a full year's tuition. No portion of tuition or fees, paid or outstanding, will be refunded or cancelled in the event of a student's withdrawal from Grace Episcopal School. Because of this, participation in the Tuition Refund Plan is mandatory for all families who pay tuition on a monthly basis. For 2021 - 2022, the cost of tuition insurance is 1.9% of annual tuition. A copy of the plan is provided to every family. Please read the brochure carefully. Parents are reminded that a student must attend Grace for fourteen consecutive calendar days (either in person or virtually) before the insurance policy is valid. In the event of withdrawal or dismissal, a portion of the tuition may be covered by the Tuition Refund Plan, with the remaining portion due immediately from the parents. The School reserves the right to withhold the student's final grades and transcripts until the student's parents have met all financial obligations to Grace Episcopal School. The school will pursue full payment in the event of a withdrawal.

H. The School's IRS Tax Identification Number (TIN) is: 54-0696099

NOTE: Check with your tax consultant to see what before and after school care may be deducted as Dependent Care Expenses.

I. Credit Card Usage

A service charge may be assessed when using a credit card to pay for school purchases.

J. Other Fees

Milk Fee: Milk for Lunch Bunch and Kindergarten - Grade 5 children is available for a fee of \$100 per year.

Return Check Fee: Checks returned to the school by the bank, for any reason, will result in a \$25 returned check fee. If the check is not replaced within ten (10) days, your account will be subject to a late payment charge, as well.

Late Payment Fee: A fee of 5% of the tuition payments will be applied to payments if 30 days late. A 10% charge will be added to the balance of all delinquent accounts after an additional 30 days.

Registration/Re-enrollment Fee: Registration and/or Re-enrollment is completed annually. A \$75 non-refundable fee is due with your contract during the January/February re-enrollment period prior to the next school year.

Lost or Damaged School Property: Parents are responsible for replacing lost or damaged school property that was in their child's care. This includes, but is not limited to, all textbooks, workbooks, library books and tablet computers.

Special Fees: Parents will be advised of optional special fees (e.g., school pictures, book clubs, etc.) through notices sent home with the children or emailed to parents.

FOOD POLICY

A. Lunch

All students, including those in Preschool and Junior Kindergarten “Lunch Bunch”, must bring a lunch from home in their own lightweight insulated bags or boxes. Lunches may not be shared and items should be those that the child can open on his/her own or with minimal adult assistance. Milk may be purchased through the school by completing the Milk Order Form. Please do not send fast food, carbonated beverages, or candy in your child’s lunch box. In addition, due to the high sodium and sugar content, Lunchables are not recommended. If a lunch is forgotten, the child will be given an opportunity to telephone a parent to request that the lunch box - not fast food - be brought to the school. In the event this is not possible, the school will provide the child with a replacement.

In order to minimize trash and to set an environmentally responsible example for our students, we encourage parents to use reusable containers when packing their child's lunch. We do have the students recycle and compost any of their lunch that is not reusable. We also encourage students to take home items that they say they do not like so parents can see what is not eaten and discuss this with their child.

This year, students will eat lunch in their individual classrooms or outside and not in the traditional Grace Cafe to avoid large group gatherings. We will reassess when health and safety protocols allow.

B. Snack Philosophy

Grace Episcopal School tries to offer children a variety of food experiences. Don't be afraid to offer items that may be new or unusual. Fruits such as kiwi, fresh pineapple or pomegranate, for example, may be a new and pleasant experience for many children. Children will frequently try things along with their peers at school that they would refuse on the dinner table at home. We hear this comment from parents all the time that their children only eat a certain food item at school—positive peer pressure!

This year, the school will provide snacks in PS/JK/K. Parents will not be asked to volunteer a snack for the group. Students in Grades One through Five must pack a snack each day as well as their lunch.

Although snacks should not be considered a full-scale meal, we have found that children are quite hungry by snack time. Offering a variety of items seems to work best. For example, some favorite snacks are small bagels with cream cheese along with individual boxes of raisins, or slices of cheddar cheese with crackers and a banana.

We realize that it is impossible to avoid all fats, sugars, additives, etc. but do try to make your choices as "health-wise" as possible. And one last suggestion: Include your child in planning their snack. This can be a lot of fun and gives your child some experience in making good nutritional choices. Children are more likely to eat those things they have helped to prepare!

C. Snacks

Nutritious snacks are served to all Preschool, Junior Kindergarten, and Kindergarten children mid-morning. Children in Grades 1 - 5 may bring mid-morning snacks - cheese, fresh fruit and vegetables. Canned foods, food in thermoses, and non-breakable thermal containers or food which must be eaten with a spoon are not appropriate on the playground and, therefore, should not be provided as snacks

Parents will not be asked to send in snacks for the entire class this year; this guideline refers

to birthday snacks as well. We ask parents to save these treats for at-home celebrations.

Food Restrictions:

- Because of food allergies, please refrain from bringing peanut, peanut butter or tree nuts as snacks. (See Food Allergies below.)
- No fruit drinks. For the PS-K students, water or unsweetened fruit juices are served at snack time.
- If you choose a snack that requires a spoon or fork, you must provide those utensils for your child.

D. Food Allergies

The first floor (PS/JK/K) and PS/JK/K Extended Care will be peanut and tree nut free. Some food allergies can create life-threatening situations within minutes. Some of the worst food allergies are related to peanuts, tree nuts, dairy products, eggs, soy, wheat, fish, and shell-fish. Depending on the type and severity of an allergy in a classroom, a specific class may need to restrict the types of food allowed into the classroom for snacks, classroom parties and lunches. This will be communicated at the start of the school year by the school office and the classroom teachers.

THE GRACE EPISCOPAL SCHOOL DRESS CODE

A. School Uniform Policy for all Students in Preschool – Grade 5

Students must adhere to the full Grace Episcopal School uniform policy during school hours; this applies to students who may need to join class virtually due to covid restrictions.

Girls must wear navy or khaki walking shorts, capris, long pants, jumpers, skirts, or skorts. When ordering uniforms from Land's End, parents may also purchase jumpers, skirts and skorts in the "Classic Navy Large Plaid", as well as "mesh polo dresses" in either navy or red. Socks and tights must match and need to be a solid red, white, navy, or black. Only solid red, white, navy or black running leggings may be worn under a skirt or jumper, but may not be worn alone, in lieu of pants or shorts. Shorts, jumpers, skirts and skorts must be at least mid-thigh in length. Girls must also wear long or short sleeved collared shirts in the style of knit polo, oxford, peter pan or turtleneck. All oxford and peter pan shirts should be white. Oxford or peter pan blouses should be worn under a jumper. Polo and turtleneck styles may be either white, classic red, or navy. All shirts, jumpers, skirts, shorts, and skorts must be free of any brand logos except for the GES crest. The application of the GES crest on shirts, jumpers, skirts, shorts, and skorts is purely optional.

Boys must wear only navy or khaki walking shorts or long pants. Socks must match and need to be a solid red, white, navy, or black. They must also wear only long or short sleeved collared shirts in the style of knit polo, oxford or turtleneck shirts. All oxford shirts should be white. Polo and turtleneck styles may be either white, classic red, or navy. All shirts must be free of any brand logos except for the GES crest. The application of the GES crest on shirts is purely optional.

B. GES Sweater/Sweatshirt Policy

1. Grades 1 - 5

All students in Grades 1-5 are required to have one Grace Episcopal School crested red or navy sweater. Parents order this sweater, as well as other "crested" items of clothing directly from Land's

End. Only red or navy Grace Episcopal School crested sweaters and crested sweatshirts may be worn in class. Any red or navy blue sweater from Land's End is permissible except for the following styles:

“Hooded Cable Cardigan” or “V-Neck Cardigan with pockets” (style #393739-3TX or #393739-3T2)

All other “uniform” clothing may be purchased from the store of your choice. Please put your child's name on their sweaters and sweatshirts before they wear them to school. There is a cloth label provided by the manufacturer in the inseam of the sweater for their name. The Grace Episcopal School crest is purely optional on any other piece of uniform clothing.

Please note that the Land's End “Preferred School Code” for Grace Episcopal School is 900033168.

2. Preschool, Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten

Please note that all children in Preschool, Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten who wish to wear a sweater or sweatshirt in the classroom may wear a plain red or navy sweater or sweatshirt.

C. Policy for all Students in Preschool – Grade 5

Student clothing must be neat, clean and free of any brand logos. Shirts should be tucked in. Torn or faded clothing is unacceptable. Inappropriate language, symbols, and advertising on clothing are forbidden. Students may not adorn their uniforms or bodies with unusual jewelry or accoutrements, and we suggest leaving all valuable jewelry at home. Parents of students wearing inappropriate clothing may be called to notify them of the violation, or to ask them to bring appropriate clothing, or to ask them to pick up the child from school.

