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About This Handbook

This handbook unifies the existing Handbooks for Stepping Stones, the Academy, and the High School into one document, current to the 2026–2027 school year.

How this handbook is organized: Part One covers what applies to every family in our school ministry, regardless of division — our shared mission and doctrine, general admission and financial policies, and the Probation Policies that apply school-wide. Part Two, Three, and Four each cover one division in full — Stepping Stones Preschool (ages 3–4), the Elementary division (K5–sixth grade), and the High School division (seventh–twelfth grade) — including that division's own dress code, attendance rules, and discipline system, since these differ meaningfully by age group. A short section, “How the Divisions Fit Together,” explains how a student's discipline record and expectations change as they move from one division to the next. The Appendices at the end are shared by all divisions and are printed once rather than repeated in each part.

Our Ministry Family

Independent Baptist Academy (IBA) — including Stepping Stones Preschool and Daycare — is a ministry of Independent Baptist Church (IBC). Stepping Stones, the Elementary division, and the High School division are not separate organizations; they are three age-based divisions of the same church ministry, sharing one Statement of Faith, one Purpose and Objectives, and one administration. Families will see both the “IBC” and “IBA” names used throughout this handbook and around campus — both refer to the same church and school family.

Purpose and Objectives

The Bible gives parents the responsibility to “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6) The key to success in this process can be realized to a fuller extent when the home, church, and school stand united in the Christ-centered, Bible-centered training of a child (Ecclesiastes 4:12). The home, church, and school may share this great responsibility.

It is the purpose of Independent Baptist Academy (IBA) to present Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and provide high-quality, Bible-centered education. It is our desire that the home and church stand united with us in this purpose. As a result, Independent Baptist Academy has the following objectives:

1. **Christian Character:** Our primary goal is the training of Christ-like qualities in the lives of our young people so they truly grow up “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord... [and that they] be conformed to the image of His son.”
2. **Bible Truth:** Training in the Bible is recognized to be of fundamental importance. It augments all other segments of the student's training; and without Bible training, a student cannot be considered educated in the truest sense.
3. **Morality, Decency, and Orderliness:** In I Timothy 4:12: “Let no man despise thy youth: but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” We believe in constantly upholding the highest virtues.
4. **Self-discipline and Modesty:** These qualities are mandatory for the welfare of the home, church, school, and the world in which we live. Our discipline system is designed to aid the student in areas that need improvement. Parents are kept informed of conduct problems by a student's weekly report, quarterly progress reports, quarterly report cards, or a needed phone call.
5. **High Scholastic Achievement:** Beginning in K5, our students learn to read using the ABeka program, a proven and successful phonetic approach to reading. Students are encouraged in accordance with Scripture to strive for academic excellence in seeking to do their best for the Master.
6. **Patriotism:** IBA strives to instill in each student a love and loyalty for our country. Our students are taught the principles of good citizenship and respect for authority, as well as the responsibilities they owe to their state, country, and nation.

Statement of Faith

The basis for Independent Baptist Academy — and every division within it, including Stepping Stones Preschool — can be found in the Word of God. The following nine statements are our foundational beliefs:

1. We believe in the verbal inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. The King James Version of the Bible reveals God, the fall of man, the way of salvation, and God's plan and purpose in the ages.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in the three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the Deity and Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, and His ascension to the right hand of the Father.
4. We believe in the visible, personal, and pre-millennial return of Jesus Christ.
5. We believe that salvation is “by grace” plus or minus nothing. The conditions to salvation are repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.
6. We believe that man is sinful and thereby separated from God. He is justified by faith alone and counted righteous before God only through the merit of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
7. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost: the saved unto the resurrection of life, and the lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
8. We believe in the eternal security of the believer in Christ.
9. We believe in the local church with the ordinances of baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.

What Is Christian Education?

“Christian education is unlike any other type of education because in Christian Education, the Bible permeates every aspect of the school. Therefore, the school's philosophy is based on the principles of God's Word. The Bible becomes our filter through which policy, administration, curriculum, discipline, and every other school decision flows. Simply stated, the Bible is the foundation upon which the school is built.” (Classroom Perspectives, page 28). By basing each area of the school upon God's Word, each student can understand God's wisdom, power, judgment, and love in his study of history, science, math, English, music, and art. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6) Apart from Christ, there can be no true education.

For Stepping Stones Preschool specifically, this same conviction is expressed through a philosophy of developing the whole child — spiritually, socially and emotionally, intellectually, and physically — in a loving, Christ-centered environment where every child is treated as a unique gift from God. See Part Two for Stepping Stones' full Philosophy and Mission Statement.

Objectives in Christian Education

Our objectives in education for our children are as follows:

- To prepare them spiritually by instilling in them a love for the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Father, and His Holy Spirit, and a personal sense of responsibility to be all God wants them to be
- To prepare them to live successfully
- To encourage them to think and work clearly, logically, and independently
- To offer an instructional program that meets their academic needs
- To help them develop an understanding of the world in which they live and the ability to appreciate and adjust to their environment
- To teach them how to gain mastery in the tools of learning and communication
- To develop a sense of responsibility as a citizen and as a Christian
- To develop a moral, ethical, and spiritual sense which will aid them in appreciation of their own personal worth and that of others
- To provide opportunities for developing skills necessary to make a living
- To offer opportunities to participate in wholesome forms of recreation
- To prepare each child for an outstanding position in life, and for spiritual leadership in school, home, church, community, state, nation, and the world

General Admission Information

The church and school shall have a nondiscriminatory policy and, therefore, shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.

Students do not automatically have the right to enroll at IBA. Applications for new student enrollment will be approved at the sole discretion of the school. All new students must attend a tour and have an interview with the principal prior to completing the necessary paperwork. They will be tested prior to grade level placement regardless of whether they are transferring in from a private school, public school, or home schooling. If the student does not meet IBA's academic standards, the administration has the right to hold a student back a grade or place a student on academic probation.

Students do not automatically have the right to re-enroll at IBA. Applications for re-enrollment will be approved at the sole discretion of the school. Returning students must have successfully passed their previous school year. In order to guarantee acceptance, re-enrolling students must register before the re-enrollment deadline. Re-enrolling students will be given priority enrollment status over new applicants until the re-enrollment deadline.

Parents of all new students are required to sign IBA's "Statement of Cooperation" and agree to abide by the policies stated in this handbook. No student will be admitted or allowed to remain in Independent Baptist Academy whose parents do not agree and cooperate with the overall purpose and program of the school.

It is a state requirement to have immunization records on all new and returning students; therefore, an up-to-date immunization record on your child is a must. Immunization forms, which will need to be completed by your child's doctor, are available in the school office. All students must meet Maryland state immunization requirements and provide proof of such. See the Appendices for current vaccine requirement tables.

Special-needs students: Unfortunately, IBA is not equipped and trained to take special-needs students in any grade and does not accept any government subsidies to which the child may be entitled.

Kindergarten: K5 students must be five by September 1 of the school year they are seeking admission and be fully potty trained.

Stepping Stones Preschool admission requirements are covered in Part Two.

General Financial Information

Independent Baptist Academy neither solicits nor accepts government funds of any type. Therefore, it is necessary that fees, tuition, and before- and after-school care charges be paid when due. Any account that is not kept current will cause the student to not be allowed to participate in any extra programs: hot lunch, Early and Late Stay, Intramurals, and music lessons. A monthly rate of tuition is used for the convenience of our school families. All accounts will be due on the day specified on the “Financial Information Sheet.” A late fee will be assessed for accounts not paid on time. When an account is one payment behind, parents will be asked to withdraw their children. A service fee will be charged to your account for each returned check. No report card or transcript will be distributed when there is an account that is not up to date. All accounts must be paid in full by May 10 in order to prevent students from being withdrawn from the Academy. If balances are not paid in cash, all transfer of records will be held until check has cleared. For more specific financial information with a list of charges, see the Financial Information Sheet. Stepping Stones-specific rates, fees, and the sibling discount are covered in Part Two.

Probation Policies

Independent Baptist Academy uses probation — rather than immediate withdrawal or non-re-enrollment — as a structured opportunity for a student and family to correct a specific, documented problem before the next enrollment cycle. Probation applies across all three divisions: Preschool (K3–K4), Elementary, and High School.

Shared Framework

- **Authority:** The Principal is the sole decision-maker for placing a student on probation, in every category and every division — there is no split authority.
- **Notification:** A signed letter is sent home to the parent/guardian at the start of any probation period.
- **Documentation:** A Probation Agreement is signed by the Principal and the parent/guardian, spelling out the specific condition(s) for lifting probation and the deadline. A copy is kept in the student's file.
- **Review:** There is no formal midpoint check-in. Status is reviewed at the natural deadline for that category (described below).
- **Consequence if conditions are not met:** For Financial Probation, the student will be asked to withdraw and will not be offered re-enrollment for the following year if the account is not brought current. For Behavioral Probation, the student may be asked to withdraw and may not be offered re-enrollment for the following year. Academic Probation carries its own distinct consequence (described below).

Academic Probation

Applies to Elementary (K5–6th) and High School (7th–12th) only — not Preschool, which does not issue numeric report card averages.

