

**OCONEE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**  
2022-2023  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**



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Seneca, South Carolina 29672  
(864) 882-6925  
[www.oconeechristian.org](http://www.oconeechristian.org)

Welcome to the Oconee Christian Academy family. We are delighted that you are a member of the student body for the 2022-2023 school year. We are excited about working with you to make this a special year of spiritual and academic growth and maturity. Our theme this year is “**Jesus Freaks.**” Romans 1:16 says, “**For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.**”

The goal of Oconee Christian Academy is to offer each student quality educational opportunities in an environment of Christian purpose and principle, and to develop in every student a Christian philosophy of life.

Our educational program is based on sound academic training, Biblical discipline and the teaching of the Word of God, which is integrated into every area of life and study. Using the Bible and teachings of Christ as the center of the curriculum, our commitment is to train up our students “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). We count it a privilege to serve the Lord in this loving family environment.

Oconee Christian Academy provides this handbook as a means of acquainting parents and students with general information about the Academy, as well as defining some specific policies and rules. Parents (hereinafter defined to mean parents or legal guardians) and students are expected to be familiar with the handbook and sign a contract of agreement with, and support of, the school rules, policies, and procedures presented in this handbook. We feel it is vitally important to have parental involvement and support as we seek to enforce the rules and regulations set forth.

Oconee Christian Academy reserves the right to change any policy when it is deemed appropriate to do so. Notice of such changes will be given by newsletter to parents and orally to the students. It should also be understood this handbook is not to be considered all-inclusive. The Board of Trustees will make decisions and establish guidelines concerning any issues not specifically covered, as the need arises.

We request that you **keep this handbook** and that you **read it carefully**. You should be able to find answers to your basic questions. If you need further information or clarification, please call the school office at (864) 882-6925.

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## 2022-2023 FACULTY & STAFF

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Dean Bare.....	Director Emeritus/Stewardship Director
Lisa Beebe.....	Receptionist/Administrative Assistant
Bryan Bellotte.....	Operations
Michelle Brinnon.....	Associate Director of Accreditation
Renee Campbell.....	Fourth Grade
Keena Chambers.....	Student Resource Advisor
Debbie Chapa.....	Upper School Theater
Beth Cooper.....	Upper School ELA
Courtney DeLoatche.....	Art
Ginger DuPree.....	Upper School Science
Pamela Edgar-Crain.....	Principal
Jeremy Garrett.....	Upper School Bible
Scott Glenn.....	Upper School Math/ Campus Pastor/ IT/ Registrar
Taylor Gonzalez.....	Music/Band/Worship Arts
Aika Goudkov.....	Financial Administrative Assistant
Dmitri Goudkov.....	Upper School History/Advanced PE
Eric W. Johnson.....	Head of School
Gwen Johnson.....	Admissions Director
Bill Jones.....	Upper School Science
Jenny Keaton.....	Upper School ELA
Andrea Kelly.....	Second Grade
Jodi Lingle.....	Kindergarten
Ralph Looney.....	Upper School Bible/History
Diane McFarlane.....	AP Music Theory
Allison Motyka.....	First Grade
Charleen Price.....	Fifth Grade
David Shannon.....	Upper School Math
Walt Sinnamon.....	Upper School Science
Jim Watson.....	Third Grade
Mike White.....	Spanish
Greyson Williams.....	PE/Upper School Bible
Jennifer Woodring.....	Athletic Director/ Marketing & Communications/ Special Events Coordinator
Renee Wooten.....	Library/ STEM/ Food Service Manager
Reggie York.....	Operations

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## 2022-2023 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Joe Chapa (Chair)  
Cathy Myers (Secretary)  
Jimmy Boggs  
Shane Clardy  
Bob Giblin  
Dana Jones  
Melissa Pittman  
Holly Ricketson  
Caleb Woolbright

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# FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS

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## ACCREDITATION

OCA is fully accredited by Cognia, the same organization that accredits public schools throughout the United States. It is also fully accredited by ACSI (The Association of Christian Schools International).

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES ENDS STATEMENTS

Oconee Christian Academy (OCA) equips students of Christian parents to thrive spiritually, academically, socially, and physically in the next facet of life.

1. Students receive an excellent Christian education at a reasonable tuition cost.
2. Low finances do not prevent enrollment for children from qualified Christian families to the extent of available financial aid.
3. Students receive an integrated, biblical worldview through balancing academics, arts, and athletics in a thriving environment.
4. Graduates are equipped to thrive in future academic studies.
  - a. Average ACT/SAT scores will meet or exceed the seventieth percentile..
  - b. The average score for every grade tested will meet or exceed the 70th percentile on nationally standardized tests.
  - c. Students will receive up-to-date education in technology.
5. Students increasingly live passionate, Christ-centered lives as evidenced by:
  - a. Rooted and deepening faith.
  - b. Each one developing his/her giftedness for serving God.
  - c. Possession of an integrated biblical worldview.
  - d. Wholeheartedness in all things to the glory of God.
  - e. Demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit.

## FAMILY COVENANT

A *covenant* is a binding agreement between parties. It signifies a solemn oath and sincere pledge of mutual respect and cooperation.

### **School Commitment:**

Oconee Christian Academy covenants to provide the best it can for your child(ren) in the way of facilities, curriculum, instruction, faculty, athletics, and extra-curricular programs. OCA further pledges to do everything possible to support you in your efforts to raise your child(ren) in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

### **Parent/Guardian Commitment:**

As the legal parents/guardians of our children, we covenant to support OCA in its efforts in Christian education. We agree that it is our responsibility to strive diligently toward the observance of the *Family Covenant* as God enables us by the power of the Holy Spirit. If we feel at any time that our personal convictions are not aligned with this covenant, we promise to contact the administration to discuss our concerns.

**NOTE:** Please read the following statements. If there is any statement you cannot personally support, please initial it and discuss it with us in a personal interview. Generally, your honest inability to commit to any of these items would not necessarily prohibit acceptance into OCA; however, we want you to know from the start the foundational parameters of OCA, our personal expectations, and the importance of having your personal support.

1. We agree to abide by all guidelines set forth in the handbook.
2. We have read the "Statement of Faith" found in the school handbook and are willing to have our children educated in accordance with it.

3. We have read the “Fee Schedule” found in the school handbook. We agree to pay all financial obligations in accordance with the terms listed on the current Fee Schedule. We understand that report cards, transcripts, and other records will be withheld, and our child could be suspended, unless financial accounts are in order.
4. We will support Oconee Christian Academy with our prayers, our time, our finances, and avenues of involvement as God provides the opportunity and resources.
5. We will worship the Lord regularly at a Bible-believing church.
6. We will fully cooperate in the educational activities of OCA by doing our best to make Christian education effective in the lives of our children.
7. We will require our children to support the spiritual activities of the school (Chapel, Bible classes, Scripture memory, etc.).
8. The school has full discretion in the discipline of our children in accordance with the “Dress Code Policy” and the “Discipline Policy” as published in the school handbook.
9. The school reserves the right to place our child(ren) at the appropriate grade level and to designate the appropriate teacher(s).
10. The school reserves the right to dismiss any student when either the parents/guardians or the student does not cooperate with or support the enforcement of school policies.
11. We will be faithful to attend all parent functions at OCA, as best we can.
12. If we become dissatisfied with OCA in any way, we will strive to resolve the matter with the person(s) involved as privately and lovingly as possible, rather than spreading criticism and negativism. (Matthew 18: 15-17; 23-24)

**Student Commitment:**

As an OCA student, I covenant to submit to the authority of the school, its representatives, and to the final authority of the Word of God. I will respectfully follow the guidelines described in the student handbook.