For health and safety reasons, students may not wear scarves, bandanas/kerchiefs or hats in the school building. A head covering worn for religious observance is permitted.

Hair accessories (such as bows and headbands) must be our Classic Navy Large Plaid, black, red, white, or navy blue and should be minimal and not distract from the uniform.

Under Armour or like garments, long underwear, etc. should not be noticeable while in uniform attire. Cool temps allow for students to wear long-sleeved uniform shirts and school sweaters. Regarding clothing worn under the uniform attire, it may not show or have the appearance of the layered look.

All students must wear rubber soled athletic shoes (ie. sneakers or tennis shoes). These shoes must be fastened with either velcro or shoe laces, or be well-fitted slip-ons with side elastic panels. Party shoes, mary janes, clogs, sandals, ballet slippers, flats, cowboy boots, “cros”, “mules”, “jellies” and “flip-flops” should not be worn to school, by any student. All students must wear athletic shoes for PE. Please note that a student's solid red, white, navy, or black socks must match, and that shoelaces must be tied at all times. It is advisable to wear solid red, white, navy, or black tights, or solid red, white, navy or black leggings, shorts, or bike pants under skirts or jumpers for recess and PE.

D. Policy for Students in Physical Education (PE)

All students must wear rubber-soled, athletic shoes for PE. Students are encouraged to wear pants or shorts on PE days.

E. Face Masks

Students in PS through Grade 5 are required to wear a face mask. Each day, a child should arrive at school in a clean face mask (with two extra masks in their bags) and expect to wear it all day to minimize any

community spread of COVID-19. The face mask should be free of features that will distract from the classroom setting. Plain masks are ideal, and parents should avoid masks with wording or masks that resemble costumes. The School reserves the right to have a child change to a plain face mask (extras will be stocked in the office) if the one a child is wearing is causing a distraction.

E. Makeup/Cosmetics/Hair Dye

Students are not permitted to wear makeup/cosmetics/hair dye while in school.

F. Policy on Free Dress Days

On Free Dress Days, students need to wear neat and clean clothing that is free of inappropriate language and symbols; no costumes. Students must wear rubber-soled shoes on Free Dress Days. Sandals, ballet slippers, flip-flops, cowboy boots, etc. are not permitted. Please refer to Section A of the Dress Code for details.

G. Crazy Dress

“Crazy Dress” is defined as wearing mismatched items, items worn backwards, unusual combinations of patterns, or pajamas. It does not include costumes, dyed hair, wigs, hats, make up, fake blood/gore and any type of toy weapons.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

A. School Supplies

Most supplies are provided by the school, and when feasible, each child will have his/her own set of supplies (crayons, markers, glue stick, etc.). You will receive a list of any other required school supplies from your child’s teacher.

B. School Bags

All Preschool, Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten students are required to have tote bags (not backpacks) for homework and carrying papers. Grace Episcopal School tote bags are provided to new students in Preschool, Junior Kindergarten, and Kindergarten.

All students in Grades 1-5 must have a backpack. School notices, papers, etc. will be sent home on a periodic basis in folders. Please check the folder, and remove, retain, and read the contents each night. Return the folder to your child’s bag for future use.

C. Clothing

Preschool, Junior Kindergarten, and Kindergarten children must have an extra set of clothes at school in case of accidents. All clothing must be labeled with the child’s name.

It is often cooler in the classroom and outside than you might imagine. Thus, all Preschool children must have a long-sleeved sweater to be kept at school for days when it is chilly. All children in Grades 1-5 may only wear their crested sweater or sweatshirt in the classroom.

In cold weather, all children need jackets, boots, gloves or mittens and hats. **Please label all clothing, boots, crested sweaters, and personal items with the child’s name.**

D. Blankets

Preschool and Junior Kindergarten children in Extended Care must bring a small, lightweight blanket that

can cover them for naptime. Clean sheets (washed weekly) are provided by the school for PS cots, and JK will rest on mats that will be sanitized before use. Blankets will be sent home each day for laundering or exchange for a clean blanket for the next day.

E. Forbidden Items

All toys and stuffed animals should be kept at home or in the car. Rollerblades, skateboards, electronic games and gadgets, playing or trading cards of any kind, makeup, cell phones, i-pods or other home electronic devices, real or toy weapons, and other hazardous toys are forbidden at school or on school grounds. These items will be confiscated and parents will be notified immediately. Further action may be warranted. **Do not let your child bring these items to school for any reason.**

DISCIPLINE

A. Bullying

Bullying will not be tolerated. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Any student who believes that he/she has been the victim of bullying should report the incident to their teacher. Any student found to have engaged in bullying will be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions, which may include suspension or expulsion.

B. Discipline System

A positive approach is taken in managing children's behavior. When situations arise, faculty members try to redirect the child(ren) using positive reinforcement and encouragement to help resolve problems. Inappropriate language and physical punishment are not permitted. The following explains both Grace Episcopal School's philosophy and the standards and procedures for disciplinary action:

The purpose of any disciplinary action is to help a child see how he/she behaved inappropriately and how he/she could better handle such situations in the future. By responding clearly, consistently, and without undue delay, the faculty and administration can help students understand the importance of limits.

Parents' cooperation in reinforcing proper conduct is critically important. Students must know that their parents respect both school rules and the judgment of school personnel. The values we uphold require parents to be partners in the development of a sense of responsibility and respect for others.

The primary agents for disciplinary actions are the faculty members, as they know the students best and are most likely to have first-hand exposure to the conduct prompting disciplinary actions. Teachers are responsible for the determination of facts and for the selection and implementation of responses. Dialogue with the parents is always encouraged. It is through talking about and/or discussing the misconduct with the teacher and the parent that we hope a student learns from wrongdoing and is able to go forward in growth and to help others from making a similar mistake.

Minor disciplinary problems will be handled by the teacher in charge. However, if the student's behavior does not improve, intensifies, or risks harming others, the parent will be contacted. A parent conference may be requested by the teacher, school personnel or Head of School, and classroom observation may also be recommended.

The development of a continuing pattern of misbehavior can become a serious concern. In this case, a referral for further evaluation may be necessary. A history of serious disciplinary difficulties can constitute

grounds for probation, suspension, or dismissal from the school.

On occasion, a child may not be a good fit for the school. In this case, efforts will be made to determine a more appropriate educational setting. Grace Episcopal School reserves the right, however, not to renew contracts for serious and/or continuous disciplinary problems.

If at any point a child's behavior is deemed to be a danger to others or grossly unacceptable, immediate action may be required. A parent could be asked to remove the child immediately, or a student could be placed on probation, suspended, or be expelled from the school. The School Board would be advised of such action. The specific amount of time or recommendation for permanent removal would be determined by the Head of School, in conjunction with the appropriate advisory groups, including the faculty and the School Board.

Upon the recommendation of faculty, the Admissions Committee, and Head of School, a contract for the following year may be withheld. Although extremely difficult for all concerned, withholding a contract sometimes is a necessary means of helping a student learn that standards of behavior are real and meaningful, and are in the best interest of a student, and/or of the school as a whole.

C. Particularly during the COVID-19 Pandemic, our community is only as safe as the actions of its members. If the choices of a student or parent puts the greater community at risk, the Head of School may require the student to move to a virtual learning opportunity.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

A. Curriculum

The Curriculum and Faculty Profiles of Grace Episcopal School are available on the school website: www.graceschoolalex.org.

B. Individual Accommodations

1. Faculty at Grace Episcopal School routinely make appropriate accommodations for their students. These include:

- Environmental accommodations such as preferential seating for visual or auditory input;
- Academic accommodations such as cuing, restating, checking/directing, alternative forms of evaluation to more accurately promote and assess learning; and
- Emotional accommodations such as encouragement, reward, personal support, referrals, teaching alternative reactions, communicating with parents and concerned others as needed.

2. The academic program at Grace Episcopal School operates as a group process for all children with such individual accommodations as may be both appropriate and feasible. Specifically:

- Minor curriculum modifications and/or accommodations may be both appropriate and feasible. These might include reading selections based on study interest, variety of culminating projects to assess learning, permitting computer use for students requiring manual assistance for optimal performance, assistive devices such as number lines to facilitate learning and the like.
- Major curriculum modifications and/or accommodations are neither feasible nor appropriate. These might include removing or restructuring significant portions of any subject area, eliminating homework, individual or group projects, or tests.