- **Trigger:** A student's yearly average in any single subject falls below 70% on an official report card. Progress reports do not trigger Academic Probation on their own — only a report card does.
- **Workflow:** (1) The Teacher reports to the office that a student is averaging a grade below 70%. (2) The Teacher initiates a parent meeting to discuss concerns and solutions. (3) If the grade does not improve within two weeks following the meeting, the office sends a signed letter home identifying the subject(s) below 70% and encloses a Probation Agreement. (4) The parent/guardian and Principal sign the Probation Agreement; a copy is filed in the student's file. (5) The student works to bring the yearly average in that subject to 70% or above.
- **While on Probation:** The student is required to attend tutoring for the subject(s) below 70% for the remainder of the probation period. Regular attendance and effort in tutoring is expected, and may be considered by the Principal if the final report-card average does not reach 70%. Student-athletes' eligibility for athletics — sports for High School, intramurals for Elementary — is checked weekly on Wednesdays for the following week, based on the student's current subject average(s).
- **Exit:** The average is reviewed at the next report card; if the average is 70% or above, probation is lifted and noted in the file. If the student finishes the year still below 70%, the student will be required to complete a minimum of 30 subject tutoring hours at the school, or the student will be required to repeat the necessary grade.

Financial Probation

Applies to Preschool (K3–K4), Elementary, and High School.

- **Trigger:** A family's account becomes 30 or more days past due. This is separate from, and in addition to, any existing late fee already in place (for example, the school's \$60 fee assessed after the 10th of the month).
- **Workflow:** (1) The school office identifies an account 30+ days past due and notifies the Principal. (2) The Principal sends a signed letter home stating the amount owed and encloses a Probation Agreement. (3) The parent/guardian and Principal sign the Probation Agreement; a copy is filed in the student's record.
- **While on Probation:** Tuition and fees continue to accrue as normal; probation does not pause or waive any current or future charges. Students also lose eligibility for optional paid activities and extracurriculars — athletics, lunches, intramurals, music lessons, early stay, and late stay — while the account remains past due.
- **Exit:** The family works to bring the account fully current. Status is reviewed on an ongoing basis by the school office. If the account is fully current, probation is lifted and noted in the file. If the account

is still not current 60 days after the original due date (30 days after probation begins), the student will be asked to withdraw and will not be offered re-enrollment for the following year.

Behavioral Probation

Applies to Preschool, Elementary, and High School — using each division's existing discipline system.

Preschool — Traffic Light System

- **Trigger:** 3 Red-light incidents within a month.
- **Exit:** The student completes the following month without an additional Red-light incident.

Elementary (K5–6th) — Tally System

- **Trigger:** 25 tallies accumulated within a nine-week grading period.
- **Exit:** The student completes the following nine-week grading period without reaching 25 new tallies.

High School (7th–12th) — Demerit System

- **Trigger:** 25 demerits accumulated within a nine-week grading period.
- **Exit:** The student completes the following nine-week grading period without reaching 25 new demerits. Because High School demerits never reset, this is measured as new demerits earned during that grading period — not the lifetime running total.

While on Probation (Elementary and High School): The student is subject to the existing tally/demerit consequence ladder already in place (detention, field-trip restriction, suspension) at whatever thresholds are crossed. The student receives a one-game suspension (athletics for High School, intramurals for Elementary) at the start of probation. The student will continue to receive a one-game suspension for every detention and every suspension received while on Behavioral Probation.

Common Workflow — All Three Divisions

- The student reaches the applicable trigger (25 tallies/demerits, or 3 Red-lights for Preschool).
- Teacher/administration flags it to the Principal via existing tracking (weekly tally reports, demerit records, or the Traffic Light chart).
- The Principal sends a signed letter home identifying the trigger and encloses a Probation Agreement spelling out the exit condition.
- The parent/guardian and Principal sign the Probation Agreement; a copy is filed in the student's record.
- Status is reviewed at the end of the quarter. If the exit condition is met, probation is lifted and noted in the file. If the student hits the trigger again before completing a clean stretch, the student may be asked to withdraw and may not be offered re-enrollment for the following year.

PART TWO

Stepping Stones Preschool (Ages 3–4)

LIC# 256212

Philosophy

Stepping Stones Preschool and Daycare operates as an outreach ministry and is under the authority of Independent Baptist Church. Stepping Stones seeks to reach and minister to the children and families in the community by offering a high-quality weekday preschool program. Independent Baptist Church strives to strengthen the lives of preschool families by providing opportunities for involvement in its many ministries.

Stepping Stones' educational philosophy is to focus on the development of the whole child, taking into consideration each child's individual needs and development. The spiritual, social and emotional, intellectual, and physical growth of each child are all of equal importance. We provide developmentally age-appropriate preschool experiences designed to help each child grow:

- **Spiritually** by providing a chapel experience and by integrating a Biblical worldview throughout the curriculum and learning environment. Christ-centered character qualities are modeled through the love of our staff. Bible stories, songs, and prayer give children an awareness of God's love for them.
- **Socially and emotionally** by encouraging participation in group activities, getting along with others, and developing a feeling of security and belonging.
- **Intellectually** by encouraging an enthusiasm for learning through observation, exploration, and hands-on experiences.
- **Physically** by encouraging experiences that develop large and small muscle coordination and motor skills.

We believe that each child is a unique gift from God and should be surrounded in a loving, Christ-centered atmosphere where they can feel confident and safe as they experiment, make mistakes, learn self-discipline, and have the opportunity to make good choices.

Mission Statement

Stepping Stones Preschool and Daycare exists to provide a quality, developmentally age-appropriate, hands-on learning curriculum in a safe, loving, Christ-centered environment where children have the opportunity to develop a love for Jesus Christ and others and to grow and develop spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.

Curriculum

Stepping Stones uses the Abeka curriculum, a comprehensive curriculum based on Christian values featuring a traditional approach to teaching and learning, cross-subject integration, spiral review, and plenty of hands-on activities. Abeka is age-appropriate for preschool, taking into consideration differences in motor skills and cognitive abilities. The three-year-old program begins exposing students to phonics and continues adding to their knowledge of numbers, art, poetry, and the Bible. The four-year-old program serves as a bridge between preschool and kindergarten, preparing students for a structured learning environment and teaching the basics of reading.

Ages of Children Served

Stepping Stones Preschool and Daycare enrolls three- and four-year-old children.

Preschool Hours

Preschool hours are 8:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m., with the academic portion of the day beginning at 9:00 a.m. Students arriving after 9:00 a.m. must check in at the IBA school office to be allowed entrance into the building. Should a parent need to pick up a student before 3:00 p.m., they must first report to the IBA school office to receive admittance into the Preschool building. Please give teachers plenty of notice should your student need to leave early. All deliveries must be made to and left at the school office.

Early and Late Stay

Stepping Stones provides Early Stay beginning at 7:30 a.m. and Late Stay until 5:30 p.m. All students must be picked up before the 5:30 p.m. bell rings; a late fee of \$10.00 per child plus \$2.00 per minute applies after 5:30 p.m. Fees:

- **Early Stay:** \$12.00 per hour, or \$150 per month (monthly discounted rate).
- **Late Stay:** \$12.00 per hour, or \$300 per month (monthly discounted rate).

Sign-in / Sign-out

State licensing requires that every child be signed in and signed out with the parent's first and last name. Signing in acknowledges that your child is now our responsibility. Please walk your child to his teacher and do not leave your child unattended.

Snack and Lunch

We provide a morning and an afternoon snack, each providing the nutritional components of at least two food groups. A lunch, with a drink, is available for purchase daily; advance menus are sent home regularly. If a student does not purchase hot lunch, a lunch from home is required.

Rest Time

All children are required to observe a rest time. Please supply a small blanket and small pillow with a bag to store them in. All rest-time supplies are sent home every Friday to be cleaned and should be labeled with the child's name.

Change of Clothes

Please bring a complete change of clothes to leave in your child's cubby in case of an accident — pants/skirt or dress, uniform shirt, underwear, socks, and shoes, placed in a zip-lock bag marked with your child's name. Should your child use the extra clothes, a new set must be sent in the next school day.

Birthdays

Please defer to your child's teacher for specific instructions about celebrating your child's special day.

Toys from Home

Please make sure any toys brought from home meet preschool standards and do not include any type of toy weapon; label all items with your child's name. If a toy is broken, damaged, or stolen, Stepping Stones is not responsible for reimbursement.

Emergency Disaster Plan

In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, Stepping Stones will implement a plan that includes 72 hours of food, water, and protective care. Drills are conducted regularly throughout the preschool year. The Registration Fee covers the cost of your child's Emergency Disaster Kit.

Withdrawal

Parent-Initiated Student Withdrawal

A written two-week notice is required. Full payment is required for those two weeks, regardless of attendance. If payment made exceeds the two weeks, the excess is refunded by check within 10 days.

Principal-Initiated Student Withdrawal

When the principal determines the preschool environment does not meet the needs of the child, a one-week notice shall be given for withdrawal. A prorated tuition refund applies if the account has been paid in full for the month.

Registration and Tuition

All new students must attend a tour and have an interview with the principal prior to completing the necessary paperwork. The registration fee is paid prior to each child's initial enrollment and is non-refundable. Tuition payments are due on the first of each month and should be set up as an automatic payment through the Gradelink system. Any account not kept current will cause the student to not be allowed to participate in any extra programs (hot lunch, Early and Late Stay, music lessons). Any account not paid before the tenth of each month will be assessed a \$60 late payment fee. A discounted tuition is offered for a sibling when both are enrolled at Stepping Stones or another sibling attends Independent Baptist Academy.

Absences and Make-up Days

We are not able to give credit or provide a make-up day for absences due to illness, vacations, holidays, unscheduled days off (such as snow days), or staff development days. Students may not miss more than 2

consecutive weeks within the year; children withdrawn for consecutive absences may lose their spot to a child on the waiting list.

Classroom Placement Policy

Stepping Stones staff reserve the right to move a student to a different class if it is believed it will be beneficial to the student.