It is the desire of Oconee Christian Academy that every student and school employee reflect a lifestyle pleasing to Jesus Christ. Because of this, who we are and what we do, both on and off campus, is extremely important. Since the testimony of our lives is so important, parents should ensure that their children understand the guidelines found in the student handbook. Enrolling in and attending Oconee Christian Academy implies agreement to the following statements pertaining to student conduct, both on and off campus, during and after school.

1. I understand and agree to submit to the guidelines described in the handbook.
2. I agree to strive for excellence as a student in all that I say and do.
3. I agree to obey the Bible in speech and conduct.
4. I agree to respect and cooperate with those in authority at the school.
5. I agree to avoid alcohol, drugs, and tobacco.
6. I agree to avoid cursing, sexual immorality, dissension, plagiarism, and other specific acts and attitudes cited in Galatians 5:19-21.
7. I agree to submit to the dress code that has been set by the school.
8. I agree to submit to the discipline policy of the school.
9. I understand that once I enroll at OCA, I am a part of OCA wherever I am. Therefore, I agree to avoid behavior, both on and off campus that would dishonor Jesus Christ, the school, my church, my family, and me.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

To glorify God by nurturing students and equipping them to fulfill God's unique purpose for their lives.

**PURPOSE**

To provide our students a quality education, to partner with a child’s family and church in the character development of each student, and to lead both our students and families to a closer walk with Jesus Christ.

**SCHOOL HISTORY**

Several visionary parents and educators met in January 1993 to explore the possibility of providing Christian education in Oconee County. These individuals recognized that the educational process should not only prepare students academically but should also nurture their personal growth, especially in the realm of spiritual

development. Out of this meeting emerged the Oconee Christian School Forum, which established the feasibility of such a school and appointed an advisory board. In April, 1993, this board prayerfully concluded that an independent, interdenominational school was within God's will. On July 1, 1993, the nonprofit corporation known as Oconee Christian Academy (OCA) was chartered.

OCA opened its doors to children in classes K3 through the seventh grade on September 5, 1993. An additional grade was added to the school each successive year, and in June of 1999 OCA graduated its first high school class. For the first eight years of its existence, OCA was blessed by the generosity of Bounty Land Baptist Church, which housed the school within its facilities.

It soon became clear, however, that if the school were to survive, it needed more space to grow. In a timely answer to prayer, God provided a miracle. Less than a mile from where classes were being held, 54 acres of land became available. Stepping out in faith, the OCA Board of Directors decided to secure a loan for the property in March of 1997. God affirmed this decision with another miracle, as the loan was paid off within two years. Soon after, the Jeremiah Project capital campaign was born, with the goal of raising enough funds to begin construction of a new school building. In 1999, the Board membership was frozen, and a Building Committee was appointed to work with Trehel Corporation and Signature Architects to design and build the new school. Although the official groundbreaking ceremony for the public was held on November 11, 2000, actual construction did not begin until February of 2001. In another notable miracle, construction was completed in only seven months. On September 4, 2001, OCA opened its new facilities on Highway 188 in Seneca.

OCA earned full accreditation from ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International) and AdvancEd on July 1, 2015.

### **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

OCA is founded upon conservative, evangelical Protestant Christian principles as manifested in the inerrant Word of God, the Old and New Testament Scriptures. Therefore, OCA believes the Bible to be the foundation for all matters of life and learning. We hold firmly that God as revealed through Jesus Christ is sovereign and the center of the universe; as such, He must also be the center of our lives and the focus of our every endeavor. OCA believes that God speaks to us through His holy scriptures; therefore, we must submit unconditionally to the authority of the Bible and recognize His scriptures as the exclusive standard for Christian education. In addition:

- 1) We believe the Bible to be the only inspired, infallible Word of God; as such, it is the final authority in all matters of life and faith.
- 2) We believe in one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- 3) We believe that God created man in His own image and granted man free will; that man chose to sin against God, leading to physical and spiritual death; that this spiritual death separates man from God; and that all people are born with a sinful nature.
- 4) We believe in both the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, and His numerous miracles.
- 5) We believe that Jesus Christ died a vicarious death as an atonement for our sins, and that all who believe in Him are justified by the blood He shed.
- 6) We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, His ascension into heaven, His seating at the right hand of the Father, and His eventual return to earth where He will rule His Kingdom in power and glory.
- 7) We believe that salvation cannot be earned through any work of our own, but is only available from God through His grace; therefore, salvation can only be achieved by confessing sin, faithfully accepting Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and being reborn and regenerated through the work of the Holy Spirit.

- 8) We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost: those that are saved unto a resurrection of eternal life, and those that are lost unto a resurrection of eternal damnation.
- 9) We believe that all Christians are unified in spirit through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 10) We believe that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit enables the Christian to live a Godly life.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

To help our students identify and develop their own unique, God-given gifts; to challenge our students to use these gifts in becoming honorable and productive citizens; to encourage our students to grow in Christian character and conduct; and to send our students into the world committed to the service of Jesus Christ.

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# GENERAL INFORMATION

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## BIBLE TRANSLATION

For consistency, all Oconee Christian Academy classes will use the English Standard Version (ESV) when conducting Bible lessons in any class. All students will be required to bring an ESV Bible to school for their personal use.

## FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

In adherence to the basic qualifications for faculty at Oconee Christian Academy, each educator is to:

- Profess a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and maintain a positive Christian testimony.
- Agree with the OCA Statement of Faith.
- Be an actively involved member of a local church that agrees with the Statement of Faith, beliefs, and practices of OCA.
- Have at least a college level bachelor's degree.
- Have a current ACSI or state teaching certificate.
- Have a personal conviction regarding the importance of Christian education.

## INFORMATION CHANGES

When changes occur in a student's or parent's name, address, telephone numbers, employment, emergency contact information or other important information, the new information should be communicated to the school office and updated in Gradelink within three (3) days.

## LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles will be kept at school for two weeks. After two weeks, unclaimed articles will be donated to a charitable organization. Students should inquire in the school office (after first checking "Lost and Found") for missing articles.

## LUNCH

OCA partners with local restaurants to offer school lunches. A Google Form will be sent out each month and payment will be made through FACTS accounts.

Student lunches that need to be heated should be dropped into the proper container before 8:00am. Glass containers should **not** be sent to school. Students should bring their own utensils (fork, spoon, cup), if needed.

Students will not be allowed to leave campus for lunch.

Students in grades 6-12 are permitted to place personal lunch orders through delivery services such as Door Dash. All orders must be placed before school hours as students will not be allowed to access their cell phones for this purpose. These orders should be scheduled to arrive at the beginning of the lunch period (not during break). Should this privilege be abused, OCA administration reserves the right to discontinue it at any time.

## PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Faculty and administrators desire to assist students and parents with their needs and concerns and will make time in their schedule to accommodate them. Parents should expect to receive a reply to any communication within one full regular school day. Every effort should be made to conduct all communication during normal school hours. Only in cases of emergencies should faculty and administrators be called at home, using common sense as to appropriate times to call.

Parents who need to meet with their child’s teacher must **make an appointment** specifying the issue to be discussed. Teachers **must not** be engaged in parent conferences before, during, or after school when their primary task is attending to all students in their care. An administrator will participate in parent-teacher conferences as needed.

Teachers will use Gradelink to post students’ grades and other class information. Additional communication tools (such as Class Dojo) may be used at the teacher’s discretion. It is the parents’ responsibility to check Gradelink on a regular basis to stay informed. Gradelink is accessible through a link on the OCA website using a username and password. These will be distributed during the first week of school.

Parents and students are expected to regularly check the email accounts linked to Gradelink as this is the school’s primary form of written communication. In addition, Google Forms will be disseminated through email for various purposes and are expected to be filled out and returned in a timely manner.