3. The faculty at Grace Episcopal School has primary responsibility for managing classroom activities so

that optimal learning occurs for each child in the group. Specifically:

- Assignments, rewards, reprimands, and evaluations are the professional domain of the classroom
- teacher working in concert with the mission of the institution.
- Management of the social and emotional climate of the classroom is within the professional domain of the classroom teacher working in concert with the mission of the institution.
- Specific requests for management accommodations/modifications which require faculty time and effort beyond the usual activities of the classroom are neither feasible nor appropriate.
- In rare cases, the accommodation/modification might be feasible using outside resources provided by the parent. Parental assistance, additional faculty, and therapist prepared materials are examples of such collaboration.

4. The faculty of Grace Episcopal School welcomes collaboration from concerned professionals outside of the institution. All reports, recommendations, and suggestions are treated professionally and studied carefully to determine how such information might be used to better the educational opportunities available within the group process.

TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

We recognize the unique and vital learning experiences that technology offers to students. At Grace Episcopal School, we employ carefully-monitored, age-appropriate technology tools that help nurture each child's character and social development in addition to their academic progress. Our policies on the use of technology are guided by our school's five Character Keys of Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Compassion, and Courage.

Faculty, staff, and students regularly employ a wide variety of technology products in order to strengthen and expand our learning environment. Our hardware includes, but is not limited to: Windows-based desktop and laptop computers, Apple OS-based desktop and laptop computers, Chromebooks, iPads, printers, SMART Boards, and wireless routers. We use a number of both licensed and free software products, such as Microsoft Office, Typing Agent, Safari, Chrome, and Google's G Suite for Education. Furthermore, students in Grades Two through Five are given email accounts that can only communicate with their teachers.

Grace Episcopal School provides access to the Internet through a password-protected Wireless Area Network (WAN). The school employs both hardware and software tools in order to filter and monitor Internet use on campus, and students may go online only under the direct supervision of a teacher. While we take reasonable precautions to protect our digital community, no system is perfect. We expect our students to notify their teachers if they come across inappropriate material, and to do so without sharing such material with their friends and fellow students. It is our hope that families will adopt similar policies regarding Internet usage at home, including monitoring online behavior and taking steps to protect children from inappropriate content.

Students should have no expectation of privacy with regard to their use of school-owned technology tools at any time, either on- or off-campus. All devices are registered and tracked, with items collected, wiped, and inventoried at the conclusion of each academic year.

Students are given age-appropriate lessons on Digital Citizenship throughout their time at Grace Episcopal School. In addition, at the beginning of each school year, students are asked to sign a Responsible Use Policy agreement that outlines expectations of behavior regarding technology.

A. School Character Keys for Technology - Responsible Use Policy Agreement for Kindergarten - Grade 2

Honesty

- I will tell my teacher when I find a piece of technology that is broken or not working correctly.
- If I find something on my computer or iPad that someone my age is not supposed to see, I will tell my parent or my teacher. I will not share what I have found with my classmates.
- I will use school technology, including iPads and computers, to do school work only.

Respect

- I will be a kind person when I am using technology. I will never use an iPad, a computer, or any other technology to hurt my family, my classmates, or my school.
- I will follow the same rules of behavior online that I do in person.
- I will take a break when using technology makes me feel frustrated or angry.

Responsibility

- I will be careful whenever I am using technology. I will use both hands to pick up and carry an iPad or a computer. I will never carry a computer by the screen.
- I will put my device back the way I found it when I am finished using it.
- I will protect myself online. I will not use technology to share information about myself or anyone else without permission from my teacher or my parents.
- I will remember that anything I do with a computer, an iPad, or other technology could be seen by my teachers, my parents, my classmates and even by strangers.

Compassion

- I will be friendly and helpful to other students who are using technology.
- I will remember that each person learns new things differently. I will show compassion and patience for my classmates.

Courage

- If I ever see anyone using technology to hurt someone or something, I will tell a grown-up right away.
- I will practice patience and have a good attitude when I am learning something with technology that is new or difficult.
- I will ask for help when I am having a tough time using a computer or an iPad.

B. School Character Keys for Technology - Responsible Use Policy Agreement for Grades 3, 4 & 5

Honesty

- I will tell my teacher as soon as I discover that my Chromebook or another piece of technology is broken or not working correctly.
- I will make sure that the information I gather and use from online resources is factually correct.

- I will accurately cite online resources, including pictures, sound recordings, videos, and writing. I will not pass someone else's work off as my own.
- If I find something on my Chromebook or other school technology that someone my age is not supposed to see, I will tell my parent or my teacher. I will not share what I have found with my classmates.
- I will use my Chromebook and other school technology for school work only.

Respect

- I will be a kind person when I am using technology. I will never use my Chromebook or any other technology to hurt my family, my classmates, or my school.
- I will follow the same rules of behavior online that I do in person.
- I will not use swear words or other rude language.
- I will respect the privacy of my classmates. I will not take their picture or use their information without their permission. I will not ask for or seek out my classmates' usernames or passwords.
- I will take a break when using technology makes me feel frustrated or angry.
- I will not intentionally damage school technology or anyone else's work.

Responsibility

- I will be careful whenever I am using technology. I will use both hands to pick up and carry my Chromebook. I will never carry my Chromebook or any other computer by the screen.
- I will put my device back the way I found it when I am finished using it, including logging out.
- I will protect myself online. I will not use technology to share information about myself or anyone else without permission from my teacher or my parents.
- I will use proper spelling and punctuation.
- Whenever I bring my Chromebook home, I will charge it overnight before returning it to school.

Compassion

- I will be mindful of how my work could be viewed by others. I will remember that anything I do with a computer, an iPad, or other technology could be seen by my teachers, my parents, my classmates and even by strangers.
- I will be friendly and nonjudgmental with other students who ask for my help with technology.
- I will help classmates when I am available and able. If I cannot help my classmate, I will kindly ask him or her to ask another classmate or our teacher for help.
- I will remember that each person learns new things differently. I will show compassion and patience for my classmates.

Courage

- If I ever see anyone using technology to hurt someone or something, I will tell a grown-up right away.

- I will ask for help if I feel unsafe or bullied or if I witness unkind behavior.
- I will practice patience and have a good attitude when I am learning something with technology that is new or difficult.

GENERAL POLICIES

A. Birthdays and “Half Birthdays”

Teachers will celebrate a child’s birthday (or half-birthday in the case of summer birthdays) with classroom traditions like a birthday hat, sticker, pencil, etc. **We ask that parents do NOT send in any special birthday snacks this year; instead, families should save these special treats for parties at home.**

B. Carpools

If you are participating in a carpool, please give the School office a signed statement listing the people who will be transporting your child. This information must be kept current. Please note that insurance agents recommend a minimum of \$300,000 liability insurance if you are transporting children. If you transport children other than your own, you may want to talk to your insurance agent about the viability of your also carrying an umbrella policy which might give you coverage of at least \$1,000,000. All children under the age of eight (8) must be properly restrained in a child safety seat or booster seat. There must be a seatbelt for each child in the car and it must be used.

C. Custody of Children

If only one parent has custody of the child, please file a copy of the court records with the school office. Be sure to discuss the matter with your child’s teacher, the Extended Care teacher, if appropriate, and the Head of School. On a need to know basis, this information may be shared with the other faculty. Please note that non-custodial parents are given full access to the school and the child’s records unless we have on file a court order limiting such non - custodial rights.

D. Opportunities for Parent Communications and Feedback

Effective and constructive communication between the parents, faculty, administration and School Board is a top priority for Grace Episcopal School. Parents may communicate, as necessary, with the faculty through scheduled teacher conferences, written communications, voice mail, and the annual parent survey. In addition, the Parents Association and the School Board provide numerous forums throughout the year for parent communication and participation. Grace Episcopal School values parent feedback and support.

E. School Projects

Periodically, Kindergarten - Grade 5 students are required to submit projects related to the curriculum for grading and/or exhibition. Students must comply with class rules for projects and exhibits. While encouragement and guidance from parents is welcome, all projects must be done by the student. If you have questions about your role as a parent, please talk to your child’s teachers.

F. Homework Assignments

It is essential to teach students to be responsible for taking homework assignments home and bringing completed work back to school. While encouragement and guidance from parents is welcome, all homework must be done by the student. If you have questions about your role as a parent, please talk to your child’s

teachers.

Children may not return to their classrooms to retrieve homework after they have been dismissed for the day.

If a prolonged excused absence is anticipated, parents may call the school and ask for homework assignments, as well as necessary books and workbooks. Please allow time for the message to be delivered to the teacher by the administrative staff, and for the teacher to prepare the materials to be picked up. The homework assignments may be picked up from school personnel at the glass front doors between the hours of 9 am-3 pm (buzz the school office upon arrival) unless other arrangements have been made in advance.