Discipline: Traffic Light Behavior System

Each morning students all begin on the Green light. The teacher reminds students of the basic classroom behavior rules and consequences of misbehavior. Most students stay on green all day. After a verbal warning, a repeat of incorrect behavior results in the child's name being moved to the Yellow light — consequences include the loss of five minutes of free time, possibly repeating instruction time or seatwork, and issuing an apology if necessary. On rare occasions a student is placed on the Red light, reserved for deliberate acts of violence and disobedience. Once placed on Red, parents and the administrator are contacted, and if necessary the student is removed from the classroom pending administrator action.

A traffic light is displayed in the classroom with the students' names laminated and able to move easily from light to light. Each student has an incentive chart to encourage and reward good behavior.

Biting and Intentional Harm Policy

A two-and-a-half-year-old child can understand that biting and hurting others is not acceptable. The most effective action to stop biting can only be taken by the parents. In consideration for the health and safety of other children:

- **First incident** — the child receives a double time-out (10 minutes) and both sets of parents are notified.
- **Second incident** — the child is separated from the rest of the children for the remainder of the day and both sets of parents are notified.
- **Third incident** — the parents are contacted to pick up the child immediately and must meet with the principal to discuss further action.

Child Abuse Reporting

As required by the state of Maryland, all preschool staff are legally obligated to report any suspected incident of child abuse or neglect.

Court Order Policy

Stepping Stones must have on file all current court orders, signed by a judge, that refer to preschool-related enforcement. For the welfare of all students, all personnel and policies of Stepping Stones must maintain total neutrality in conjunction with all custody suits, whether settled or in progress.

Illness Policy

Stepping Stones is not licensed to care for ill children. Please call and report absences to the school office by 9:00 a.m. Keep your child home if they exhibit any of the following:

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Constant cough/sore throat
- Heavy green runny nose
- Red, watery, or mucous-filled eyes
- Undiagnosed skin rash/infected sores on any part of the body

- Unusually fussy, cranky, or fatigued
- Head lice

If any of these symptoms develop at preschool, you will be contacted to pick up your child within the hour. All children must be fever- and symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Per COMAR 13A.17.11, a child may not be readmitted to care after an absence of 3 or more days due to illness without a written statement from the parent or physician that the child may return to a regular schedule.

Medications

Stepping Stones will only administer prescription medication that must be given more than twice a day. An OCC 1216 form must be filled out in the school office. Medications must be in the original container, labeled with the child's name and required dosage.

Medical/Dental Emergency

- A staff member qualified in CPR/First Aid will be present during preschool hours.
- Please keep dietary restrictions/allergies and emergency contact information updated at all times.
- In case of a medical/dental emergency, 911 will be called under whatever conditions are necessary to preserve the life, limb, or wellbeing of the child.
- The parent/guardian is responsible for any medical bills incurred due to the medical/dental emergency.

Lice Policy

If live lice are discovered on your child, you will be contacted to pick up your child. Please be proactive in at-home treatment, including over-the-counter treatment as recommended by your pharmacist. Your child may return to preschool when there are no live bugs present and all nits have been removed; a Stepping Stones staff member must verify this before your child returns.

Uniforms and Dress

All students are required to wear a uniform purchased through the Independent Baptist Academy School Store on the French Toast School Store website. See the school office for the school-specific code. Girls in K3 and K4 may wear the approved Navy-blue dress available through French Toast; hems must touch the floor when kneeling and cover the knee when sitting, the same as the skirt hem requirement used in the Elementary Division.

Shoes

All shoes must have a closed heel and closed toe — no sandals, clogs, or other open-toed shoes. Tennis shoes or canvas-like tennis shoes may be worn. Shoes with holes for strings must be completely and properly laced at all times; shoes with “mock” holes that cannot be laced are not acceptable. High-top shoes should not be much higher than the ankle bone. Please do not wear “slip on” shoes. During winter months boots are permitted; on rainy or snowy days, rain or snow boots meeting the dress code guidelines are permitted, made of durable materials such as leather, suede, or rubber. Girls may wear ankle-length leggings during colder months in white or dark solid colors only.

Girls' Jewelry and Hair

Neither face nor hair glitter is permitted. No faddish hair colors (green, blue, bright red, orange, etc.) are allowed, and no interspersing or weaving of non-natural hair accessories. The administration has final decision on hair styles. Only one pair of earrings may be worn at a time in the lobe of the ear.

Boys' Haircuts

Haircuts should be tapered to the natural hairline on the sides and back, combed neatly across or up off the forehead. Hair in front must not touch the eyebrows; hair in back may not touch the shirt collar; hair on the sides may not be over the ears. Hair must not be allowed to get too full or appear shaggy. Thick, curly hair must not be longer than two inches. Man-buns, ponytails, rat-tails, tracking, bowl cuts, spiked hair, Mohawks, braids, or cornrows are not acceptable (flat tops are not considered spiked). Twists and afros may not exceed a two-inch thickness. The administration has final decision on hair styles. Boys are not allowed to wear jewelry of any kind.

Potty Training Policy

All students attending Stepping Stones are required to be self-sufficient in the bathroom — able to undress themselves, use the toilet, wipe, redress, and wash their hands. A student still wearing pull-ups is not considered trained. Occasional mishaps are understandable, but the student should be sufficiently trained to clean themselves; if a mishap occurs, a new set of clothes must be sent the next school day. After an initial grace period when students are adjusting to a new environment, students are expected not to have accidents except on a rare occasion. If a student has 12 or more accidents in a month (an average of 3 a week), they are not sufficiently potty trained and parents will need to withdraw them from Stepping Stones until they are fully trained.

PART THREE

Elementary Division (K5–Sixth Grade)

Early – Late Stay

IBA provides Early Stay for students in kindergarten through high school. Students arriving between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. must report to the Early Stay teacher — there are absolutely no exceptions. Students may not roam the campus or gym unattended before the 8:00 a.m. bell.

Late Stay hours are 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. All students not picked up by the 3:30 p.m. bell must report to and register with Late Stay personnel. A fee of \$12.00 per hour per child is charged, divided into 15-minute increments (a monthly discounted rate is available). All students must be picked up before the 5:30 p.m. bell; after that, a late fee of \$10.00 per child plus \$2.00 per minute applies. No student may leave the school grounds without written parental permission and administration approval.

Arrival and Dismissal

Teachers begin their day with students at 8:00 a.m. and are not available for conferences from 8:00–8:15 a.m. The academic day officially runs 8:15 a.m.–3:15 p.m.; students may enter the building at 8:00 a.m. Students arriving before 8:00 a.m. must report to the Early Stay teacher. After the first couple of weeks, parents should leave children at the academy door (kindergarten parents excepted) — this fosters both safety and independence.

At 3:15 p.m. dismissal, parents pick up students at the designated pickup line; anyone other than the parent picking up must be on the “Approved Pick-up List,” communicated by note or a call to the office. Parents have a fifteen-minute grace period before a child is automatically sent to Late Stay (and assessed a fee). Teachers are unavailable for conferences 3:15–3:30 p.m. Once a student has left the building, they should not return except in an emergency. Going home with another student after school requires a written note or email to the office — phone calls are not sufficient.

Tardiness

Students should arrive before 8:15 a.m. Three unexcused tardies equal one absence added to the total; outstanding unexcused tardies carry over quarter to quarter. Students accumulating ten unexcused tardies in a quarter are charged \$20 for every ten tardies. Tardiness is for emergencies only — “traffic” does not excuse a tardy. All tardy students must report to the office for a tardy slip.

Absences

All absences are unexcused unless a doctor's note is provided. Returning students must check with each teacher for missed assignments; unmade-up work is recorded as a zero. Students are allowed one day per missed day to make up work. If a student is absent 25 days during the school year, the Academy reserves the right to retain the student at the same grade level or refuse admittance the following year.

Contacting Students During School Hours

Students may only be contacted through the school office during school hours. Students with personal cell phones must keep them off and in their book bag.

Make-Up Work

Students must request make-up work immediately upon returning to school and check with teachers for missed assignments; unmade-up work is recorded as a zero. If absence is known in advance, request homework three days ahead so teachers have time to prepare it.

Lunch Program

A lunch with drink is available for purchase daily; menus are sent home regularly. Students may not use the microwave or ask staff to heat food, nor store items in the refrigerator. If a student forgets lunch and neither

parent can be reached, a lunch is provided and the account charged \$12. Parents may have lunch delivered; if it hasn't arrived by the start of lunch, the student is given a cafeteria lunch and charged \$12. Visitors are welcome to eat lunch with a "Visitor's Pass" from the office; lunchtime visits may not exceed the student's lunch period.

Recess/Break Time

Weather permitting, elementary students are given an outside recess each day; cold-weather recess depends on temperature and wind chill. Students should dress for outside recess. When weather prevents outside activities, supervised free time is provided indoors.

Early Pick-Up from School

Parents picking up students during class time for appointments must report to the office, not the classroom. A written note or phone notification at least one hour prior to pick-up is required; students leaving early must sign out through the office.

Scheduled Noon Dismissals

On scheduled 12:00 noon dismissal days, parents must pick up children by 12:15 (a fifteen-minute grace period). Beginning at 12:16, an \$8.00 late fee applies for every fifteen-minute interval per child not picked up. No Late Stay is provided on these days.

Snow and Inclement Weather Days

Parents receive email and text notification through Gradelink for closings or delays. IBA does not necessarily follow PG County school closings or delays.

Medicine, First Aid, and Sickness at School

Tylenol, Tums, and Ibuprofen are available in the school office with parental permission on file. Medicine brought from home (prescription or OTC) must go straight to the office with written dispensing instructions. Students must never give medication of any kind to another student.

Prescription Medication: administered only with written parental permission, in the original container labeled with the student's name, date, medication, and dosage. **Asthma Inhalers:** older students may possess and use an inhaler with a self-medication authorization note on file from their doctor; younger students keep inhalers in the office. **Emergency Medications** (e.g., epi-pens): parents provide the medication and physician instructions to the office. **Sickness:** parents will be called for fever, diarrhea, or vomiting; a child with fever, rash, or other illness may not return until 24 hours symptom-free.