### **PARENTS’ CLUB**

Parents’ Club (PC) provides a framework in which parents and teachers may work together for the students’ best interests. The objectives are to support OCA teachers and to enhance the school’s programs. This fellowship is vital to fulfillment of our educational and spiritual goals. Parents’ Club meetings are an important means for communication with parents as well as maintaining the unity of the school. The PC organization plans and coordinates fundraising and other special activities throughout each year. If you are interested in joining Parents’ Club, please contact [parentsclub@oconeechristian.org](mailto:parentsclub@oconeechristian.org).

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

The school office will be open from 7:30am until 3:30pm. The school day for each grade level will be as follows:

K-5 <sup>th</sup> grade	8:00am until 2:45pm
Grades 6-12	8:00am until 3:00pm

Students may begin arriving at 7:40am.

On early dismissal days, grades 6-12 will be dismissed at 11:25am and elementary grades will be dismissed at 11:30am.

It may not be possible to access forgotten items after school hours.

### **After School Enrichment Program**

OCA’s After-School Enrichment Program provides an enriched environment for elementary students who need after school care. This program offers supervised play, homework supervision and assistance, and a small snack. Enrichment hours are from after school until 5:30pm daily. Full-time enrollment is available for \$50 per week. Pending office notification, students can “drop in” for \$15 each day.

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# ENROLLMENT POLICIES

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Upon enrollment/re-enrollment, parents and students are affirming support of the school's Statement of Faith, Family Covenant, and Student Handbook. Parents are expected to discuss the content of these documents with their student(s).

## ADMISSION

Oconee Christian Academy desires for each parent and student to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and become active in a local body of believers. OCA also believes that the primary responsibility for a child's education lies with the parents (Ephesians 6:4) and that this education should be grounded in sound Christian principles (Deuteronomy 6:1-9, Psalm 78:5-6, and Proverbs 22:6). Oconee Christian Academy closely follows the South Carolina educational standards.

Oconee Christian Academy is interested in attracting students who are motivated to learn, strong in character, and who are amenable to high quality Christian instruction. Our programs are designed to meet the needs of students who are average or above average in ability and achievement. At the present time, the Academy may not be able to provide programs that can meet the needs of some students who may require unique or specialized learning programs.

It is understood that Oconee Christian Academy reserves the right to refuse admission to anyone based solely on the discretion of the administration. Please note that the school does not usually accept transfer students who have failed to do acceptable work at other schools or have been subject to disciplinary action at those schools. Oconee Christian Academy does not enroll or retain married students.

The following procedures will be helpful to parents of prospective students applying for admission to Oconee Christian Academy:

- All students should have a desire to attend the Academy.
- A registration fee must be submitted to the Academy office. The registration fee is not refundable unless the Academy is unable to accept the applicant for enrollment.
- The student's academic and deportment records from the last school attended should be submitted to the OCA office before admission. The most recent standardized test results should be submitted for any student entering grades 2-12, or they may be required to take an admissions test.
- Students must be living under the authority and in the residence of a parent or legal guardian even if they are over 18 years of age.
- Proof of legal guardianship, regardless of age, shall be available upon request for all students.
- An interview between the prospective student and the administration will be held before the student is accepted for admittance.
- An interview with at least one parent will be held with the administration before students are enrolled. Students in sixth grade and above must be present during the parent interview.

### **Age Requirements**

A certified copy of the birth certificate (not a hospital or ceremonial copy) is required for each student who enters Oconee Christian Academy. All students entering our kindergarten program must have reached their fifth birthday by September 1. Students who are enrolled in first grade should have reached their sixth birthday by September 1.

### **Health Requirements**

Due to South Carolina law, we require an up-to-date South Carolina DHEC Certificate of Immunization for each student, no later than the first week of school. Students enrolling at OCA for the first time must present a completed South Carolina DHEC Certificate of Immunization, either initially, or as a part of the records transferred from their previous school. All students enrolling at Oconee Christian Academy must have all medical information entered into Gradelink. Students requiring special medical attention will be accepted on the approval of the administration. All 7<sup>th</sup> graders are required to have been given a Tdap immunization.

### **Financial Requirements**

Parents will not be allowed to enroll a student in Oconee Christian Academy if they still owe money to a previous Christian school, or to re-enroll if they still owe Oconee Christian Academy a balance from the previous school year.

A student's enrollment at Oconee Christian Academy is considered an expression of the family's acceptance of the financial obligations incurred.

Any family desiring financial assistance or scholarship assistance must submit a Financial Aid Application and the required supporting documentation through FACTS in order to be considered. Assistance is awarded based on demonstrated need if funds are still available. More information can be found for Financial Aid Procedures under the Admissions tab on the OCA website. ([www.oconeechristian.org](http://www.oconeechristian.org))

**All payments for both Tuition and Incidentals are collected through FACTS.** The school offers parents two tuition payment options: Paid in full or monthly payments.

**Tuition Paid in Full** – Tuition and Fees may be paid in full in June on either the 5<sup>th</sup> or the 20<sup>th</sup> to avoid monthly payment charges. New families may pay in full at the time of registration to avoid monthly payment charges.

**Monthly Tuition Payments** – Monthly tuition payments are paid in 12 monthly installments, due on the 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. Monthly payments will begin either June 5<sup>th</sup> or June 20<sup>th</sup> and continue through May 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup>. There is an additional charge of \$120 per student for the monthly payment option. New Families will have their balance divided into even payments for the months remaining through final payments in May at the time of registration.

**Incidental Charges** – These charges are always collected on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month and include things like field trips, lunches, etc.

**Late Payments** – Payments received after the due date are subject to a \$25 late fee.

**Returned Payments** – FACTS charges a fee of \$30 on payments that draft, but are returned for Insufficient Funds.

**Pro-rated Tuition** – Tuition for students starting after the first day of school or leaving before the last day of school will be pro-rated on a monthly basis. (Fees are charged in full and cannot be pro-rated.) A withdrawal fee is charged to process students withdrawing prior to the last day of school.

**Refunds** – All Fees are non-refundable and vary according to grade level.

**Continuous Enrollment** – Enrollment at OCA is considered continuous through Graduation in FACTS. Therefore fees and charges will automatically be applied from year to year unless you notify OCA. Parents must also Opt-out in writing by completing the form sent out before the reenrollment period ends to avoid charges.

**Re-Enrollment Period** – During the Reenrollment Period families are asked to reenroll in Gradelink so that their contact and family information is updated yearly.

- New Families must create a FACTS account linked to OCA via the FACTS login link under the Admissions tab on the OCA website ([www.oconeechristian.org](http://www.oconeechristian.org)), pay Registration Fees, and choose their tuition payment plan option. They will have 2 agreements in their FACTS account. One to pay Tuition, and one to pay Incidentals, (such as lunches, field trips, etc.). They may choose to connect one payment method for Tuition and a different method for Incidentals, or have both draft from the same method. FACTS charges an almost 3% convenience fee to use credit or debit cards, so OCA recommends using a dedicated bank account just for FACTS drafts if at all possible (especially for Tuition since it is a larger amount).
- Returning Families are automatically rolled over by FACTS to the same payment draft method used the previous year (bank account or credit/debit card). If they wish to change the payment method, they need to log into their FACTS account to update their bank or credit/debit card information for the upcoming year.
- Returning Families are also automatically rolled over by FACTS to the same tuition payment option (one full payment or monthly payments) from year to year. **They need to notify OCA by April 30th if they wish to change this option.**
- **If a customer's FACTS account is past due, they will not be able to add charges in their Incidental account. This means students cannot attend field trips, order lunches, purchase spirit wear, etc.**
- Report cards will not be issued for any student whose account is not paid through the current month.
- **If any balance becomes 60 days past due, the student will be removed from class. After 5 additional days, the student will be removed from the rolls. If a student is removed from the rolls, a withdrawal fee must be paid before they can be re-enrolled. The administration will make every effort to have a personal conference with the family in order to avoid this step.**
- Previous year accounts must be paid in full before a student's re-enrollment is complete (See fee schedule).
- A student with an outstanding account will not be allowed to participate in end of year and graduation activities.
- The student's diploma will be held until the financial obligation is met.
- Accounts must be current before transcripts will be sent to colleges/universities.