G. “Show and Tell”

The faculty reserves the right to preview all show-and-tell items. Parents should work with their children to determine what is an appropriate show-and-tell item to share with their classmates. We encourage parents to talk with their child’s teacher prior to class if there are any questions about what items are appropriate.

H. Screenings, School Transcripts, Reports, and Forms

In the past, GES has contracted personnel to administer vision, hearing, speech and language, and occupational therapy (OT) screenings to all students in Preschool, Junior Kindergarten, and Kindergarten at predetermined intervals. If the School determines safe protocols can be put in place (ie. virtual screening, outdoor screenings, etc.), screenings may be offered. Parents will be alerted to any screening plans in advance and will have the ability to opt out if safety concerns outweigh the screening desire. The results and any applicable recommendations will be given to both the parents and GES.

School transcripts, reports, testing, and forms normally kept in the Grace Episcopal School files for each student will be sent directly to other schools, camps, etc. at the written request of the parent. Parents must submit written releases to the office when requesting this. All teacher recommendations or assessments are confidential and cannot be released directly to the parents. Please give the office several days to prepare and forward these requests. Official transcripts will not be issued for any student with an outstanding financial obligation to the school.

I. Supplemental Testing and Screening

In order to provide the best school services possible, the faculty periodically consults with specialists or requests that parents arrange for supplemental testing and/or screening for their child. During the course of such consultations and tests/screening, children may be observed in the classroom by specialists and may be the subject of confidential conversations. All test results, either suggested by faculty or other specialists, must be provided to Grace Episcopal School. Failure to disclose supplemental testing and/or screening may result in cancellation of the enrollment contract. No special accommodations will be given without proper documentation in the student’s file.

J. Progress Reports and Conferences

Report Cards for Preschool- Grade 5 are issued three times a year. Scheduled conferences are held with parents in November and optional conferences are offered to parents in the spring. Please check your calendar for the exact dates. Please note that teachers may need to schedule additional conference days (these conferences may be held virtually).

A parent-teacher conference is a time for you to get to know your child’s teacher and to learn about the overall progress of your child. It is also a wonderful opportunity to talk about your child’s interests and challenges, as well as helping to build strong, supportive connections between home and school. Please do not bring your children into your parent-teacher in-person or virtual conference.

You may request additional conferences with your child’s teacher during the year. If concerns should arise,

early communication with the proper person about your concerns is always encouraged. Please approach the teacher first. You may request a conference with the Head of School, if you have first met with the teacher. Team conferences can be arranged.

L. School Psychologist

Please contact the school office if you wish to schedule a 30-minute appointment with our school psychologist.

M. Lost and Found

The school will do its best to return lost and found articles to the appropriate child. It is imperative for parents to label clothes with the child's name to assist us in this effort. If a valuable item (glasses, retainer, etc.) is lost, please alert the school office and we will do our best to search for the item.

N. Accident Insurance

The school carries limited accident insurance on our enrolled children.

O. Visitors

Only essential visitors will be allowed into the School during school hours this year.

P. Notices and Flyers

All letters, emails, flyers, notices (including Room Parent notices), and advertisements to school families must be approved by the Head of School or Assistant Head of School before distribution or posting in the school. Send your request via email to office@graceschoolalex.org. Please allow 24 hours advance notice for approval.

Q. Child Abuse Reporting

All staff members of the school are mandatory reporters of child abuse. We are required by law to report suspected abuse.

R. Use of the Grace Episcopal School Logo

The official Grace Episcopal School logo may only be used or reproduced with the prior permission of the Head of School.

HEALTH POLICY

A. Attendance

The Commonwealth of Virginia requires Kindergarten and Elementary School children to be in school every day unless they are ill. (Medical appointments are an exception.) Regular attendance is equally important for Preschool and Junior Kindergarten children.

On entering school each day, all children will have their temperatures taken. Children must be fever free before taking any fever reducing medications to enter or remain at school (under 100 degrees).

B. Is your child too ill to come to school?

If you suspect anyone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms, STAY HOME and alert the school. Please err on the side of caution and keep children home if you suspect any symptom as it protects our whole community.

If COVID-19 is suspected, contact your primary care provider for advice. You may also wish to call the Alexandria Health Department's Covid Hotline at 703.746.4988.

Furthermore, if your child acts listless, drowsy or headachy, has a flushed face, a runny nose with thick mucus, lack of appetite, or shows any behavior that is noticeably out of the ordinary, you should keep your child at home. Please be considerate of others and help us prevent the spread of infections throughout the school. If in doubt as to whether your child should come to school, please call your pediatrician.

IN ADDITION TO COVID SYMPTOMS, YOUR CHILD MUST STAY HOME IF HE/SHE HAS:

- A fever of 100 degrees or higher for any reason
- An unexplained skin eruption or rash
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Pinworms

RETURN TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES:

- The Alexandria Health Department has advised the School that a child showing any **new** symptoms that could be related to COVID-19 can only return to school if:
 - The child sees a physician who gives a written note that says the child can return to school and is fever free for 24 hours before the day of return.

OR

 - The child stays home for ten consecutive days before returning and is fever free for 24 hours before the day of return.

OR

 - The child has a negative covid test result and is fever free for 24 hours before the day of return; documentation of negative test result must be shared with the school office.
- **In the case of a positive Covid diagnosis for the student or someone in the child's family, the School will contact the Health Department and follow/communicate the guidelines given.** Depending on level of contact, the Health Department may require up to fourteen days of quarantine of the child. Health Department advice will be sought regarding each individual case and the Health Department will determine when that child can return to school.

D. Head Lice

Head lice are small insects that infest the human hair, and their silvery-white to brown-colored, oval-shaped eggs are called nits. Head lice are highly contagious and can be very common in group settings. Head lice should not lead to any serious medical problems. If a student has head lice, the family should report this to

the school office and the child's teacher. Lice treatment should be started immediately along with the removal of nits. Once treatment is started, a student may return to school. It is important to note that lice and nit patrol must continue for a minimum of 2 weeks after the initial treatment. If you have questions, please contact your pediatrician.

E. Medication Procedure

1. Over-the-Counter Medication

If your child is to be given non-prescription medication (including cough drops) by the school for a short period of time (no longer than 10 days), we must have a signed Parental Consent for Medication Form. This form is available on the School website (www.graceschoolalex.org), or from the office.

2. Prescription Medication

If your child is to be given prescription medication for any length of time, or non-prescription medication for longer than 10 days, we must have:

- Written authorization from the prescribing physician (a copy of the prescription with signature will suffice); and
- A signed Parental Consent for Medication Form. This form is available on the school website and **must be completed by a physician** in order for any prescription drug to be kept at the school and administered to your child.

All medication must be in the original container from the pharmacist and be current. The prescription label, with the student's name, dates, name of the medication, dosage, times to be given, and the physician's name, must be on the container.

Children may not have over-the-counter or prescription medications in their possession at any time. All medication must be given to the office and will only be administered by MAT trained personnel.

F. Allergies and Sensitivities

Parents must provide the school office with an updated list of all of their child's allergies and sensitivities (food and non-food), prior to the beginning of every school year. If this list should change, please contact the school office.

G. Recess / P.E. policy

School and State regulations require children who are well enough to be in school to go outdoors for recess and P.E. in fair weather.

H. Incidents and Accidents

An accident report is completed when a minor accident occurs at school. In the event of a serious accident or an emergency, parents are contacted immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the School secures any medical attention deemed necessary. If needed, your child may be transported to the emergency room by ambulance.

I. Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Policy

If parents want sunscreen and/or insect repellent to be applied to their child, they must first fill out a Parental Consent for Medication Form. In the case of younger children (PS/JK), we suggest you apply

sunscreen at home before drop off time.

J. Pick-up of Sick Child

If the school feels your child is not well, you will be contacted at home or at work and asked to take your child from the school. State regulations require you to come to the school promptly. You must have on file an Emergency Information Form listing the names of 2 responsible adults who are available to pick up your child when he/she is ill if you are unavailable. An Emergency Contact needs to live/work close to the school and be able to pick up your child within an hour. Please keep this information up to date.

PARENTAL FORMS

We are required to keep various information forms in your child's file. These may seem repetitious to you, but keep in mind that these are valid forms, required for the protection of your child.

We appreciate your cooperation in completing these forms, and your help in keeping information on them current. It would be unfortunate if there were an emergency involving your child and we could not locate you. The following forms are available on the School website (www.graceschoolalex.org).

- Changes to the GES Emergency Information Form
- Medications Consent Form
- Virginia School Entrance Health Form
- Milk Order Form

A. Emergency Information Form

This form is completed annually, and the information is vital to the smooth operation of the school. It must be kept up to date at all times with names of at least two other adults who may pick up your child within an hour. Please notify the office immediately of any changes. This information is critically important if we need to reach you in an emergency. The Commonwealth of Virginia requires this form.