Dress Code

School is a semi-formal environment, and the dress of our young people should set the stage for a serious learning atmosphere. The administration decides what is acceptable in dress and appearance; violations result in a dress code letter and dress code tallies. Extreme fads of any nature are prohibited. Shirttails must be tucked in upon entering the building; students remaining on campus after classes must stay in uniform through the end of Late Stay (7:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.).

Girls' Dress

Only uniforms purchased from the IBA French Toast School Store are accepted.

- **Skirts:** Navy Blue or Khaki, purchased from French Toast. Hems must touch the floor when kneeling and cover the knee when sitting.
- **Modesty Shorts:** Girls must wear shorts or fitted leggings underneath their skirts at all times.

- **Tops:** Three-button polo, short or long sleeve, with Academy initials, in light blue or burgundy; tucked in at all times, only the top button may be undone; undertee must be white only; at least one burgundy polo required for field trips and picture day.
- **Dress:** Approved Navy-blue dress through French Toast, same hem requirements as skirts. Available to K5–3rd grade girls only.
- **Hosiery:** Tights or socks (crew or knee socks) at all times; no neon, patterned, or footie socks; no mismatched or double socks. Ankle-length leggings (fitted, not baggy or loose; white or dark solid colors only) permitted in colder months.
- **Shoes:** Closed heel and closed toe, hard-bottom sole; no sandals, clogs, or slipper-style shoes (e.g. Uggs). Platform boots are not allowed. Laces must be complete and properly tied. Kindergarten students should avoid slip-on shoes. Rain/snow boots permitted matching the IBA standard.
- **Jackets:** No camouflage; only IBA jackets or sweaters from French Toast in the classroom.
- **Jewelry, Hair, Makeup:** Makeup permitted 7th–12th only, used sparingly. No faddish nail polish, glitter, or hair colors; no two-toned hair or non-natural hair accessories. Tattoos (including drawn-on) prohibited. Earrings no larger than 1½" diameter/2½" length, one pair at a time. No faddish bracelets or sports headbands during academic hours; no color-changing contacts.
- **Hats:** May be worn to school but not on campus; never worn backwards.
- **General Dress (non-uniform days):** Modest neckline, not tight-fitting; no sleeveless or sheer clothing; kick pleats no higher than mid-knee.

Boys' Dress

- **Pants:** Navy blue or khaki from French Toast only; no camouflage, denim, or denim-like material except designated special days; solid-color belt (black, brown, blue, or tan — no white or neon). Pants must not be too tight and must be the proper length.
- **Shirts:** Three-button polo, short or long sleeve, Academy initials, light blue or burgundy; tucked in at all times; at least one burgundy polo required for field trips and picture day.
- **Socks:** Crew-style at all times; no neon, patterned, or footie socks.
- **Shoes:** No sandals; tennis or canvas-like tennis shoes during the week; laces complete and properly tied.
- **Jackets:** No camouflage or denim; only IBA jackets/sweaters from French Toast in the classroom.
- **Jewelry & Headbands:** Only a watch, class ring, or initial ring (worn on ring finger); no necklaces, bracelets, or earrings; no sports headbands during school hours; no color-changing contacts; no tattoos of any kind.
- **Hats:** May be worn to school but not on campus; never worn backwards.
- **General Grooming:** Hair in front must not touch eyebrows; back hair must not touch the shirt collar; sides must not cover or touch the ears; sideburns no lower than mid-ear. Rat-tails, tracking, bowl cuts, spiked hair, Mohawks, braids, and man-buns are not acceptable (flat tops are not spiked). Twists and afros may not exceed two inches. Administration has final decision on hair styles.

General Goals for Students

Independent Baptist Academy expects that its students live above reproach by showing respect to God, country, family, faculty, and fellow-students; therefore, lying, cheating, profanity, and stealing will not be tolerated. Attendance at IBA is a privilege, not a right. Anyone who will not cooperate spiritually, morally, or scholastically will be dismissed.

Academic Divisions of the Elementary School

Kindergarten: Scope and Sequence

Our kindergarten program prepares students socially and mentally for their future years, using the Abeka reading program (a time-proven phonetic approach). Students learn letter names, sounds, and blends; handwriting formation; language development covering colors, shapes, animals, transportation, community helpers, health, safety, and manners; and daily number work including counting and writing to 100, coin and calendar concepts, telling time, and beginning addition/subtraction. Social Studies covers Community Helpers, Children of the World, and America; Science covers plants, animals, the sea, earth, space, weather, and seasons. Bible, music, character training, patriotism, and respect for authority are woven throughout.

Primary Program: First–Second Grade

Continuing the Abeka Book curriculum, students are taught math, language, spelling, poetry, history, science, art, and penmanship alongside daily Bible instruction. First grade builds on phonics into spelling and grammar fundamentals, introduces American and World History units, and advances arithmetic through three-digit addition/subtraction, telling time, and basic geometry. Second grade deepens phonics, spelling, and grammar; expands American History; and advances arithmetic through multiplication/division facts, fractions, and graphing. Seatwork — independent review material done at the student's desk — reinforces learning, builds independent work habits, and frees the teacher to run focused reading groups.

Intermediate Program: Third–Fourth Grade

Alongside daily Bible instruction, students study math, language, spelling, poetry, history, science, art, and penmanship, plus a weekly music class and computer class, chapel, Parent Teacher Fellowships, and fall/spring intramurals. This is a transitional stage: material becomes far more content-based, and studying at home becomes necessary for history, science, spelling, and vocabulary success, alongside an intensifying, fast-paced math and grammar sequence.

Middle School Program: Fifth–Sixth Grade

Continuing to build on lower-elementary skills, subjects include Bible, language, mathematics, science, reading, spelling, health, and history, with three electives — music, computer, and a secondary language — plus chapel, PTF, and intramurals. Sixth graders may participate in IBA's high school sports program (soccer, volleyball, basketball) provided they maintain a “C” average in all classes. Material becomes even more content-based; English and math (stair-step subjects) often require daily study. Classroom structure shifts toward more individual responsibility and away from group work, preparing students for junior high.

Philosophy of Discipline in the Christian School

Biblically, we believe discipline is the parents' responsibility. During school hours, parents may delegate that responsibility to the school, but the primary responsibility remains theirs — so it is vital for parents and school to cooperate on discipline. At IBA, discipline goes hand-in-hand with love: as a child feels his teacher's love, he realizes it is the misbehavior the teacher dislikes, not him, deepening rather than damaging the relationship.

Ardell Jacquot's Guide to Successful Christian Teaching sums up our philosophy: discipline in a Christian school seeks the development of character — a change in attitude, action, and thinking — guiding a student in paths of righteousness (see Job 36:10-11; Hebrews 13:17). The purposes of godly discipline are: to bring about change in behavior and encourage self-discipline; to teach submission to authority; to curb unrighteousness; to build character; and to enhance learning. When these principles are applied, children learn from mistakes as well as successes, and mature in Godly character — “discipline with eternity in mind is what IBA is all about.”

Tally System of Discipline

The tally system is the procedure of school discipline used in kindergarten through sixth grade. A tally is a way of recording behavior that indicates a need for instruction or correction — a reminder, not a punishment, though it may lead to punishment if disregarded. The spiritual basis draws on Proverbs 9:9-10 and Hebrews 13:17: rightly receiving instruction leads to wisdom and pleases God (II Timothy 3:17).

“HOW I ACT” — H=Hullabaloo, O=Out of Order, W=Work Not In, I=Intentional, A=Attitude Lacking, C=Courtesy Lacking, T=Talking

Tally Type & Explanation	Grade	Penalty
Hullabaloo (Yellow): noises done purposely that are disrupting or distracting — tapping a pencil, rattling papers, burping, yawning, singing, humming, whistling, yelling, etc.	K–6th	1 tally
Out of Order #1 (Orange): infractions not covered elsewhere — out of line without permission, throwing things, passing notes, gum, littering, eating at wrong times/places, out of seat, unrelated materials, dress code violation, same-gender horseplay/shoving.	K–6th	1 tally
Out of Order #2: inappropriate male-female physical contact — holding hands, inappropriate touching/sitting, hugging, kissing.	4th–6th	5 tallies
Out of Order #3: cell phone not in book bag, or used at a non-designated time/place.	K–6th	5 tallies
Work Not In (Green): seatwork/assignments/homework not turned in on time (1 tally per item); unprepared (missing supplies); unsigned required papers; weekly report/absentee note not returned. Not removed once a missing item is turned in — it's a responsibility reminder.	K–3rd / 4th–6th	1 tally / 2 tallies
Attitude Lacking (Light Blue): disrespect directed at a teacher/authority — rolling eyes, defiance, arguing, huffing, sneering, slamming items, refusing to sign the tally slip, mocking, sarcasm, insolence, etc. Multiple actions at once may go straight to suspension.	K–6th	2 tallies
Courtesy Lacking (Dark Blue): rudeness toward staff, teachers, or peers; inconsiderate behavior, lack of manners.	K–6th	1 tally

Tally Type & Explanation	Grade	Penalty
Talking (Pink): talking without permission during class time or in line; talking is permitted only after a raised hand is recognized.	K–6th	1 tally
Intentional Disobedience (Red): open defiance, fighting, bullying, lying, stealing, cheating (automatic zero), lewd language/profanity, pornography or lewd material/action, smoking.	K–6th	10 tallies

Each Friday, students receive a weekly report showing tallies received that week, cumulative tallies, and D/F papers; a detention notice is included if one was earned. The administration may alter tally values, use other means of correction, apply older-student criteria to a younger student, or move straight to expulsion for aggravated or particularly serious misbehavior.