- An account must be current and/or paid in full before records can be released or forwarded to another school.

### **FULL TIME ENROLLMENT**

Students are required to be enrolled in classes for the full school day. For upper school students, this means students must be enrolled in seven courses each semester. One of these courses may be a study hall. No student will be granted permission for late arrival or early dismissal.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Oconee Christian Academy admits and welcomes students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and payment programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

### **RE-ENROLLMENT**

All parents are required to update registration information at the time of re-enrollment. Upon re-enrollment, the parent and student re-affirm their acceptance of all OCA policies.

### **WITHDRAWAL/TERMINATION**

Parents withdrawing a student from OCA on or after the first day of school and through the final day of school must complete a withdrawal form available in the school office. Early withdrawal fee per student is \$250.00. All outstanding bills must be paid in full, and all textbooks and materials returned before records will be released. If a student is terminated by Oconee Christian Academy, payment of accounts, and return of textbooks and materials will be required before records are released.

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## ATTENDANCE POLICIES

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Daily attendance is essential to academic progress. Not only does regular attendance help academic success, it also builds responsibility and prepares students to enter the workforce. Parents are expected to support all OCA attendance requirements by making sure their student attends class daily.

### ABSENCE POLICIES

In K-5<sup>th</sup> grade, a student who misses more than 50% of the school day for any reason will be counted absent. A student must attend the entire time to be counted present on half days.

In 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade, attendance is based on class periods. If a student attends four of seven periods, the student would be marked present for the day. A student must attend the entire time to be counted present on half days. **A student missing more than 20 minutes of class for any reason will be counted absent for that class period.**

A student counted absent for the day will not be allowed to participate in after school activities unless he/she is given permission by administration due to special circumstances.

**All OCA students are allowed 9 absences per semester.** All absences will count against the total number of absences allowed per semester, with the exception of school-sponsored events (i.e. field trips, athletic events, etc.). Notes are required from parents, doctors, counselors, etc. in case an appeal is requested for cases of excessive absences. If a student's absence is not verified with a note, they may be considered truant and disciplined accordingly. Excessive absences due to a severe illness or other emergency will be addressed by administration on an individual basis. All work missed during an absence must be made up by the student unless otherwise decided by administration.

If a student misses more than 9 days during a semester, they are in jeopardy of losing credit for those classes with excessive absences. Credit recovery time may be required in after school sessions coordinated by administration. In extreme circumstances, summer credit recovery may be required, coordinated by administration.

### **Dual Enrollment Attendance Requirements**

Please note that students taking dual enrollment classes at OCA are subject to the attendance policies of the college or university providing the college credit. OCA faculty will make these policies known to their students.

### **Make-Up Work**

Students are responsible for getting their assignments from their teachers and completing them in the allotted time. Students will have one day for each day they are absent to make up any work or tests missed in class. Make-up tests will normally be scheduled before or after school.

### **Planned Absences**

Parents should notify the office of any planned absence (i.e. medical appointments, church youth trips, family educational trips, etc.) at least one (1) week in advance. Once permission is received, teachers will complete a written list of assignments to be completed by the student. These absences will count toward the 9 absences allowed per semester. Families are encouraged to plan trips during school breaks rather than causing their student to miss vital instructional time.

### **Signing Out of School Early**

A written parental request stating the time and the reason will be required for any student leaving school early. This note is to be brought to the office when the student arrives at school. This policy applies whether a student is transported by a parent or is a student driver. Any student who leaves campus at any time without permission will be subject to disciplinary action. Students dismissed early must be picked up from the school office, not the classroom, and must be signed out. It is the student's responsibility to obtain homework assignments before leaving. Students leaving early must turn in any work that is due on that day. If the student fails to turn in work until the following day, the work will follow the teacher's policy for late work.

## **PERFECT ATTENDANCE**

To receive this award a student must be present all day every day.

## **TARDY POLICIES**

### **Tardiness to School**

Students are to report to homeroom/1st period upon morning arrival. A bell will ring at 8:00am to begin the school day, at which point students are expected to be in their seats and prepared for class. Students arriving after 8:00am must report to the main office to receive an admittance slip before going to class.

Acquiring excessive unexcused tardies will result in consequences. Tardy counts start over at the beginning of the second semester.

### **Excessive Tardiness to School**

Tardiness will be excused only for personal illness, illness in the family, medical appointments, or other unavoidable issues approved by administration.

2 unexcused tardies per semester will be granted without penalty. If an elementary student accrues excessive tardies, administration will address the issue with the parent(s). If a 6th-12th student has an unexcused tardy to school for a third time in one semester, he/she will serve one hour in detention as scheduled by administration.

### **Tardiness to 6th -12th Grade Classes**

Tardiness will be excused by the teacher if a late student has a note from a teacher/administrator.

2 unexcused tardies per semester will be granted without penalty. If a student has an unexcused tardy to class for a third time in one semester, he/she will serve one hour in detention as scheduled by administration.

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# ACADEMIC POLICIES

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## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

OCA provides academic accommodations for students with proper documentation. To request a meeting regarding this, please contact the school office.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

The Family Covenant gives clear guidelines regarding the academic honesty standards expected of all students. Plagiarism is “to steal or extract and pass off as one’s own ideas, words, writings, etc., of another” (Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary). **This may include copying directly from an outside source, such as a website, or copying another student’s work. Academic honesty is expected on both minor and major assignments.**

Even though some publishers will sell teacher manuals and test books/banks, OCA prohibits the purchase or use of these materials by any person associated with the school. Copying of tests is strictly forbidden, as is sharing answers (homework, tests, projects, or book reports, etc.). Work may not be saved for future use with students/siblings. (This does not mean that parents cannot help students with homework in appropriate ways.)

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

**When a teacher has evidence that a student has chosen to violate age-appropriate expectations for academic honesty, the issue will be addressed in the following manner:**

- **First Offense:** Any student who exhibits academic dishonesty will be required to re-do the assignment for a maximum grade of 60%. The student’s parents and school administration will be notified,
- **Second Offense:** A student who exhibits academic dishonesty for a second time in one academic year will be required to re-do the assignment for a maximum grade of “0.” The student’s parents and school administration will be notified, **The student and his/her parents will be required to meet with administration.** School administration may also exercise various school disciplines for this offense, including in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.
- **Third Offense:** A student who exhibits academic dishonesty for a third time in one academic year will receive the consequences pertaining to a second offense. In addition, the student will be required to appear before the Head of School and accept their decision on continuing his/her career at OCA.
- It should be noted that academic dishonesty may result in being placed on probation or being dismissed from Beta Club, BOOST, and/or Student Government.

## CURRICULUM

Emphasis is placed on a traditional approach to various subject areas using Christian curriculum whenever possible. A Christian worldview is incorporated into all subjects. Neatness is stressed in all work. Grades are based on class work, tests, projects, homework assignments, and reports.

The following subjects are taught on most grade levels:

- Bible
- Language Arts (reading, writing, spelling, grammar)
- Social Studies
- Mathematics
- Science
- Physical Education (includes Health and Safety)
- Special Enrichment Classes (art, music, etc.)
- Foreign Language
- Computer

Final decisions as to which curriculum will be used for each subject will be made by the administration. OCA will seek to provide its students with the best education possible in a Christian environment so that they may be thoroughly equipped for life.

The fact that a certain book is used as a textbook or as supplemental reading for a class, or is placed in the library, does not necessarily mean that OCA endorses its content from the standpoint of morals, philosophy, theology, or scientific hypotheses.