B. Re-Enrollment Contract

A new re-enrollment contract, issued in January, is required each year, along with a re-enrollment fee. This is your commitment for the entire school year. Read it carefully. It is a legally binding document and becomes enforceable for the coming year on June 1.

C. Field Trips

We hope to allow limited field trips if/when School Administration deems safe for students.

D. Medical Form

A Virginia State Medical form with up-to-date immunization information must be on file before a child can begin classes at the start of each school year. This form must be completed and signed by your child's doctor and by you. Please check to be sure the physician notes the dates of each immunization. We recommend that parents keep a copy/photograph of this form.

E. Allergies and Sensitivities Form

Parents must provide the school office with an updated list of all of their child's allergies and sensitivities (food and non-food), prior to the beginning of every school year. If this list should change, please contact the school office.

F. Medication Consent Form

This form is available on the school website and must be completed by a physician in order for any prescription drug to be kept at the school and administered to your child.

G. Photography Release

The school enjoys taking photographs of our students. Photos may be displayed and be used for publicity purposes, including the School's web page and social media accounts. No names of students will be used. The blanket permission statement on the back of the Emergency Information Form must be signed by the parent. If you do not want your child photographed for certain purposes, please note this on the form.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

While not a traditional year, we still value parent interest and participation. Listed below are ways to express your positive interest and support:

- Room Parent
- Attendance at your child's teacher conferences
- Participant in loyalty programs like Amazon Prime, Target, etc.
- Virtual Reader in class at a pre-scheduled time
- Help with publicity
- Donations of nonperishable foods for collection
- Donations to the Annual Fund and/or Financial Aid Program
- Facility maintenance or equipment purchase
- Serve on the Parents Association Board

Please contact the school office or Parents Association to volunteer your services.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

A. Major Fundraising Opportunities

- Annual Giving Fund

The Annual Giving Fund is the most important source of revenue to the school after student tuition and fees. It is a vital part of the annual operating budget contributing to every part of Grace Episcopal School's operation. Donors can direct their funds to Greatest Need, Financial Aid, Faculty Development, Academic Programming and Technology, Art, Music, and Cultural Programming, and Facilities.

- Gala/Auction

The Gala/Auction is Grace's primary event based fundraiser. We traditionally hold the event in the fall, but we do not plan for this large gathering in 2021. We will reassess in 2022 to see if the Gala/Auction can be held in the spring either virtually or in person.

- Financial Aid Program

Since our school's founding in 1959, the financial aid program has been an integral part of the community outreach vision of both Grace Episcopal School and Grace Episcopal Church. The money raised each spring for financial aid will be awarded to families with demonstrated need for the following school year.

B. Back-to-School Night

In September, the school will conduct a Virtual Back-to-School Night for all parents. This event gives parents an opportunity to “visit” classrooms and learn about the curriculum plans for the current year. Virtual Back-to-School Night is for parents and teachers only. Please arrange for child care (even at home) so you can participate in this virtual meeting.

Virtual Back-to-School Night will be held on Monday, September 13 at 6:30 pm. Details will be shared by classroom teachers.

C. Service Learning Projects

Throughout the school year, numerous outreach projects are undertaken. These include canned food drives, Carpenter’s Shelter dinner delivery, clothing drives, and the Alive Walk for the Homeless. These service learning projects provide students with the important experience of helping others.

SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS

A. Web Page - www.GraceSchoolAlex.org

The Grace Episcopal School web page provides the community with an overview of our school and is an important part of our admissions recruitment process.

Be sure to check our school website for announcements and up-to-date school calendar information. The Parent and Student Handbook is available on the Parent Resources section of our web page. The Directory may only be accessed by logging on to the password-protected “My GES” portal on our website. To ensure privacy, a student’s name will not be published anywhere on our website that may be accessed by the general public.

B. The Weekly Grace and Classroom Weekly Newsletter

The Weekly Grace is an essential part of our communication plan. The Weekly Grace contains important information from our Head of School and school community, please read. Classroom teachers produce an electronic weekly newsletter. Please be sure to read the newsletter carefully and make a note of special announcements.

C. Parent and Student Handbook, Extended Care Handbook, and Directory

The Parent and Student Handbook and Directory is issued as a single publication and is available online. The Parent and Student Handbook should be read very carefully and kept handy for reference throughout the year.

The Parent and Student Handbook (without the Directory) is available on the Parent Resources section of our web page. The Directory portion may only be accessed on-line by logging on to the password-protected “My GES” portal on our website. Additions, deletions and changes will be made to the on-line Directory as necessary throughout the year, so it is vital that you notify the School Office of any changes to your contact information.

D. Policy for Proper Use of Student and Faculty Directories

The faculty and student directories of Grace Episcopal School are confidential. The information contained within them is for Grace Episcopal School purposes only. Use of these lists for any other purpose (such as promotional or commercial purposes) is strictly prohibited.

In addition, the use of the names “Grace Episcopal Church” or “Grace Episcopal School” in conjunction with any promotional or commercial venture without the permission of the Vestry of Grace Episcopal Church or the Head of School is prohibited by a church policy adopted by the Vestry, the governing board of Grace Episcopal Church.

E. School Yearbook

The Grace Episcopal School Yearbook, The Crest, is distributed at the end of the school year. Please contact the Grace Episcopal School office if you have any questions about this publication.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Overview

Grace Episcopal School has a Crisis Management Plan. This plan is reviewed periodically, and if the Crisis Management Team should need to take action, they will assemble in the Head of School’s office to decide the plan of action to take.

The actual Crisis Management Plan Handbook is lengthy and a copy is available in the school office for review. The administration, faculty, staff, and students review throughout the year procedures for the various crises that might occur during the school year. This review includes, but is not limited to, monthly fire drills, semi-annual shelter-in- place drills, and an annual review during in-service week. We also keep a supply of non-perishable food and bottled water in a sheltered area in the event that we need to enact a shelter-in-place scenario. It should also be noted that Grace Episcopal School has an agreement with St. Rita’s School at 3801 Russell Road, (703) 548- 1888, if we should have to vacate our property during the school day.

The following is the Table of Contents from the Crisis Management Plan Handbook. It lists the wide range of topics covered by the Crisis Management Plan.

- Crisis Management Team
- Reporting of the Existence of a Crisis
- Responding to the Crisis
- Snow Days, Weather and Other Major Emergencies
- Specific Crises
- Emergency Evacuation
- Alternate Evacuation Site
- Shelter in Place
- Chemical Exposure
- Utility Emergency
- Hazardous Material
- Accident/serious injury/illness
- Bomb Threat
- Death of School Family Member
- Field Trip Crisis
- Intruder
- Lost or Missing Child

- Pandemic/National Crisis
- Notification of Parents
- Media Plan

Appendices:

- Fire Marshal Approved Fire/Emergency Evacuation Procedures
- Fire Marshal Approved Bomb Threat/Scare Procedures
- Building Floor Plan
- The First 30 Minutes Manual
- FBI Advisory – Suspicious Letters/Parcels/Packages in the Mail
- ParentREACH User Guide

The safety, security and well-being of your children are of utmost importance to us. Please be assured that we will be diligent until the last student has safely left the building.

Public Statements Required by Dept. of Social Services of Religiously Exempt Child Day Centers

Licensing- Virginia Department of Social Services	Preschool, Junior Kindergarten and Extended Care Programs are exempt from licensing through religious exemption code § 63.2-1716.
Religious Exemption Documentation	Each year Grace Episcopal School files the necessary paperwork with the Virginia Department of Social Services to qualify for a religious exemption.
General Liability Insurance	Grace Episcopal School has public liability insurance to cover suits brought against the institution for personal or bodily harm suffered during the operation of the center as a result of negligence.
Staff Health Report	The school complies with the Virginia Department of Social Services request that our Preschool, Junior Kindergarten and Extended Care Staff be certified by a practicing physician or physician's assistant or licensed nurse practitioner to be free from any disability, which would prevent them from caring for children under their supervision.
Rooms Occupied	Grace Episcopal School has a 5-acre campus and shares the well-maintained building with Grace Episcopal Church. The school has the use of 23 rooms including Merrow Hall Auditorium, two playgrounds, one turf field, one large playing field, and one amphitheater. The outside play area for the students is securely enclosed by a fence.
Enrollment Capacity	The school will enroll no more than 130 students in the entire school for the school year. The Preschool and Junior Kindergarten classes will enroll no more than 22 students per class.
Snacks	Preschool and Junior Kindergarten snacks are provided by the parents and/or the school. The Extended Care snacks are provided by the school.
Lunches	Children bring their own lunch from home each day.