Discipline Procedures for Kindergarten – Sixth Grade

Threshold	Consequence
10 / 20 / 30 / 40 / 60 cumulative tallies	Student must serve an after-school detention (each threshold)
25 tallies	Unable to go on a field trip or participate in party days/End of Year Carnival unless accompanied by a parent
50 tallies	Unable to go on any field trip or participate in party days/End of Year Carnival; a sixth grader in High School sports is no longer eligible to play
50 tallies	Suspended for one day
75 tallies	Parents asked to voluntarily withdraw the child, or the child will be expelled (this pace equals nine to ten tallies a week)

Tally totals reset at the end of each semester. Kindergarten suspensions carry no grade deduction but are recorded on the permanent record; the administration may expel after a suspension. **Detention:** K5–3rd grade, 30 minutes (\$10.00); 4th–6th grade, one hour (\$20.00). After-school detention begins at 3:30 p.m. and takes precedence over any after-school activity; failure to report results in six tallies; students not picked up by 4:30 are sent to Late Stay and assessed a fee. **Suspension:** K5–sixth grade students may make up missed work but receive a 0.50% deduction off their nine-week average per day suspended; the administration may expel after a first or second suspension.

Homework

Homework is an integral part of the school program, given for reinforcement, practice, remedial activity, and special projects. To encourage church attendance, teachers do not assign homework on Wednesdays, though unfinished seatwork must still be completed (even on Wednesdays). Students in grades one through six are required to have a daily assignment tablet, signed nightly by a parent; failure to obtain the signature results in tallies. Students should not complete homework together over FaceTime or video chat.

Honor Roll

Compiled after each nine-week grading period. **Principal's Honor Roll:** all “A's” with no S, S-, U, or I grades. **Honor Roll:** all “A's” and “B's” with no S, S-, U, or I grades. An “I” (incomplete) not made up within 10 school days after the grading period disqualifies the student from honor roll that period; no incompletes are given at the end of the fourth nine weeks.

Progress Reports

Issued at the mid-point of each nine-week grading period (about four and a half weeks in) to inform parents whether work is satisfactory. Must be signed and returned the next school day, or tallies/demerits are given for each day not returned.

Report Cards and Grading System

Issued after each nine-week period. Bills must be current before report cards are issued. All academic subjects receive number grades; the four elective subjects in grades 1–6 (art, computer, music, Spanish) receive O's, S's, and U's. Honor roll requires all A's and B's in academic subjects and at least an S+ in electives.

Academic Subjects	Elective Subjects (Art, Computer, Music)
A+ = 98–100 · A = 93–97 · A- = 90–92	O+ = 96–100 · O = 91–95 · O- = 86–90
B+ = 87–89 · B = 83–86 · B- = 80–82	S+ = 81–85 · S = 76–80 · S- = 70–75
C+ = 77–79 · C = 73–76 · C- = 70–72	U = 69 & below
D+ = 67–69 · D = 63–66 · D- = 60–62	
F = 59 & below	

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Held mid-way through the Second Quarter; Third and Fourth Quarter conferences are held as needed, requested by either party. Parents who attend the same church as staff are asked not to discuss school-related problems at church — please set up an appointment instead.

Testing Program

All students in grades K through eleven take standardized achievement tests each spring in English, spelling, math, science, social studies, reading, reading comprehension, and listening skills, used to improve curriculum.

Promotion

A student's end-of-year average determines promotion. A student with two “F's” in two different subjects may be retained in the same grade. **Summer Tutoring** is required for core/stair-step subjects (math, reading, phonics, language, English): 30 hours for a single “F” average (59 and below); 20 hours for a “D” average in a core subject (60–69). Tutoring may be with an IBA teacher, a learning center such as Sylvan, or another qualified, degreed instructor. Parents must return IBA's evaluation form confirming completion before the child advances.

Textbooks

Students are responsible for their textbooks; hardback books, workbooks, and paperbacks should be laminated/covered within one school week of receipt. Replacement of lost or excessively damaged textbooks is the responsibility of the student, with costs/fees assessed accordingly.

Church Attendance and Ministry Requirements

Regular church attendance is expected of all students.

Conduct at Athletic Competitions

No booing or throwing items; violators will be asked to leave. Visiting teams are our guests and should be treated as such. Students attending athletic games must remain in their IBA uniforms.

Parental Visits to School

Parents are welcome for lunch, special programs, and class observation (see the shared Parent/Classroom Interactions appendix). Students may not invite friends or relatives to school during the school day.

Solicitations

Not allowed without administration permission — including selling tickets or candy, distributing political materials, or circulating petitions.

Articles Brought to School

Toys brought for recess or Late Stay must meet academy standards; the child takes full responsibility, and IBA is not responsible for reimbursement if broken, damaged, or stolen. No toy weapons.

Articles Prohibited or Restricted at School

Prohibited items include (but are not limited to): cameras, radios, electronic equipment, tape recorders, laptops, MP3 players, CD players, sports equipment, animals, water guns, balloons, tools, firecrackers, shaving cream, trading cards, mace, pepper spray, laser pointers, heavy chains, cigarettes/lighters, alcohol, narcotics, dice, playing cards, knives, guns, explosives, toy guns/caps, water pistols, baseballs, bats, skateboards, scooters, skates, and wheeled shoes. Hats, sunglasses, and jackets must be removed indoors; bandannas, scarves, and headbands are prohibited; students should not draw/write on themselves or apply stickers/decals to skin.

Students are not permitted to bring any “smart” electronic devices to school (iPads, tablets, laptops, watches). Cell phones must remain off and out of view 7:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m., kept in book bags at all times. Cell phones may not be used during Early Stay, the school day, PE/Recess, afternoon homeroom, music classes, or Late Stay, except with permission to speak with a parent or ride. Confiscated phones are returned at day's end with tallies given; repeated infractions may require a parent to retrieve the phone from the administrator.

Searches for Suspicion of Illegal or Unauthorized Materials

The school reserves the right to search a student's locker or belongings if suspected of possessing weapons, explosives, alcohol, or drugs; enrollment constitutes parental consent to such searches. A positive drug test result or possession of a real gun, knife, weapon, explosive, alcohol, or drugs results in automatic expulsion.

Visitors

All non-employees (including graduates and older staff children) must report to the office for a Visitor's Pass; unknown visitors may be asked for picture ID and purpose of visit. Guests must conform to IBA's dress code. Parents should warn children about strangers and report any loitering near school.

Lost and Found

Items are displayed at the end of each quarter for claiming; students are encouraged to mark all personal items.

Asbestos, Fire Drills, and Parties

IBA is free from asbestos or other carcinogenic building materials and complies with OSHA regulations. Fire drills are held periodically; escape plans are posted in each classroom. Administrative approval is required for any school group gathering or party.

School Pictures

Taken yearly by a professional photographer; students wear uniforms on picture day. Purchase is optional; all students are photographed for the yearbook.

School-Sponsored Trips

Limited to the teachers and students of the specific class plus approved chaperones — not younger or older siblings. Home-school students under our umbrella program may participate; outside students may not, except visiting missionary or special speaker's children. Faculty are in charge of all students unless a student is on Field Trip Restriction (25–49 tallies in a semester), in which case a parent must accompany and is fully responsible for that student. Permission slips with emergency numbers are required; all school rules apply;

students who misbehave may be denied future trips. School vehicles require separate boy/girl seating and at least one adult accompanying the group.

Parent Chaperones

Chaperones follow the same dress standard as students — knee-length dresses/skirts for ladies, full-length pants for men (blue jeans/knee-length jean skirts acceptable on casual trips). All chaperones must sign a Chaperone Agreement Form.

Care of School Property

Students must not damage school or private property on campus or at school events. Willful or accidental damage must be paid for. Textbooks must be covered, or tallies are issued. Desks remain school property subject to random checks; general housekeeping inspections and reasonable-suspicion searches may occur without notice.

General Practices

No visitor may interfere with normal programs without administration permission. The school's name may not be used in media without prior authorization. IBA is not responsible for non-school-sponsored after-school functions. Dress and conduct rules apply to school-sponsored functions for students and guests alike. Students should not trade, rent, buy, or sell personal belongings with one another.

Rap/Rock Music Policy

IBA considers rap and rock music (including “Christian rock/rap”) detrimental to a young person's spiritual, moral, and intellectual life; listening during school hours is an infraction resulting in tallies/demerits.

Withdrawal / Dismissal

Parents may withdraw a student for any reason with three days' written notice, completed in person through the Academy office; tuition continues until the official form is completed and delivered. Records/transcripts are withheld until all bills are paid. The school may, for any reason, ask a student to withdraw with notice, separate from discipline procedures. Students dismissed will not be considered for re-enrollment during the current school year; parents must meet with the administration before re-enrollment is considered for the next year. Refunds apply only to tuition already paid, not fees or other expenses.

Leaving School Grounds

Students may not leave school grounds during the day without office and parent permission, and must sign the check-in/check-out log. Failure to do so results in tallies/demerits.

Boy-Girl Relationships

Couples are never to be unchaperoned in the school or on the grounds; tallies are issued for this and for inappropriate touching. Only siblings or relatives may ride in cars together unless accompanied by parents or approved chaperones.

PART FOUR

High School Division (Seventh–Twelfth Grade)

Early – Late Stay

IBA provides Early Stay for students in kindergarten through high school. Students arriving between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. must report to the Early Stay teacher — there are absolutely no exceptions. Late Stay hours are 3:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.; a fee of \$12.00 per hour per child applies (15-minute increments, monthly discounted rate available), with a \$10.00 plus \$2.00-per-minute late fee after 5:30 p.m. Athletes staying for a game must still register with Late Stay at 3:30 p.m. and arrange adult supervision for any gap before the game starts. Students not picked up from sports practice by 5:30 p.m. will likewise be checked into Late Stay and assessed the applicable fee.