It is our policy to help our students develop a mature, Christian worldview when dealing with objectionable material found in some books. We want students to understand that there are certain morals, terminologies, philosophies, ideals, etc., which we can neither condone nor practice as Christians. We also wish to develop in our students the ability to respond to non-Christian ideas from a Christian worldview.

## EVALUATION METHODS

### Evaluation Categories

All graded work will be assigned and evaluated as either a minor assignment or a major assignment. Minor assignments will comprise 40% of the final grade and major assignments will comprise 60% of the final grade. It is expected that each teacher communicates the value of each assignment.

### Grade Reporting

Kindergarten through fifth grade are on the quarter system, with report cards issued four times per year. **Grades six through twelve are on the semester system, with report cards issued twice a year and with progress reports available at the midpoint in each semester.** At the end of the year, the final grade will be recorded on the permanent record. All "Incompletes" must be completed before the end of the next grading period, or an "F" will result. If a student withdraws from a class after 10 days, then the student will receive a "WF," or Withdraw/Fail. An "I" (Incomplete) cannot be a final grade.

Enrichment subjects (Art, Music, P.E., etc.) will be non-graded for kindergarten through fifth grade. Students either pass (P) or fail (F) the course. Sixth through twelfth grade students will earn numerical grades for all classes. Grades will be posted on Gradelink by 3:30pm on Monday for the previous week's work.

When report cards are completed at the end of each grading period, an email will be sent and the record will be accessible through Gradelink.

### **Grading Scale**

The uniform grading scale aligns with the South Carolina Department of Education grading policy.

<u>Numerical Average</u> <u>Weighting</u>	<u>College Prep Weighting</u>	<u>Honors Weighting</u>	<u>Dual Credit</u>
<u>90 – 100 = A</u>	4.000 – 5.000	4.500 – 5.500	5.000 – 6.000
<u>80 – 89 = B</u>	3.000 – 3.900	3.500 – 4.400	4.000 – 4.900
<u>70 – 79 = C</u>	2.000 – 2.900	2.500 – 3.400	3.000 – 3.900
<u>60 – 69 = D</u>	1.000 – 1.900	1.500 – 2.400	2.900 – 2.000
<u>51 – 59 = F</u>	0.100 – 0.900	0.600 – 1.400	1.100 – 1.900
<u>00 – 50 = F</u>	0.000 – 0.000	0.000 – 0.000	0.000 – 0.000

### **Standardized Testing**

All students are required to take the PSAT during their 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade year and Pre-ACT during their 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade year. Students are expected to take the SAT or ACT during their junior and senior year if they plan to attend a four-year university. If applying to a technical college, the student may opt to take the SAT, ACT, or that school’s entrance exam.

Standardized tests (Iowa Assessments) are given to grades K through 11<sup>th</sup> grade during the month of April. This school-wide testing will be administered over 2-3 mornings. If a student is absent during this time, he/she is required to make up the testing.

During any week in which a series of exams are being administered (i.e., end of year exams or standardized tests), permission will **not** be granted for students to be absent from school for any reason other than sickness (which requires a doctor’s excuse) or death in the immediate family.

### **Prerequisites for Taking Advanced Courses**

At the discretion of the teacher and administration, students are invited to participate in honors/AP/dual enrollment classes taught on campus. Students must have achieved a GPA of 4.0 in their previous class for the given subject or discipline and must have achieved an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher in the previous year. Students may not have any failing grades in the previous year.

### **Online/Off Campus Courses Not Scheduled through OCA**

Permission to take dual enrollment classes that are not taught on OCA’s campus may be granted at the discretion of administration if the above criteria are met. Permission must be received before the student is enrolled in the course.

Permission will not be granted for students to take an online/off campus course if the same course is offered by OCA. Requests to take specialized courses must be submitted to administration and may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

## **Exams and Exemptions**

Semester exams are comprehensive assessments of all topics covered in that semester. Grades 9-12 semester exams are given during scheduled exam times at the end of each semester and combine to equal 20% of the final grade. In some subject areas, with approval from the principal, a project may replace a semester exam. Fine arts courses may be exempt from exams at the discretion of administration. Dual enrollment courses will include exams at the discretion of the governing university. Middle school students enrolled in a course for which high school credit is earned (such as Algebra) will be required to take exams for that course. Students enrolled in an AP class are required to take the final College Board AP Exam. Students enrolled in an honors class may elect, with a teacher recommendation and parent approval, to take the equivalent AP exam in addition to the end of year honors exam.

Exam exemptions are provided according to the following requirements:

- No exemptions are allowed for mid-year exams unless the exam is for a one semester course. The exemption policy for a one semester course will align with that of end-of-year exams.
- **End-of-year exams**
  - A student may exempt an end-of-year exam as long as he/she has earned a cumulative average of 90% or higher in that course and has 9 or fewer absences for that class **in either semester**.
  - A student may exempt an end-of-year exam as long as he/she has earned a cumulative average of 80% -89% in that course and has 9 or fewer absences for that class **for the year**.
  - A student will lose the privilege of exempting exams if any of the following have occurred:
    - suspension from school for any reason
    - in-school suspension for any reason
    - plagiarism/academic dishonesty infraction
    - third cell phone violation in either semester

## **Academic Awards**

Honor students for grades 1-12 are recognized at the end of each grading period. Recognition is for students who make all A's, and for students who make all A's and B's. Students must be enrolled for a full grading period before they are eligible for honor awards. Classes taken outside of OCA (such as home school classes, online classes, dual credit classes or career center classes) will not be used to calculate current year honor awards or class rank. **End-of-year awards will be determined at the 13 ½ week mark of the second semester.**

## **Academic Probation**

Students (grades 1-12) who receive three grades or more below C- at mid-term or the end of a grading period, will be placed on academic probation. An initial meeting between parents and the administration will be required, followed by weekly progress reports. Failure to improve academically by the next mid-term or end of a grading period may result in dismissal from school.

### **Extra Credit**

OCA does not offer extra credit to individual students; however, the option of extra credit work may be offered to an entire class. Extra credit will not be assigned at the end of a grading term to benefit an individual student's grade.

### **Honor Graduates**

Seniors who have maintained an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.75 or above will be honor graduates. Those with an overall GPA of 4.25 or above will be recognized with highest honors. **To qualify as an honor graduate, the student must receive credit for a minimum of 4 advanced classes (honors/AP/dual enrollment). \*This requirement will take effect with the class of 2026.** The senior with the highest GPA will be recognized as valedictorian. The salutatorian will be the senior with the second highest GPA. Final GPA calculations will be determined at the 13 ½ week mark of the second semester. Both students must be honor graduates. They must have attended OCA their junior and senior years and must be enrolled in a majority of honor courses.

### **Promotion /Retention**

Students receiving three D's (or more) in academic subjects will be promoted probationally, **only** if they receive tutoring during the summer. Students receiving an F in three (or more) academic subjects, including reading or math, may be automatically retained, and may not be allowed to repeat the grade at OCA.

- Kindergarten - Promotion to first grade will be agreed upon by the Head of School, and the child's teacher based on assessments of the student's social, emotional, and academic development. Parents will be consulted, but the Head of School will make the final decision.
- Elementary - Parents will be consulted, but the final decision will be made by the Head of School.
- Middle School - Any students who receive failing grades on their yearly average in Math and English will be retained. It will be necessary for the students to attend summer school and pass in order to be promoted.
- High School - Any students who receive failing grades on their yearly average in Math and English must repeat that course the following year or in an approved summer school program to continue to the next level. The Head of School will make the final decision on promotion or retention.

## **GOOGLE CLASSROOM**

Upon registration, all students will be given an OCA email address and password. They will use these to access both their @oconeechristian.org email as well as their Google Classroom account. Students are expected to regularly check their email as this is a primary form of communication with the school.