DISTANCE LEARNING OPTION WHILE SCHOOL CLASSROOMS OPEN

Throughout the year we are prepared if students need to move between in-classroom learning and distance learning. We will strive to meet the needs of our families and students in these transitions. The key to success is communication between parents and teachers. Thank you for recognizing the unique nature of this effort and for understanding that the teacher may need some time to adjust efforts until we feel satisfied with the progress of this program.

Supplies

- Parents may be asked to stop by the School for a curb-side pick up of necessary supplies for their student.
- Parents should prepare a healthy work environment for their students. This space should be free of distractions and food and mimic a classroom environment.
- Parents should be sure proper WiFi service will allow for sustained and robust connectivity. Students should wear uniforms to synchronous class meetings.

Technology

- Students in PS or JK will need to use a home device (iPad or Laptop). Teachers will share information about loading the Seesaw Platform that we will use to push virtual opportunities/lessons to students.
- Students in K-2 will receive an iPad to aid in instruction. These iPads will be loaded with Seesaw as well as other applications the classroom teachers will use.
- Students in 3-5 will receive a Chromebook to aid in instruction with the use of Google Classroom.

Possible Instructional Schedule if necessary for covid mitigation efforts:

- Students in distance learning models will not have PE instruction from the School. We are hopeful that families can find healthy alternatives to encourage outdoor play and exercise. If the whole school must pivot to distance learning, our PE teacher will post lessons each Friday.
- Synchronous
 - Students will be invited to join Morning Meeting via Zoom each day.
 - Teachers will give parents/students a schedule of curriculum blocks for Math, Language Arts and Science/Social Studies. Students are expected to join these teaching blocks via zoom. Depending on the daily instructional goals, students may be on zoom for the entire block or will engage in a short instructional lesson and then be told to work independently at home to finish an assignment.
 - In addition to the classroom instructional blocks, students will have an individual zoom meeting with the classroom teacher or teacher's aide a minimum of one time per week.
- Asynchronous
 - To support the lessons taught, teachers will post assignments to be completed independently.
 - All students will complete assignments posted each Friday by Specials Teachers.
 - Individual teachers will determine the best method of assessment for assignments of distance learning students as it will differ by grade level.
- Behavior Expectations
 - Student attendance will be taken at each synchronous block.
 - If a student's virtual environment becomes a distraction to the class, the session will be ended and the parent notified.
 - If a student uses technology improperly, the parent will be notified.

GES Extended Care Program

OVERVIEW OF THE EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

The Extended Care program will begin as a modest offering to families due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our desire to keep children in small cohorts throughout the day and the need for proper supervision of children requires us to begin with a smaller program in the fall.

The School offers morning care to pre-registered students in PS-5 and after school care for children in PS - Grade 5. Morning Care begins at 7:30 a.m. and after school care begins at noon and runs until 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday during the school year. The Extended Care Program follows the school calendar. There are no refunds if school is closed, or when a child does not attend school. The exception to this refund policy is if the entire school is required to move to distance learning for 30 days or more.

The Extended Care Program follows the same behavior and discipline policies in place during the school day.

ENROLLMENT, FEES, AND PAYMENTS

The Extended Care Fee is for the full school year and is payable in full, directly to Grace Episcopal School, or in eight (7) equal payments through Smart Tuition Management (September through March). Any family purchasing an annual Extended Care Program by the day may not substitute days because of any school closures, planned or unplanned, or child's absence from school.

Drop-In Extended Care will **not** be offered to begin 2021-2022. We will reassess throughout the year.

A. Morning Extended Care

Morning Extended Care operates for the entire school year with the exception of school holidays or staff professional days.

Hours of Operation: 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

B. After-School Extended Care

After-School Extended Care operates for the entire school year, with the exception of school holidays or staff professional days. There are two after school programs: Lunch Bunch Extended Care and After-School Extended Care.

Lunch Bunch Extended Care starts at 12:00 p.m. and is for children in the Preschool or Junior Kindergarten programs. After-School Extended Care starts at 3:15 p.m. and is open until 4:30 p.m.

FEES: Available through Business and Admissions Offices or can be found on the Grace Parent Portal.

C. Contact Information for Alison Kindler, Director of Auxiliary Programs.

The email for the Director of Auxiliary Programs is: ecdirector@graceschoolalex.org or call 703.549.5067.

GRACE EPISCOPAL SCHOOL VOICEMAIL SYSTEM

Grace Episcopal School values and encourages parent communications. Parents may communicate, as necessary, with the faculty and administration through scheduled (virtual) conferences, written communications, the annual parent survey, and voicemail.

The administrative office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. School personnel will answer the telephone and door buzzer during administrative hours. If there is no answer during the regular or Extended Care day and you are calling about a change in plans, please do not leave a message on the voicemail; instead, please keep calling — the staff may be escorting a child to a classroom.

Please be sure to speak directly with a staff member if you have an emergency message. Do not rely on voicemail.

If there is a dire emergency and no one answers the school telephone (703-549-5067), call the church office at 703-549-1980 between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

At all other times please leave a voicemail message: faculty and staff will return your call within 24 hours. When leaving a voicemail message, please be sure to state your name and telephone number(s) so that the faculty and staff may return your call. We request that you do not call the faculty and administration at home.

When calling any of the phone extensions listed below, you must first dial 703-549-5067.

Name	Extension	Name	Extension
Administration + School Office		Mitlo, Cindy	105
Front Desk	130	Mohammad, Susu	113
Byrnes, Julia	115	Mon, Jennifer	130
Calaman, Beth	101	Mukashova, Kamila	108
Culbreth, Patti	131	Orellana-Montano, Thalia	113
Entwisle, Ashley	130	Palacio, Miguel	130
Holland, Mary Kate	113/106	Salisbury, Debbie	104
Hungerford, Amanda	117	Sayles, Tera	108/113
Kindler, Alison	116	Strohl, Benjamin	130
Miller, Susan	106	Vogus, Heather	104
		Wheeler, Hannah	105
Teachers + Staff		Extended Care	
Battifora, Pierina	108	Extended Care	130
Brittingham, Ashley	110		
Cote, Lyndi	111		
Duncan, Dani	103		
Fraley, Elisabeth	130	School Office	
Garbla, Mosheh	109	703-549-5067	
Heraud, Kayla	111		
Holland, Mary Kate	113/106	School Fax	
Johnson, Diane	107	703-549-9545	
Longo-Knowles, Aida	130		
Lynch, Claire	109	Grace Church	
		703-549-1980	

COVID-19 Mitigation Plan

2021-2022

Task Force

Patti Culbreth, Head of School
Amanda Hungerford, Assistant Head of School
Julia Byrnes, Director of Admissions
Mary Kate Holland, Director of Early Childhood Programs
Dani Duncan, IT Specialist
Ben Stroh, Director of Maintenance
Jan Wolff, School Board Chair

Point Person: Patti Culbreth; pculbreth@graceschoolalex.org; 703-549-5067

Advisors:

Ms. Lina Zimmerman, RN, Epidemiologist at Alexandria Health Department
Ms. Emily Astorga, Public Health Nurse and School Liaison, Alexandria Health Department
Sarah Schwartz, Schwartz Hannum PC
Independent School Organizations: VAIS, ISM, AISGW
Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

Introduction

The success of our school must be a community effort. Grace always supports and takes care of one another, particularly when we are adapting to new circumstances. If we put the needs of the greater community above our own, we are truly living the character keys of Grace and have a much better chance of success and continued good health during the school year. As with any shared space, the school cannot offer a 100% guarantee of health and safety. However, as outlined in this COVID-19 Mitigation Plan, we are taking comprehensive steps to protect our students, faculty, staff and families, while keeping students as engaged in the learning process as possible. Thank you for reviewing this information, and as appropriate, sharing it with your children.

We currently plan to begin the School year on Tuesday, September 7. School will be in session, Monday through Friday, 8:30-3:15. Parents should be prepared to send their children back to in-person learning. The School will stand ready to pivot to distance learning for an individual, a cohort or the entire student body if recommended by public health officials and/or the Governor or Bishop to move to virtual learning due to covid restrictions.

As might be expected, there may be occasions where this COVID-19 Mitigation Plan is inconsistent with the policies in the Parent and Student Handbook and the Employee Handbook. To the extent that there are inconsistencies, community members should adhere to this COVID-19 Mitigation Plan throughout the duration of the pandemic and until otherwise noted by the School. We will continue to monitor and adjust our plans and protocols based on the newest guidance from health and community experts. The School will endeavor to notify families of updates to plans and protocols as soon as practicable.