Arrival and Dismissal

The academic day runs 8:15 a.m.–3:15 p.m.; students may enter at 8:00 a.m. and must report to Early Stay if arriving earlier. At 3:15 p.m., parents pick up at the designated line; anyone other than the parent must be on the “Approved Pick-up List.” Driving students must go directly to their car at dismissal (not linger in homerooms/halls/lobby) and leave by 3:20 p.m. Teachers are unavailable for conferences 3:15–3:30 p.m. A written note or email (not a phone call) is required for a student to go home with another student.

Tardiness

Students should arrive before 8:15 a.m. Three unexcused tardies equal one absence; unexcused tardies carry over quarter to quarter, and ten in a quarter incur a \$20 charge per ten. Tardiness is for emergencies only.

Absences

All absences are unexcused unless a note is provided. In junior high (7th–8th), 25 absences in a school year may result in retention or refused admittance the following year. In high school, excess absences cause loss of course credit according to the schedule below; the administration has final authority.

Class meets	Excessive absences at
5-day classes	25 days
4-day classes	20 days
3-day classes	15 days
2-day classes	10 days
1-day class	5 days

Make-Up Work

Students must request make-up work immediately upon return and check with teachers for missed assignments; unmade-up work is recorded as a zero. Request homework three days in advance when absence is known ahead of time.

Lunch Program

A lunch with drink is available for purchase daily. No microwave use or refrigerator storage (demerits apply). A forgotten-lunch student is charged \$12 for a provided lunch; a delivered lunch not arrived by lunchtime results in the same \$12 charge. Visitors need a Visitor's Pass and may not exceed the student's lunch period.

Early Pick-Up from School

Report to the office, not the classroom; give notice at least an hour prior. Students must sign out through the office.

Scheduled Noon Dismissals & Snow Days

On 12:00 noon dismissal days, pick up by 12:15 (fifteen-minute grace period); an \$8.00 late fee applies per fifteen-minute interval thereafter, with no Late Stay provided. Closings/delays are announced via Gradelink email/text; IBA does not necessarily follow PG County closings.

Medicine, First Aid, and Sickness at School

Tylenol, Tums, and Ibuprofen are available in the office with permission on file. Junior high and high school students give all medicine to the homeroom teacher with a dispensing form. Prescription medication requires written parental permission and original labeled containers. Asthma inhalers require a self-medication authorization note on file. Emergency medications (epi-pens, etc.) are provided to the office with physician instructions. A student with fever, diarrhea, or vomiting will be sent home and must be symptom-free 24 hours before returning.

Dress Code

School is a semi-formal environment; the administration decides what is acceptable in dress and appearance. Violations result in a dress code letter and demerits. IBA's official day runs 7:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. and uniform is required throughout for any student remaining on campus.

Girls' Dress

- **Skirts:** Navy Blue or Khaki through the IBA French Toast School Store only; hems reach the floor kneeling, cover the knee sitting.
- **Modesty Shorts:** Girls must wear shorts or fitted leggings underneath their skirts at all times.
- **Tops:** Three-button polo through French Toast, choice of colors; at least one burgundy top required for field trips and picture day. Tucked in at all times, only top button undone, white undertee only. No men's apparel/boys' jackets; no scarves, suspenders, or excessive jewelry.
- **Hosiery:** Socks, hose, or hoseless — socks must be white if worn. Panty hose or thigh-high hosiery is encouraged over knee-high (visible knee-highs are subject to demerits). Ankle-length leggings (fitted, not baggy or loose; white or dark solid colors only) permitted in colder months.
- **Shoes:** Closed heel and toe, hard-bottom sole; no sandals/clogs/slipper-style (e.g., Uggs). Platform boots are not allowed. Rain/snow boots matching the IBA standard permitted. On dress-up days (plays, speech recitations), open-toed/strappy shoes are allowed.
- **Jackets:** No non-IBA jackets, vests, or hoodies in classroom/hallway/lunchroom/chapel; only IBA jackets/sweaters from French Toast.
- **Jewelry, Hair, Makeup:** Makeup/jewelry used sparingly; nails kept short for PE safety. No faddish nail polish, glitter, faddish hair colors, two-toned hair, or non-natural hair accessories. Tattoos (including drawn-on) prohibited. Earrings $\leq 1\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter/ $2\frac{1}{2}$ " length, one pair in the lobe only; no nose rings. No faddish bracelets or sports headbands during academic hours; no color-changing contacts.
- **Hats:** Worn to school but not on campus; never backwards.
- **P.E. Uniform (Jr. High/High School Girls):** Knee-length athletic skirt, IBA P.E. shirt, socks, and proper tennis shoes.
- **General Dress (non-uniform days):** Modest neckline, not tight; no sleeveless or sheer; kick pleats no higher than mid-knee.

Boys' Dress

- **Pants:** Navy blue or khaki through French Toast only; leather belt required (no canvas/fabric); no denim except designated special days. Pants must not be too tight and must be the proper length.

- **Shirts:** Three-button polo through French Toast; at least one burgundy top required for field trips and pictures; tucked in, only top button undone, white undertee only.
- **Socks:** Crew-style at all times; no neon, patterned, or footie.
- **Shoes:** No sandals; tennis/canvas shoes during the week; laces complete and properly tied.
- **Jackets:** No non-IBA jackets/vests/hoodies in classroom/hallway/lunchroom/chapel; sweatshirts/hoodies not oversized, baggy, or lettered.
- **Jewelry & Headbands:** Only a watch, class ring, or initial ring on the ring finger; no necklaces/bracelets/earrings; no sports headbands during school hours; no color-changing contacts; no tattoos including drawn-on.
- **Hats:** Worn to school but not on campus; never backwards.
- **PE:** Knee-length shorts or wind pants, IBA P.E. shirt, socks, tennis shoes (all from French Toast).
- **General Grooming:** Clean-shaven daily (no visible facial hair). Hair in front must not touch eyebrows; back hair must not touch collar; sides must not cover/touch ears; sideburns no lower than mid-ear. Rat-tails, tracking, bowl cuts, spiked hair, Mohawks, braids, and man-buns are not acceptable (flat tops not spiked). Twists/afros $\leq$ two inches.

Students violating dress code will be sent home to correct the violation and receive demerits; grooming violations (shaving/haircut) automatically receive a dress code demerit.

General Goals for Students

IBA expects students to live above reproach, showing respect to God, country, family, faculty, and fellow-students; lying, cheating, profanity, and stealing will not be tolerated. Attendance is a privilege, not a right; anyone who will not cooperate spiritually, morally, or scholastically will be dismissed.

Junior High School Program: Seventh–Eighth Grades

Students begin having many different teachers across Bible, English, math, science, literature, spelling, health, music, Spanish, computer, and history, with a weekly chapel program added. Material becomes extremely content-based; English, math, and foreign language may carry daily homework; quarter, midterm, and final exams are added. Seventh and eighth graders may participate in IBA's sports program (soccer, volleyball, basketball) provided they maintain a “C” average in all classes.

High School Program: Ninth–Twelfth Grades

Graduation requires accumulating 27 credits in excess of Maryland's requirements, including a Bible class every year attended. English must be taken at IBA (summer-school English elsewhere is honored only after an IBA-administered placement test). All students follow the administration's prescribed course of study. Math, science, and foreign language (Spanish I/II) intensify with daily homework and stair-step mastery requirements. High school students may participate in the sports program, maintaining a “C” average. A student's transcript, developed across all four years, follows them for life. Graduating seniors lacking more than one credit may not march in commencement unless arrangements are made for approved summer school.

Graduating Seniors — Financial and Honors

Seniors have financial obligations including graduation fees, reception fees, cap and gown, and senior trip costs (see the school office for current fees). A GPA of 3.50–3.69 earns a silver honor cord at graduation; 3.70+ earns gold. Valedictorian and salutatorian are chosen by GPA among students who attended at least two years of high school at IBA, with a minimum honor-point average of 3.50 (valedictorian) or 3.25 (salutatorian); ties may result in co-valedictorians.

Church Attendance and Ministry Requirements

Regular church attendance is expected of all students.

Philosophy of Discipline in the Christian School

Biblically, discipline is the parents' responsibility, delegated to the school during school hours — requiring close cooperation between home and school. At IBA, discipline is paired with love, so a child understands it is the misbehavior, not the child, that is corrected. Citing Ardell Jacquot's Guide to Successful Christian Teaching and Job 36:10-11 and Hebrews 13:17, the purposes of godly discipline are to bring about change in behavior and self-discipline, teach submission to authority, curb unrighteousness, build character, and enhance learning — “discipline with eternity in mind is what IBA is all about.”

Demerit Method of Discipline (Seventh–Twelfth Grades)

The demerit system is IBA's method of discipline for grades seven through twelve. Failure to comply with the standard of conduct results in demerits; the administration may alter demerit values, use other means of correction, or proceed straight to suspension or expulsion if demerits are not changing behavior.

A student accumulating 35 demerits in a semester becomes ineligible for field trips for the rest of the semester; 50 demerits makes a student ineligible for the sports program. Demerit weights do not return to zero at the end of the semester.

Demerits	Consequence
10 / 20 / 30 / 40	One-hour after-school detention
50	SUSPENSION #1 (one day) — 3% grade deduction
60	One-hour after-school detention
70	SUSPENSION #2 (two days) — 5% grade deduction
80	One-hour after-school detention
90	Parents asked to voluntarily withdraw the child, or the child will be expelled

Detention: held during Early Stay on Monday (7:00 a.m.) or after school on Thursday (3:30 p.m.); takes precedence over after-school activities. Late arrival to detention = 3 demerits; failure to report = 5 demerits. Students not picked up by 4:30 p.m. are sent to Late Stay and assessed a fee. Detention fee: \$20.00.