Each class will have a Google Classroom portal through which the student will be able to access and submit assignments at the teacher's discretion. Both students and parents will be invited to join these online classrooms and should accept the invitation in a timely manner. Should the school have to move to remote learning, this online classroom will be used to conduct class daily. In the case of an extended period of remote learning, exact requirements and expectations will be communicated by the school.

While grades may be recorded in Google Classroom, it will not replace Gradelink as the primary record of classroom activities.

Should a student be homebound due to an extended illness or other extenuating circumstances, it may be possible for the student to attend class via Google Meet. However, permission to attend class in this method will be granted by administration only in special circumstances.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Oconee Christian Academy requires the successful completion of an academic program in accordance with the requirements of the state of South Carolina. **OCA provides two graduation tracks.**

### **Honors Track**

The honors track exceeds requirements for a South Carolina high school diploma. **To earn a diploma on the Honors Track, the student must receive credit for a minimum of 4 advanced classes (honors/AP/dual enrollment). \*This requirement will take effect with the class of 2026.** To graduate from Oconee Christian Academy with an academic record that prepares a student for advancement to a four-year university, he/she must accumulate at least 25 high school credits as specified by the following requirements:

- |   |           |             |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| ● Bible   | 4 Credits |             |
| ● English/Language Arts                               | 4 Credits |             |
| ● Mathematics (Including Algebra I, Geometry & above) | 4 Credits |             |
| ● Science (Must include Biology)                      | 3 Credits | **4 Credits |
| ● U.S. History  | 1 Credit  |             |
| ● U.S. Government                                     | ½ Credit  |             |
| ● Economics   | ½ Credit  |             |
| ● Other Social Sciences                               | 1 Credit  |             |
| ● Physical Education/Health                           | 1 Credit  |             |
| ● Computer Science                                    | 1 Credit  |             |
| ● Foreign Language (2 years same language)            | 2 Credits |             |
| ● Electives (one of which must be a Fine Art)         | 3 Credits |             |

\*\* Beginning with the class of 2024, it will be necessary to have 26 credits to graduate from Oconee Christian Academy on the Honors Track. The additional credit will be from a fourth science requirement.

### **Standard Track**

The standard track meets all requirements for a South Carolina high school diploma. To graduate from Oconee Christian Academy with an academic record that prepares a student for advancement to a technical college or to directly enter the workforce, he/she must accumulate at least 24 high school credits as specified by the following requirements:

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| ● Bible   | 4 Credits |
| ● English/Language Arts                               | 4 Credits |
| ● Mathematics (Including Algebra I, Geometry & above) | 4 Credits |
| ● Science (Must include Biology)                      | 3 Credits |
| ● U.S. History  | 1 Credit  |

- U.S. Government ½ Credit
- Economics ½ Credit
- Other Social Sciences 1 Credit
- Physical Education/Health 1 Credit
- Computer Science 1 Credit
- Foreign Language or CATE (Career & Technology) 1 Credit
- Electives (one of which must be a Fine Art) 3 Credits

Full-time OCA students who have completed all the requirements for graduation will be allowed to participate in graduation activities. Students with unresolved behavioral or financial responsibilities will not be allowed to participate in graduation activities. Upon graduation, final transcripts will be sent to the college of your choice at no cost. **If extra transcripts are needed, there will be a \$5 charge for each one requested.**

### **HOMEWORK**

The purpose of homework is to complete assignments begun in class, to develop skills regarding materials presented in class, to memorize facts, or to research topics which cannot be completed in class due to lack of time or facilities. The amount of homework given will be in proportion to the grade level of the student. Parents are asked to help students regularly and check on completed homework to be certain it is satisfactory. It is not our purpose to over-burden students with homework. If you have a question about the amount of homework your child is receiving, please contact your child's teacher. Homework turned in late will result in point deductions from that grade.

It is a constant and yet rewarding challenge to find the proper balance between academic excellence and church attendance. There is no doubt that we want to promote church attendance and family time on Wednesday evening, but it would be difficult to accomplish our academic goals by completely eliminating Wednesday homework and Thursday testing. With that in mind, we make the following provisions in order to support church attendance:

- Teachers are asked to take into consideration Wednesday night church attendance when assigning homework and scheduling tests. It is OCA's desire that an age-appropriate balance be struck between these important activities.
- All extracurricular practices will be dismissed no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesdays.
- No extracurricular events (athletic games, etc.) will be scheduled on Wednesdays except on very rare occasions when weather related conditions have forced multiple cancellations.

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# BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

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Parents and students acknowledge that decisions regarding disciplinary matters are the sole discretion of the school administration.

## CELL PHONE POLICY

Students are not allowed to use cell phones or smart watches during the school day. All cell phones and smart watches must be turned off and must be left in a vehicle, locker, or backpack. Parents needing to contact their student should call the office and a message will be relayed. Students will be given access to the office phone outside of class time to contact parents. Classroom phones are off limits to students.

Should a student's cell phone or smart watch be seen at any point during the school day, parents will be notified and consequences will be enforced.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense – Electronic device confiscated and held until the end of the school day. The student will serve one hour of detention.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – Electronic device confiscated and must be surrendered to the front office for 30 school days. The student will pick up the device at the end of each day. The student will serve two hours of detention.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> and Subsequent Offenses – Electronic device confiscated and must be surrendered to the front office for the remainder of the school year. The student will pick up the device at the end of each day. The student will serve in-school suspension.

## COMPUTER USE

Students at Oconee Christian Academy will have access to school computers in various capacities during their school day. The use of the computers must be in support of education and research and must be consistent with the academic and behavioral expectations of Oconee Christian Academy. OCA students using the Internet will do so where the teachers can be responsible for supervising and orienting students about effective and appropriate use.

With access to computers and to people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered of educational value in the context of a Christian school setting. Teachers will make an effort to select appropriate electronic resources and guide students toward course-appropriate materials. However, on a constantly changing global network, it is impossible to control all materials, and inappropriate materials may still be accessed.

Students should immediately report any violation of these guidelines, whether accidental or intentional. General school rules of behavior and communication apply. Students that do not follow these guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include suspension of computer or Internet privileges, suspension, or even expulsion.

Student-owned laptops or tablets may be used for the purposes of taking notes, etc. in middle and high School classes if the student receives permission from the teacher prior to use. All regulations regarding the use of school computers apply to these devices when they are in use on school property. If a student violates school policy while using a personal device, the device will be turned into the office and consequences will be issued at the discretion of administration.

**By using computers on school property, students agree to the following:**

- I understand that using the Internet at OCA is a privilege and not a right. If I abuse the privilege, my access to the Internet may be suspended or terminated.
- I understand that Internet access is intended for use with school projects. I will not use the Internet for personal or recreational purposes.
- I understand that I may not visit any sites that show inappropriate sexual information, or information that is racist, hateful, and violent in nature or displays un-Christ-like behavior.
- I understand that I may access my OCA email account for educational purposes.
- I understand that I may not use the Internet/ to download or share copyrighted materials.
- I understand that I may not use the Internet to participate in social media or online gaming.
- I will log on using only my own username and password and that I must sign out of my account and not reveal my password or those of other students.
- I understand that I may not change or destroy—or attempt to change or destroy—any network settings on school computers or any other person’s data on the network, nor will I change any default settings: desktop screensaver, etc.
- I understand that I am not to use any school computers unless an instructor is present and I have gained his or her permission.
- I understand that all school computers can and will be electronically monitored and/or electronically recorded by OCA staff, and there is no expectation of privacy.
- I understand that I may not use personal USB flash drives on school computers without permission from the instructor.
- I have reviewed these statements with a parent/guardian and agree to abide by them; violations may result in termination or suspension of my access privileges, other school disciplinary actions, and possible appropriate legal action.