I. Local Public Health Conditions

- A. The Virginia Department of Education encourages schools to offer in-person instruction while implementing a layered mitigation effort.

- B. The School Administrative Team serves as the COVID-19 Team for responses to potential positive cases on campus. Our primary contact person will be **Patti Culbreth, Head of School**, pculbreth@graceschoolalex.org, 703.549.5067
- C. As provided in further detail herein, the School will contact the Alexandria Health Department in the event of known or suspected cases of COVID-19. The Health Department has a school division to liaison with school administration.
- D. We will prepare our health services/front office by doing the following:
 - 1. Assure provision of medical-grade PPE for health services/administrative staff; and
 - 2. Assure and maintain typical (non-COVID-19) health services through the school's administrative personnel and/or any necessary outside providers of health services.
- E. The School is developing a communications strategy to educate members of our community about COVID-19 risk mitigation. This communications strategy includes:
 - 1. Providing this document to all community members in advance of school reopening;
 - 2. Holding an orientation for all community members regarding these policies for faculty/staff on August 30, 2021 (first day of Teacher Work Week) and for students on September 7, 2021 (first day of school);
 - 3. Planning to notify community members via distribution email, letters or the ParentREACH system of texts, phone calls, and emails to inform them of individual cases or outbreaks on campus (with the COVID-19 positive individual's name withheld); and
 - 4. Planning to notify community members via distribution email, letters or the ParentREACH system if any changes are made to the plans and protocols outlined in this COVID-19 Mitigation Plan.

II. Home/Parent Responsibility

- A. All families must familiarize themselves with the plans and protocols contained in this COVID-19 Mitigation Plan.
- B. All families shall be asked to perform health checks on all students before coming to school each day; this is an honor system.
 - 1. The parent shall take the child's temperature prior to leaving the house. If a student has an elevated temperature (as described below) or any other sign of potential illness, he/she must stay home.
 - 2. Parents shall ask themselves the following questions and keep the child home from school for further monitoring if the answer to any question is yes. Parents must alert the school to the absence and the need to monitor conditions:
 - a. Have you or anyone in your household been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or who may be suspected of having COVID-19?
 - b. Do you or anyone in your household have any of the following
 - i. Fever or chills
 - ii. Cough
 - iii. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - iv. Fatigue
 - v. Muscle or body aches
 - vi. Headache

- vii. New loss of taste or smell
- viii. Sore throat
- ix. Congestion or runny nose
- x. Nausea or vomiting
- xi. Diarrhea
- xii. Sick in any way.

3. Where a student has seasonal allergies that routinely cause congestion, a migraine condition that causes headaches, or any other known condition that causes one of the above symptoms on an ongoing basis, parents may be required to provide a doctor's note to that effect.

4. Where a student experiences a short term symptom due to a known cause, such as muscle aches due to a strenuous exercise routine or fatigue due to an unusually exciting or difficult night at home, please report the reason for these symptoms to the School Office before sending your child to School.

- C. Any student registering a temperature of **100 degrees or higher** is not permitted to attend school that day. The temperature must be taken prior to the administration of any fever reducing medication.
- D. Families will need to communicate with the School Office what symptoms the child is experiencing so the school can record and monitor any possible trends.
- E. In the case of COVID-19 exposure or infection, the School will follow the advice of the Alexandria Health Department and expect families to do the same.
- F. Leading health experts highly recommend a face covering in a public building; therefore, students and teachers will wear a face mask at all times except when taking a "mask break" with social distance or during lunch/snack. However, masks will not be placed on anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

III. Faculty/Staff Responsibilities

- A. All Teachers/Staff/Administrators must familiarize themselves with the plans and protocols contained in this COVID-19 Mitigation Plan, and all teachers/Staff/Administrators will be fully vaccinated.
- B. Teachers/Staff/Administrators must take their temperatures before or upon arrival at School. If the temperature is 100 degrees or higher, he/she must stay home and call the School to report the symptoms. If already at School, he/she must notify the School Office as soon as possible and ensure supervision of students before leaving campus.
- C. Teacher/Staff/Administrators who are too ill to drive will be quarantined on campus until they can be picked up by an emergency contact.
- D. Teachers/Staff/Administrators will wear a mask or face covering.
- E. Teachers/Staff/Administrators will monitor students to make sure masks are being worn when required.
- F. Teachers/Staff/Administrators will practice social distancing as reasonably possible when in close work conditions (i.e. workroom, copy room, office).
- G. Teachers/Staff/Administrators will be responsible for keeping their work environment (classroom, office, etc.) as clean as possible and use School supplied disinfectant to clean hard surfaces and high touch areas.

IV. Personal Protective Equipment

- A. Students and adults in the School will be required to supply their own clean face mask each day. Masks should be washed and/or exchanged on a daily basis.
- B. The School will have extra PPE, including spare face masks in the event one is damaged, in the office if needed.
- C. Students in PS-5 are required to wear face masks all day until health data allows for a change in protocol.
- D. Medical grade PPE will be offered to all individuals who are screening others for symptoms of COVID-19 (including taking temperatures), providing health services, or otherwise expected to be in close contact with individuals who may have COVID-19 on campus.
 - 1. Health services staff will be reminded of the importance of hand hygiene before putting on and after removing PPE.
 - 2. Soiled disposable PPE will be placed in the trash dumpster.

V. Cohorts/Small Groups

- A. Preschool and Junior Kindergarten classes will begin the year in a “pod” system which allows for approximately 6-8 children and an adult in a classroom area. Our Director of Early Childhood Programs will oversee a developmentally appropriate plan for curriculum and activities. Individual cohorts may have minimal interaction with children from other cohorts during transitions and bathroom breaks. The Junior Kindergarten will be a separate cohort which will be broken into smaller pods of 6-8 children and an adult.
 - 1. Snacks for Preschool through Kindergarten will be provided by the school with individual servings only.
 - 2. Children will bring their own water bottle each day.
 - 3. Two pods who share a large space are separated by a combination of a 6 foot high plastic “wall” as well as furniture to encourage children to give each other social distancing space (a challenge for 3 and 4 year olds).
 - 4. While at recess, children in the PS/JK cohorts will be allowed to play with their cohort classmates regardless of indoor pod. (ie: All PS students can play with one another but only PS students; JK students can play with all JK classmates but only JK students).
- B. Each individual classroom in grades Kindergarten through 5th Grade will serve as an individual cohort. The day will be spent with same- grade level classmates. When students are outside at recess, they will be in individual class zones but will be outside with another class in a separate zone. Individual cohorts may have minimal interaction with children from other cohorts during transitions and bathroom breaks.
 - 1. Students in Grades 1-5 must bring their own snacks and lunches each day per the food policy outlined in the Parent and Student Handbook.
 - 2. Children will bring their own water bottle each day.
 - 3. Classrooms in K-5 have a new look. Desks are separated up to 3 feet in each classroom (APA Guidelines) and when not 3 to 6 feet apart, there is an additional Plexiglass or heavy plastic wall/partition to create a barrier. Individual desk barriers for grades K-5 will encircle the individual student desktop on three sides.
 - 4. Other spaces may be modified, as well, at the School’s discretion.
- C. If applicable during the 2021-2022 school year, the School will follow the Governor’s guidelines on large group gatherings and field trips. In the School’s discretion, planned large group gatherings and field trips may be cancelled, postponed, held virtually, or otherwise reimaged.

- D. Athletics in PE class may be held if social distance can be maintained between all participants. At the School's discretion, all athletics and sports events may be cancelled, postponed, or otherwise reimagined.
- E. Parents, volunteers, and/or visitors will be monitored by camera at the front door to the facility.
 - 1. If possible, tasks will be handled at the door.
 - 2. Visitors and volunteers will only be permitted if deemed essential by the School Administration.
 - 3. If a parent or visitor must enter the building, he/she must first have his/her temperature taken. If no fever (100 or higher), he/she will only be allowed as far as the Main School Office unless an emergency or essential task requires his/her assistance.