Suspension: missed work may be made up, but a grade deduction applies per day suspended; the administration may expel after a first or second suspension. See the Demerit Weights table below.

Homework

Homework is neatly, accurately, and promptly completed, given for reinforcement, practice, remediation, and special projects. No homework is assigned on Wednesdays to encourage church attendance. Seventh through twelfth graders are not required to have nightly-signed tablets, but repeated delinquency can require daily signing and, if it continues, may result in expulsion.

Progress Reports & Report Cards

Progress reports are issued mid-way through each nine-week grading period and must be signed and returned the next school day or demerits are given for each day late. Report cards are issued after each nine-week period; bills must be current before issuance. All A's and B's are required for Honor Roll.

Grading Scale
A+ = 98–100 · A = 93–97 · A- = 90–92 · B+ = 87–89 · B = 83–86 · B- = 80–82 · C+ = 77–79 · C = 73–76 · C- = 70–72 · D+ = 67–69 · D = 63–66 · D- = 60–62 · F = 59 & below

Honor Roll

Principal's Honor Roll: all “A's” with no “I” (incomplete) grades. **Honor Roll:** all “A's” and “B's” with no “I” grades. An unresolved incomplete after 10 school days disqualifies a student for that period; no incompletes are given at year's end.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Held mid-way through the Second Quarter; Third and Fourth Quarter conferences are as-needed, requested by either party. Please schedule an appointment rather than discussing school issues at church.

Testing Program

Standardized achievement testing is given each spring for grades K–11. Seniors should register for the SAT and/or ACT; taking both gives colleges the clearest picture of a student's aptitude and achievement.

Promotion

In seventh and eighth grade, a student's end-of-year average determines promotion; an “F” in two different subjects results in retention. At the high school level, an “F” causes loss of credit for that subject only; grade level tracks credits earned. **Summer Tutoring** (7th–8th grade core/stair-step subjects): 30 hours for a single “F” average (59 and below); 20 hours for a “D” average in a core subject (60–69), with an evaluation form due at summer's end.

Textbooks

Students are responsible for covering and caring for textbooks within one school week of receipt; lost or excessively damaged books are the student's financial responsibility.

Conduct at Athletic Competitions

No booing or throwing items; violators asked to leave. Visiting teams are guests and should be treated as such. Students attending games must remain in IBA uniform.

Parental Visits to School

Welcome for lunch, programs, and observation (see the shared Parent/Classroom Interactions appendix). Students may not invite friends or relatives during the school day.

Solicitations

Not allowed without administration permission.

Articles Brought to School

IBA is not responsible for broken or lost items brought to school.

Articles Prohibited or Restricted at School

Prohibited items include (but are not limited to) cameras, radios, electronic equipment, tape recorders, laptops, MP3 players, CD players, sports equipment, animals, water guns, balloons, tools, firecrackers, shaving cream, trading cards, mace, pepper spray, laser pointers, heavy chains, cigarettes/lighters, alcohol, narcotics, dice, playing cards, knives, guns, explosives, toy guns/caps, water pistols, baseballs, bats, skateboards, scooters, skates, and wheeled shoes. A student may bring a Kindle (not Kindle Fire) as a book to read between classes only — no games or internet use.

Smart electronic devices (iPads, tablets, laptops, watches) are not permitted. Cell phones remain off and out of view 7:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m., kept in cars or lockers throughout the day; not used during Early Stay, the school day, PE/Recess, or Late Stay except with permission. Confiscated phones return at day's end with demerits given; repeated infractions require a parent to retrieve the phone from the administrator. See the Cell Phone Use appendix.

Searches for Suspicion of Illegal or Unauthorized Materials

The school may search a student's locker or belongings on suspicion of weapons, explosives, alcohol, or drugs; enrollment constitutes parental consent. A positive drug test, or possession of a real gun, knife, weapon, explosive, alcohol, or drugs, results in automatic expulsion.

Visitors, Lost and Found, Asbestos, Fire Drills, Parties

All non-employees must obtain a Visitor's Pass at the office and conform to the dress code; unknown visitors may be asked for ID. Lost items are displayed quarterly for claiming. IBA is asbestos-free and OSHA-compliant. Fire drills are held periodically with posted escape plans. Administrative approval is required for group gatherings or parties.

School Pictures

Taken yearly by a professional photographer; students wear the burgundy uniform shirt on picture day. Purchase is optional. Senior pictures are the family's sole responsibility, arranged independently.

School-Sponsored Trips

Limited to the teachers and students of the specific class plus approved chaperones, not siblings. Home-school umbrella students may participate; outside students may not, with narrow exceptions. Permission slips, adherence to all school rules, and possible trip fees apply; misbehaving students may be denied future trips. School vehicles require separate boy/girl seating and at least one accompanying adult.

Parent Chaperones

Chaperones follow the student dress standard — knee-length dresses/skirts for ladies, full-length pants for men (jeans acceptable on casual trips). All chaperones sign a Chaperone Agreement Form.

Care of School Property

Students may not damage school or private property on or off campus during school activities; damage must be paid for. Uncovered textbooks incur demerits. Desks and lockers remain school property subject to random checks and reasonable-suspicion searches.

General Practices

Visitors may not interfere with normal programs without permission. The school name may not be used in media without authorization. IBA is not responsible for non-school-sponsored functions. Dress and conduct rules apply to school-sponsored functions for students and guests. Students should not trade, rent, buy, or sell personal belongings with one another.

Rap/Rock Music Policy

IBA considers rap and rock music (including “Christian rock/rap”) detrimental and prohibits it during school hours; violations result in demerits.

Withdrawal / Dismissal

Three days' written notice, completed in person at the Academy office; tuition continues until the official form is complete. Records are withheld until bills are paid. The school may ask a student to withdraw for any reason with notice, separate from discipline procedures. Dismissed students are not considered for re-enrollment during the current school year; parents must meet with administration before the next year's re-enrollment is considered. Refunds apply only to tuition already paid.

Leaving School Grounds

Not permitted without office and parent permission; students must sign the check-in/check-out log or receive demerits.

Boy-Girl Relationships

Couples are never unchaperoned in school or on the grounds; demerits apply for this and inappropriate touching. Only siblings/relatives may ride together in cars unless accompanied by a parent or approved chaperone.

Policy for Working Students

High school students who wish to work during the school year must: carry a 3.0 grade average or better; complete all courses of instruction offered by IBA; have fewer than ten demerits per semester; maintain faithful church attendance; and not skip school to work. No special school schedules are made to accommodate work; students check out through the office and leave promptly; school functions take priority over work schedules; working students may not change out of uniform before leaving for work. After-school work is a privilege, not a right, and may be canceled for rule violations or at the administration's discretion.

Driving Student Requirements

Students who drive must park immediately upon arrival, remove everything needed for the day, and lock the car before entering the building; they may return to their car only with office/teacher permission for an emergency. At dismissal, drivers go directly to their car (not lingering), ensure riders are with them, and leave the lot by 3:20 p.m. Sports participants must ride the team bus unless approved otherwise. A non-sports student driving to a sports event may not carry passengers without written parental/administration permission. Transporting other students requires written permission from all parents involved; opposite-sex riders require written administration approval unless family members. Squealing tires, loud engines/music, or reckless driving is not tolerated.

Violations: First — parents notified, demerits given. Second — driving privileges suspended three school days. Third — no driving to school for two weeks. Additional disciplinary action may apply at the administration's discretion.

Locker Regulations

- It is encouraged for all students to have a lock on their locker.
- Only office-approved pictures may be hung inside lockers; no writing on lockers, inside or out, and any artwork/slogans must be office-approved.
- Students must respect the property of a locker-mate; combination or key access must be shared with all students using that locker.
- Students may not open or enter another student's locker without permission from the homeroom teacher or duty teacher.
- All cell phones must stay in lockers 8:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.; no calls or texts during that window, or the privilege of bringing a cell phone is lost, no exceptions.
- No open food or beverages inside lockers at any time.
- Stealing from a locker is a serious offense resulting in demerits, as does abusing or defacing a locker (school property).
- Students may not change lockers without prior office approval.

Seventh–Twelfth Grade Demerit Weights

The categories below give representative demerit values; repeated offenses generally escalate, and the administration may proceed straight to suspension for serious or repeated violations.