## **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

Each teacher will establish and clearly communicate his/her rules for the classroom. It is expected that students abide by these rules. In advancing the academic, spiritual, and social development of their students, teachers may institute policies, procedures, and consequences that align with OCA's overall philosophy of discipline.

### **Positive Reinforcement Plan - Elementary**

Effective teachers recognize commendable behavior and reinforce it. Teachers in grades K-5 will employ a variety of positive reinforcement programs for classes and individuals. While each teacher will have their own system, some examples may include ice cream parties for a class or treasure box for individual students.

## **DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES**

In the ideal structure of Kingdom Education, the home, the church, and the school work together in a cooperative manner to fully educate and nurture students in the admonition of the Lord. Cooperation between these three groups must be evident to fully develop the character of the student, and promote behavior consistent with Biblical worldview. The model for OCA students is our Lord Jesus Christ who "grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). The goal of discipline is to correct and train students while protecting the overall safety and educational environment for all students at OCA.

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

School personnel shall adhere to the following general guidelines when imposing discipline:

- A student shall be disciplined whenever necessary to improve the student's behavior, to maintain essential order, or to protect other students, school employees, or property.
- Oconee Christian Academy feels the teacher should have control of the classroom in order for academic instruction to be accomplished.
  - The teacher is the first line of authority on addressing behavior requiring discipline. If the behavior continues, a parent will be contacted.
  - If there is still no resolution of the problem and parents have been notified of a discipline problem, a school administrator will become involved. At this time a phone call or conference with the parents, administrator and/or teacher and child will be held to implement a plan of action to resolve the situation.
  - The school expects full cooperation from both students and parents in disciplinary matters.
  - Discipline referrals will be recorded in Gradelink.
- Students shall be treated fairly and equitably. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case. Corporal punishment is not method used by OCA faculty or administration. When determining the best disciplinary action to take, factors to consider shall include:
  - The seriousness of the offense;
  - The student's age;
  - The frequency of misconduct;
  - The student's attitude;
  - The potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment.

- OCA administrators have full discretion in the questioning of students, and in the evaluation of events may conduct their investigation without parental notification or attendance. During the course of investigating actions and events concerning possible student incidents, the school may seek to question students alone or in groups.

### **Middle and High School Detention**

Lunch detentions may be given by teachers and the administration when students fail to comply with school regulations. Failure to report to detention on time or disruptive behavior during detention could result in further disciplinary action.

After school detention may be assigned by administration. **After school detention will incur a \$10 fee per hour billed to the student's account.**

## **DRESS CODE**

There are two primary reasons for a dress code:

- To ensure modesty which the Bible encourages (I Timothy 2:9).
- To instill in students a sense of professionalism and respect for themselves and those around them.

OCA appreciates the conscious effort of parents and students in following these guidelines. This will allow teachers and administrators to focus on the educational process rather than enforce dress code policy. Administration reserves the right to determine the acceptability of students' clothing and/or hairstyles. As in all disciplinary matters, the decision of administration is final.

**All students are requested to be in OCA dress code at all school-sponsored events, on or off campus.**

### **General Guidelines for Boys**

- **Pants/shorts should have no holes above the knee that reveal skin or undergarments.**
- **All shorts must be to the top of the kneecap when standing.**
- Sleeveless shirts are not allowed.
- Clothing must be neat, clean, modest, and size appropriate such that undergarments are not visible.
- No clothing bearing writing or images improperly placed, conveying a double meaning, or promoting any illegal, immoral, or questionable activity will be allowed.
- Appropriate undergarments should be worn and should not be visible.
- Pajamas should not be worn to school.
- No sunglasses, hoods, or other head coverings should be worn inside the building.
- Shoes must be worn at all times and must not be of a style that poses a risk of injury during any activity.
- No exposed writing or tattoos (permanent or temporary) on the body.
- No exposed earrings or other body piercing jewelry.
- **Headphones/earbuds are not to be worn except for educational purposes and with teacher approval.**
- Hair must be within the natural range of colors (no green or purple, etc.). Hair must not be styled in an extreme manner and **must not hang below the collar, eyebrows, or middle**

of the ear. Sideburns should not extend below the base of the earlobe. Facial hair must be neatly trimmed.

- Boys are not permitted to wear makeup nor are they allowed to wear dresses/skirts..

### **General Guidelines for Girls**

- Pants/shorts should have no holes above the knee that reveal skin or undergarments.
- Dresses, skirts, or shorts must be to the top of the kneecap when standing. Slits in skirts must meet this requirement.
- Leggings may be worn only if paired with a skirt or dress that comes to the top of the kneecap when standing.
- Low necklines, overly wide necklines, bare midriffs and bare backs are not allowed. Sleeves and sleeve openings must not allow undergarments to be visible. **Tops must fully cover the shoulders.** Clothing should be sized such that normal movements (stooping, stretching, etc.) allow the student to maintain modesty.
- Clothing must be neat, clean, modest, and size appropriate such that undergarments are not visible.
- No clothing bearing writing or images improperly placed, conveying a double meaning, or promoting any illegal, immoral, or questionable activity will be allowed.
- Appropriate undergarments should be worn and should not be visible. Tank tops cannot be worn in lieu of an appropriate undergarment.
- Pajamas should not be worn.
- No exposed writing or tattoos (permanent or temporary) on the body.
- No visible body piercing other than the ear. Ear piercings should not be excessive or extreme. Ear bars, gauges, or other extreme items should not be worn.
- No sunglasses, hoods, or other head coverings should be worn inside the building.
- Shoes must be worn at all times and must not be of a style that poses a risk of injury during any activity.
- **Headphones/earbuds are not to be worn except for educational purposes and with teacher approval.**
- Hair must be within the natural range of colors (no green or purple, etc.), and must not be styled in an extreme manner.

### **Outerwear**

Outerwear (jackets, hoodies, sweatshirts, etc.) may be worn over approved clothing so that it may be removed as the weather moderates. Outerwear does not replace the requirement to wear tops that adhere to the dress code policy.

### **Elementary Dress Code Additions**

- No flip-flops, slides, or sandals that cannot be secured with a back strap are to be worn.
- No high heels or wedges are to be worn, except for special ceremonies, and other shoes should be brought to change into after the ceremony.
- **To maintain modesty during play, shorts or leggings should be worn under skirts/dresses..**

### **Elementary Dress Code Violations**

If a violation occurs, the teacher will address the issue by sending a notice home in the student's folder. Two warnings will be issued per semester. Should a third violation occur in the same semester, parents will be contacted by the office and the student will be required to change clothes or cover the non-conforming article before returning to class. The student will be responsible for any work missed while discussing the issue with administration and/or while waiting for a parent to bring appropriate clothing. A conference may be required at the discretion of administration.

### **Grades 6-12 Dress Code Violations**

Any teacher who feels that a student is in violation of the dress code will contact administration. If a violation occurs, the student will be required to change clothes or cover the non-conforming article before returning to class. The student will be responsible for any work missed while discussing the issue with administration and/or while waiting for a parent to bring appropriate clothing.

The following consequences will be observed, with a "clean slate" offered each semester:

- First offense: A written warning will be issued.
- Second offense: A written warning will be issued.
- Third (and subsequent) offenses: The student will serve after school detention.
- Repeated offenses will result in parent contact and may include further disciplinary action at the discretion of the administrator.

## **DRIVING GUIDELINES**

Anyone driving on school property is expected **not** to exceed 10 mph, exercising caution especially when approaching or departing loading/unloading areas. **Do not leave your car unattended** in those areas. If you need to go inside the building, you should park in a **designated parking space**. Do not block the flow of traffic by parking in the line of traffic. This applies to all drivers: students, parents and visitors.