VI. Hygiene and Cleaning

- A. Health screening and mask wearing procedures will be as described above.
- B. Signage and other reminders will be used to encourage all individuals to stay at least 6 feet apart, and to promote healthy hygiene and hand-washing behaviors.
- C. Teachers and students will take handwashing or hand sanitizing breaks before and after snack/lunch, at bathroom breaks, and after recess. Teachers and children will be encouraged to sanitize their hands each time they enter or exit the classroom.
 - 1. The School will provide soap in bathrooms and hand sanitizer in each classroom.
 - a. Sanitizer will be out of reach of smaller children – but accessible for teachers to supply/use with class as appropriate.
 - b. Small children will be closely supervised while applying hand sanitizer.
- D. During snack/lunch, all individuals will be kept at least 3 feet apart or be separated by plexiglass or plastic “walls”. Snacks (grades 1-5) and lunch (PS-5) must be brought from home, should not need to be refrigerated or microwaved, and will be stored in student's classrooms for their usage.
- E. Staff will routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched. This will include cleaning objects and surfaces not ordinarily cleaned during the day (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, and countertops) using standard cleaners.
 - 1. PS/JK will use a rotation of toys that allows for disinfecting.
 - 2. To the greatest extent possible, students will use their own individual supplies (crayons, markers, glue sticks, etc.).
- F. Contracted cleaning staff will perform a thorough cleaning at the end of the day.
- G. Staff will be gloved and masked when cleaning and disinfecting and wash hands after removal of gloves.
- H. Faculty/Maintenance staff will clean the playground equipment each day.
 - 1. Individual play equipment (balls, hula hoops, etc.) the children are in contact with on the playground will be cleaned between classes.
 - 2. Children will wash or sanitize their hands after recess each day.
- I. If the Alexandria Health Department recommends extensive cleaning of a room due to exposure or a positive case reported, we will follow their guidelines. Some of those guidelines include:
 - 1. Wipe all hard surfaces with a bleach solution;
 - 2. Air out the room (all windows open); and
 - 3. Use of a canned fogger or electromagnetic cleaning gun as the final

cleaning step to reach all areas and surfaces.

- J. The School will ensure that there are adequate cleaning and disinfecting supplies in the building at all times for these procedures to be carried out.

VII. Ventilation and Water Systems

- A. The current HVAC system draws fresh air into the classroom.
- B. When appropriate, a classroom window(s) will be opened to allow for more ventilation/circulation.
- C. In the event of a prolonged facility shutdown, we will ensure that water systems (including drinking fountains and other features) are safe to use before returning to campus.

VIII. Health and Wellness

- A. All students who are learning in-person on campus will be required to obtain vaccinations in accordance with Virginia law prior to the beginning of the year. We recommend students receive a flu shot in early fall to protect them during flu season.
- B. Any student who must quarantine due to covid restrictions will be offered to join the class virtually with a distance learning plan.
- C. Touchless temperature checks will be taken upon arrival for students, faculty, and staff.
- D. Staff will actively monitor children and themselves for symptoms.
- E. All persons will cover coughs and sneezes and staff will encourage children to cough and sneeze into their elbow or a tissue. Children and staff are advised to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- F. Faculty/staff will immediately remove any child or staff member who is not feeling well and:

1. Screen, isolate, and send home if the student vomits or has diarrhea or displays any other symptom of COVID-19 or another communicable illness without further screening.

- a. Students with suspected cases of COVID-19 will be screened and isolated on campus while they are waiting for their families to pick them up.
- b. The screening and isolation space will be kept separate from any office used to treat conditions for students who are not suspected of having COVID-19 (for example, students who skin their knees on the playground).
- c. Parents must pick up students within thirty (30) minutes of being notified that their children are ill.

2. Take the individual's temperature. If 100 degrees or higher, the individual must go home.

- a. Employees will be sent home directly; students will wait in a well-ventilated quarantine area in the front office for a parent/guardian to pick up the child.

3. Check for other flu-like symptoms like cough, lethargy, loss of smell, etc. Any child or adult suspected of the virus will be sent home immediately to quarantine, in accordance with the procedures described above.

4. The Alexandria Health Department will be contacted about any confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, and we will implement their advice based on the particular situation. This may include:

- a. Closing the entire School for extensive cleaning.
 - b. Closing an individual classroom or space for an extensive cleaning.
 - c. Thorough cleaning and health monitoring of a particular classroom, space, and/or cohort until we learn of testing results.
 - d. Sending a particular cohort home for a period of up to 14 days.
 - e. Closing the school on a short term or long-term basis.
- G. Student/ Adult with symptoms of illness may only return to school if he/she:
 - 1. Returns (fever, vomit, and diarrhea free for 24 hours) with a doctor's note diagnosing a treatable infection/situation and the doctor's signed permission to return; or
 - 2. follows alternate advice of Alexandria Health Department Liaison as disseminated by the Head of School (this may include the advice to quarantine for 10 to 14 days).
- H. Student/Adult who is presumed or confirmed positive for COVID-19, or who are exposed to a COVID-19 case, can return to school once he/she:
 - 1. Has followed the full advice of the Alexandria Health Department in the case of a COVID-19 diagnosis or an exposure to COVID-19 diagnosis.
 - a. This advice may include quarantining up to 14 days;
 - b. and/or obtaining a negative test result for COVID-19.
 - 2. If positive and symptomatic, the individual must also have done the following:
 - a. Quarantined for ten (10) days since the onset of symptoms;
 - b. Been fever free without the use of fever reducing medications for at least 72 hours; and
 - c. Experienced a significant improvement in all symptoms.
- I. Parents can request consultation with our School Child Psychologist, Dr. Rene Hackney, per guidelines in the Parent and Student Handbook for questions regarding mental health concerns in children.

IX. Social Distancing

- A. Faculty/Staff/Administrators will practice social distancing to the maximum extent possible while still allowing for the care of children. Due to the nature of preschool and elementary programs, faculty often need to be in close proximity to children; however, we will maximize space for social distancing of children and will refrain from non-essential contact.
- B. Faculty/Staff/Administrators will encourage individual play and study and require masks when small groups are necessary (reading groups, etc.)
- C. Masks will be required of students and faculty/staff during the school day.
- D. To allow ample time for fresh air, schedules will incorporate increased outside time, weather permitting.
- E. The rooms will be physically arranged to promote as much individual space for play and study as possible.
- F. The K-5 rooms will be physically arranged to ensure that there is up to 3 feet between desks; if not possible due to space constraints, the School will implement layered mitigation which may include masks, desk barriers, and/or temporary wall barriers.
- G. Administrators will reinforce social distance guidelines regularly with faculty, children and families.

X. Drop-off/Pick Up

- A. Parents/guardians are asked to follow a staggered schedule for drop off and pick up of children to allow more time/space for social distancing and a better flow for morning temperature checks.
- B. Face masks for all students are required when entering the cue in the carpool lane.
- C. Parents/guardians should only exit the vehicle if needed to assist with a car seat or temperature check.

XI. COVID-19 Communications

- A. It is the responsibility of every person in the school community to notify the School within 24 hours if any immediate household member has contracted COVID-19 or is suspected to have contracted COVID-19.
- B. If there is a confirmed case in our direct community (parent-student-teacher-staff), we will call the Alexandria Health Department and follow their advice. The school community will be alerted to information about the outbreak and the Health Department's advice while keeping personal information private.
- C. In the event of a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 in our community, the School will work with the Alexandria Health Department to supply contract tracing information for the safety and well-being of all.
- D. If our program or schedule must change due to an outbreak, the School will communicate with parents using our ParentREACH system of texts, phone calls and emails.

XII. HR Concerns

- A. The School will implement a flexible employee sick leave policy:
 - 1. If an employee is advised by a local Health Department to quarantine because of a suspected infection of the individual or a family member, those quarantine days will not be drawn from personal leave.
 - 2. If an employee is quarantined but shows no symptoms or is otherwise feeling healthy, the School will expect the teacher to support the classroom efforts virtually.
 - 3. The School will fully comply with the requirements of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).
- B. School faculty/staff can be reimbursed for PPE that supports their safety and well-being.
- C. School Administration will continue to check state and local Health Department notices daily about transmission in the area and adjust operations accordingly.
- D. Requests for reasonable accommodations on the basis of disability will be considered on an individual employee basis.
- E. Employees can use the Support Hotline offered by EAP Essential Plan through Sun Life as supplied by the Director of Finance and Operations to seek advice on mental health concerns.
- F. We have hired and/or trained support staff in the event of an employee's illness, and our current employees are prepared to provide coverage for each other when necessary.

- G. All school personnel must be fully vaccinated.

XIII. School Closure Due to Severe Conditions

- A. In the event of an outbreak on campus, the School will consult with the Alexandria Health Department about how to proceed.
- B. If instructed to do so by the Alexandria Health Department, the Governor, the Diocese, or any public health or government authority, the School will close on a short term or long term basis.
- C. In the sole discretion of the School, Grace may also choose to close on a short term or long term basis in order to protect the health and safety of our community.

Resources:

Alexandria Health Department
American Academy of Pediatrics
Center for Disease Control
Virginia Association of Independent Schools
Virginia Council for Private Education
Virginia Department of Education



Grace
Episcopal
School

3601 Russell Road
Alexandria, Virginia 22305-1731
Office: 703-549-5067 | Fax: 703-549-9545

www.GraceSchoolAlex.org