Category	Demerit Weight / Notes
Attitude (Disrespect)	5 / 10 / 15, escalating; several actions at once may go straight to suspension

Category	Demerit Weight / Notes
Bullying	5, then 7 thereafter for repeated offenses
Candy/Food/Drink/Gum at undesignated areas or times	1–2, escalating
Cell phone / tablet / smart watch violation	5 (not in locker) / 7 (rings in class) / 10 (used without permission), escalating
Chapel violation	2, escalating to 3 for repeat offenses
Cheating (includes using AI for any part of an assignment)	Automatic zero on the work, plus 15 (homework answers) or 20 (quiz/test/exam); repeat offense may mean suspension
Defacing/destruction/neglect of school property	5–6 per offense, escalating
Disobedience (includes skipping detention)	5, escalating to suspension
Disorderly conduct (horseplay, play-fighting, etc.)	3–5, escalating
Dress code	3, escalating to suspension for repeated violations
Drugs or alcohol (at or away from school)	Suspension
Failure to follow instructions	1–3, escalating
Fighting	15 each offense
Hall/locker violation	1–2, escalating
Leaving building/room without permission	1–2, escalating
Lying/deceitfulness	10, escalating to 20 for repeat offenses
Notes (passing in class)	2–3, escalating
Physical contact (inappropriate male-female contact)	2–5, escalating; also applies at IBC-sponsored and other events
Pornography/lewd action or lewd material (at or away from school)	50 each offense; repeat offense may mean suspension/expulsion
Prohibited or restricted articles brought to school	5–15 depending on the item, escalating
Rap/rock music (at or away from school)	10, escalating to 20
Sacrilegious speech/writing, profanity/cursing (at or away from school)	5–15 depending on severity, escalating
Skipping class (includes study hall/afternoon homeroom)	5 each offense
Smoking/tobacco products (at or away from school)	35 each offense; repeat offense may mean suspension
Stealing	20–30
Talking / talking in an inappropriate way	2–3, escalating
Tardy	Reminder-based first two quarters, then 1–2 per tardy with no reminders
Trash/littering	1
Unprepared (missing books, Bible, PE uniform, etc.)	1

Category	Demerit Weight / Notes
Unsigned papers	1–2, escalating
Willfully hiding/withholding information about another student's infraction	10, escalating to 15
Work not in (late or incomplete assignments)	1–2, escalating

Note: warning or zero-value demerits are given during the first week of school only (excluding major infractions such as lying, stealing, or cheating). Demerit assessments double during exam week.

APPENDICES

Appendices

The appendices below were previously printed separately, and nearly identically, inside both the Elementary and High School handbooks. They are shared references for the Elementary and High School divisions and are printed once here rather than twice.

Appendix A: Cell Phone Use

General Policy: Cell phones, tablets, and smart watches used for communication are to remain “off” and “out of view” during official school hours, 7:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. Elementary students must keep phones off and in their book bags at all times; junior high and high school students must keep communication devices off and in their cars or lockers throughout the day. Devices are not to be used during Early Stay, throughout the school day, during PE/Recess, during afternoon homeroom or music classes, nor during Late Stay, unless a student has been given permission by a teacher to speak with an adult such as a parent or ride.

If a student brings a cell phone to class, or it rings while in a bag or locker, the teacher will initiate disciplinary action and the phone will be confiscated for the remainder of the day. “Forgetting” to turn off the phone is not an excuse; students with repeated confiscations may be asked not to bring a phone to school in the future. Use of a cell phone during a test for any reason is automatically considered cheating. No taking or other use of cell phone photographs is permitted, particularly in restrooms or locker room areas, at any time — this is a serious discipline offense.

Parents needing to contact a child during the school day for emergencies should call the main school phone number; school staff will assist in communicating with the child. A child's cell phone should not be relied upon as a means of parent contact during the school day.

Note: These guidelines were formulated after careful review of school cell phone policies across the state and the country. (©2006 Christian Law Association, www.christianlaw.org)

Appendix B: Vaccine Requirements

It is a state requirement to have immunization records on all new and returning students. Required and recommended cumulative doses by age group are as follows; proof of immunity by positive blood test is acceptable in place of vaccination where marked with an asterisk (*).

Kindergarten (60–71 Months / Age 5)

Doses	Vaccine
4	DTP/DtaP/Tdap/DT/Td
3	Polio*
1	Hib (must be received after 12 months of age)
2	Measles* (ages 60–71 months)
2	Rubella* (ages 60–71 months)
2	Mumps* (ages 60–71 months)
1	Varicella (Chickenpox)
3	Hepatitis B (not required for children older than 5)

Recommended — Ages 4–10 Years

Doses	Vaccine
6	DTP/DtaP/Tdap/DT/Td (final doses required for ages 11–12)
3	HPV (cervical cancer prevention)
1	MCV – Meningococcal (if not previously vaccinated)
1/year	Influenza
3	Polio*
2	Measles*
2	Rubella*
2	Mumps*
2	Varicella (Chickenpox)
2	Hepatitis A
3	Hepatitis B, if not previously vaccinated
1	Hib (after 12 months of age)
0	PCV7 (Prevnar), not required after age 5

Required/Recommended — Ages 11–18+ Years

Doses	Vaccine
3	Hepatitis B
5	DTP/DtaP/Tdap/DT/Td (5th dose recommended under age 7)
3 or 4	Hib (one after 12 months of age; not required after age 4)
1	PCV/PPCV (Prevnar), not required after age 5
4 or 5	IPV-Polio* (one dose after age 4)
1/year	Influenza
2	Measles, Mumps, and Rubella*
2	Varicella (Chickenpox)
2	Hepatitis A (at 1–2 years of age; may be given after age 2 if desired)

Appendix C: Guidelines from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention

According to the CDC, the typical child has 6 to 12 illnesses a year ranging from mild to severe, and even minor illnesses can require staying home to prevent further spread. In addition to consulting your pediatrician, consider the following when deciding whether to keep a child home:

- **Fever:** greater than 100.5°F requires staying home until fever-free for at least 24 hours; call your doctor if it doesn't resolve in 2–3 days.
- **Cough:** doesn't necessarily require staying home unless interfering with sleep or activity; productive cough with fever or trouble breathing should be evaluated by a pediatrician.
- **Vomiting or diarrhea:** stay home until symptoms stop and a regular diet is tolerated.
- **Sore throat:** mild sore throats without other symptoms are fine for school; sore throat with fever, vomiting, abdominal pain, or difficulty swallowing should be evaluated (and tested for strep if going around) — a strep diagnosis requires 24 hours on antibiotics before returning.
- **Earaches:** see a health provider if lasting more than a day or severe.

- **Impetigo or skin rash:** treat 24 hours before returning.
- **Pinkeye/conjunctivitis:** treat with antibiotic eye medicine before returning.
- **Painful urination:** could signal a kidney infection — keep the child home.
- **Chicken pox:** may return when all blisters are scabbed over and dry.
- **Head lice:** may not return until treated with all nits removed.
- **Contagious illness:** may not return until at least 24 hours of medication and no longer contagious per your doctor.

Frequent hand washing, tissue use, and covering coughs/sneezes help prevent the spread of illness. Sometimes staying home is the best way to protect our children, our communities, and ourselves.

Appendix D: Prince George's County Schools Code of Student Conduct

Independent Baptist Academy will follow Prince George's County Public Schools' student Code of Student Conduct as a minimum requirement for maintaining a safe and orderly environment. The administrator has the right to expel/suspend any student who commits any of the misbehaviors listed below, all of which lead to a mandatory request for expulsion from the administration:

- **Assault:** physically pushing, hitting, or otherwise attacking another student, staff member, or other lawfully present person, resulting in serious injury.
- **False alarms:** activating a fire alarm or warning of a fire, bombing, or other catastrophe without cause.
- **Group fight:** planned fighting by two or more students against others outside their group that results in serious bodily injury and/or significant disruption.
- **Physical attack on any school employee:** assaulting or attempting to assault any administrator, teacher, or staff member.
- **Illegal drugs and alcohol:** possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, marijuana, controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, inhalants, other intoxicants, or paraphernalia.
- **Possession of explosives:** possession, use, or threatened use of any explosive capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.
- **Possession or use of weapons:** possessing, using, or threatening to use any firearm, knife, razor, defensive weapon, martial-arts device, or any tool/instrument capable of inflicting bodily harm or resembling a weapon. A student who accidentally brings a weapon or look-alike weapon should report it to a school employee immediately upon discovering it.
- **Shakedown/strong-arm/extortion/bullying:** obtaining money or items under duress or threat; threatening bodily harm verbally or in writing/text/email/social media; threatening to bring a weapon to school.
- **Vandalism/destruction of property over \$500:** willful destruction or defacement of school or private property, on or off campus.
- **Other acts:** any singular act so severe in purpose, motivation, or commission that it adversely impacts the educational environment, including serious or repeated offenses.

Appendix E: Parent/Classroom Interactions

Classroom Observation

Parents are always welcome visitors. Please schedule a classroom observation at least five school days in advance so schedules can be adjusted; this minimizes disruption and helps ensure a beneficial visit. Please observe these four guidelines: remain in the **visitor's** chair; refrain from initiating interaction with the children; do not attempt to conference with teachers during instructional time (they will gladly discuss the observation at a mutually convenient time); and exit the room quietly at the close of your visit.

During the first sensitive weeks of the school year, we ask parents to avoid classroom observations until after the first quarter Progress Report. Parents may schedule one forty-five-minute observation per semester; siblings and other family members may not attend. Requests must be approved by the principal, who may decline or ask to reschedule for safety, security, or academic reasons (e.g., a scheduled test day). All visitors must check in at the office and obtain a visitor's badge.

Observation Day Procedures

- Arrive a few minutes early and go to the office to receive your visitor's pass; a staff member will escort you to the room.
- If children leave the room as a group (e.g., chapel), follow and observe unobtrusively and quietly, staying close enough to see and hear.
- When your scheduled time draws to a close, signal the teacher and proceed quietly out the door.

Lunchroom and Recess

Parents are always welcome to have lunch with their child; ask the teacher for lunch times and cafeteria costs. Please eat only with your own child, and keep any siblings brought into the cafeteria with you at all times. We ask that parents not accompany their child to the playground at recess.

The American Creed and Pledges

The American Creed

I believe in the United States of America — As a government of the people, by the people, for the people; Whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; A democracy in a republic; A sovereign nation of many sovereign states; A perfect union, one and inseparable; Established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my Country to love it; to support its constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies. (By William Tyler Page)

The Pledge to the Bible

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word. I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. I will hide its Word in my heart that I might not sin against God.

The Pledge to the Christian Flag

I pledge allegiance to the Christian Flag and to the Savior for whose Kingdom it stands. One Savior, crucified, risen, and coming again, with life and liberty to all who believe.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands: one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.