### **Student Drivers**

High school students who drive their own vehicles to school must register with the Academy (a form is available in the office) and follow the rules below in order to have driving privileges:

- Students are allowed to park in the lower parking spots. The first row of parking is reserved for staff and visitors.
- Cars must follow the proper entrance and exit routes when entering or leaving school property.
- Speeding (above 10 MPH) and/or reckless driving in any form will not be tolerated on the OCA campus or on the street leading directly to campus.
- Students are not allowed to sit in parked cars or congregate in the parking lot.
- Students may not go to their cars during the school day without permission from a school administrator. Students must sign out and sign in.
- No other student may ride with a student driver away from school without prior written permission from both sets of parents and the administration.

- Student drivers may not carry student passengers when driving to school sponsored field trips without parental permission for all students in the vehicle.
- Volume on automobile sound systems must be kept low enough so as not to be heard outside the vehicle.
- Students who drive to school and wish to check out prior to the end of the school day must bring a note from home indicating parental approval. In the case of illness, the office will call parents to secure permission for the student to sign out.

## **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

Oconee Christian Academy maintains that using, buying, selling or other transfer, or consuming illicit drugs (including vaping) and/or alcohol cannot be tolerated and may result in dismissal of the offending student or students. Individual situations will be evaluated case-by-case, with an attempt to find the best solution for the individual and the student body as a whole. Situations that warrant restoration, in the sole opinion of the administration, will be given due consideration. Law enforcement may be notified as deemed appropriate by administration.

### **Drug Testing**

Drug testing may be requested for athletes as part of the athletic participation process. If the parents and/or student refuse, then the student's privilege to attend OCA will be revoked.

The administration of OCA reserves the right (in the interest of safety for that student or any other student) to conduct random drug testing of any student in grades 6-12 at the student's expense. If the parents and/or student refuse, then the student's privilege to attend the Academy will be revoked.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Matthew 18:15-18 states that conflicts within the body of Christ should be handled on an individual basis. As Christians, we are expected to make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace by being completely humble, gentle, patient, and forbearing (Ephesians 4:2-3). When conflict arises:

- Take your concerns to the Lord in prayer to receive His wisdom and gain proper perspective. Remember that the anger of man will never accomplish the righteousness of God (James 1:20).
- Both parties involved should discuss the issue as soon as possible. The individuals involved should schedule a conference in person to discuss the problem.
- A third party is to become involved only if the conflict cannot be resolved among those in conflict.
- If the conflict is never fully resolved, forgiveness must be applied in keeping with biblical instructions.

All conferences should have the purpose of resolution, not revenge.

All decisions made by the head of school are final and cannot be appealed.

## **MAJOR DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Attending OCA is a privilege that is extended on the condition that students and parents accept and support school policies. The school, in its sole discretion, will make the final determination of whether there has been a violation of the school's policies. If a student is suspended, expelled, or withdrawn due to disciplinary actions, there will be no refund of tuition or waiver of financial obligations.

### **Probation**

Students who accumulate a series of minor infractions or are guilty of a major infraction may be subject to disciplinary probation. While on probation, the student's behavior will be closely monitored by teachers and school administration. Methods to address behavioral change will be recommended. Disciplinary probation may include denial of privileges and participation in school activities. The length of the probation period will be determined by the administration. Parents will be informed of the probationary status. In some cases, administration can develop a behavior contract between the school, student, and parent. Students who do not meet the criteria may be required to withdraw from school.

### **Suspension**

Students who accumulate a series of minor infractions or are guilty of a major infraction may be subject to school suspension. Specific changes in attitudes and actions will be expected prior to readmission. A readmission conference may be deemed necessary for the student to return to school. Readmitted students will be placed on disciplinary probation upon their return to OCA. An administrator has the authority at all times to suspend a student for any violation of a school rule. The length of suspension will be one to five days as determined by the administrator.

There are two types of suspensions:

- **In-School Suspension:** While excluded from participating in regular classes, students are able to complete class work in school. The student may also be required to complete assignments required by administration. While a student is participating in in-school suspension, he/she is not allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities including athletic events. **In-school suspension will incur a \$35 fee per day billed to the student's account.**
- **Out-Of-School Suspension:** This is for a designated period of time during which students are not allowed to attend school. Work missed during any suspension is required to be made up. While a student is participating in out-of-school suspension he/she is not allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities including athletic events.

### **Restoration**

It is always OCA's intention to lovingly restore students after a period of suspension. As a means to that end, some or all of the following guidelines will govern the readmission of suspended students.

At the beginning of the suspension period, OCA staff and administration will:

- Clearly identify the offense at both the beginning and end of the suspension.
- Assist the student in verbalizing why the offense was inappropriate and/or harmful.
- Notify the student's teachers of the suspension term. This will include notifying the sponsor

of Beta Club, BOOST, and/or Student Government if the student is a member of the organization. Disciplinary action may result in probation or dismissal from these programs.

- At the end of the suspension period, OCA administration will:
  - Conduct a re-entry interview with the student and possibly one or both parents.
  - Assist the student in identifying a plan to ensure improvement.
  - Remind the student of their importance in the OCA community. Explain that the student is on disciplinary probation and its ramifications, if applicable.

### **Expulsion**

Attendance at OCA is a privilege. Any student whose conduct in or out of school shows him/her to be in opposition to the basic principles and purposes of OCA will be required to withdraw from the school. Expulsion will be required if it becomes apparent that the school will not be able to meet the needs of a student, or that the student's behavior is preventing classroom instruction. When expulsion is recommended, a date of withdrawal from the school will be set and the withdrawal procedure followed.

### **Readmission**

OCA reserves the right to deny readmission to any student whose actions demonstrate that it is in the Academy's best interest not to allow readmission. The request for readmission should be in writing to the Head of School. Restoration at a Christian school is always a difficult matter. Students who have been dismissed from OCA or other schools must present evidence of genuine repentance and carry out a school-designed restoration program. If a student has been dismissed or asked to withdraw, been given due consideration, and desires reinstatement, the student must have one full school year without major discipline infractions before reapplying. During that time, the student must be involved in a program of church attendance and youth group involvement as well as student, parent, and group counseling. During the restoration period, academics must continue at another school or home school. Upon completion of the reinstatement restoration program, recommendations by the student's pastor, youth pastor, and school designated counselors will be considered by the respective administrative staff to determine the student's reinstatement. Students returning will be on **disciplinary probation for one year.**

### **Continued Enrollment**

OCA reserves the right to deny continued enrollment to any student whose actions and/or attitudes demonstrate that it is not in the best interest to allow reenrollment. Students who have demonstrated through progress reports and poor attitude a lack of interest in being at OCA will be interviewed by the administration. A poor attitude may be reflected through a lack of compliance with the dress code, response to discipline, respect for authority, etc. After this interview, a conference with parents will be scheduled. Students may be placed on disciplinary probation with enrollment for the following year withheld until a review of the student's progress has been evaluated.

## **SCHOOL RULES**

The rules listed below are not intended to be all-inclusive, but are a representative sample of the type of behavior that all students should display at Oconee Christian Academy. Students should:

- Obey the Bible in speech and conduct.
- Respect and cooperate with those in authority at the school. **This includes referring to all faculty and administrators by title and last name, not first name.**
- Show respect for other students and their property.
- Show respect for school property at all times. If school property is damaged, the student may be held financially responsible. If the destruction was willful, the student will be disciplined appropriately.
- Exhibit online behavior that honors Christ.
- Avoid public displays of affection or physical contact inappropriate for a school setting. Students of opposite genders should not be alone on school grounds or at school events.
- Avoid alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. The school reserves the right to require random drug and/or alcohol tests.
- Refrain from displaying anything on the outside of lockers (photos, etc.). The student cannot add a non-school issued lock without permission.
- Avoid bringing weapons, toy or real, of any kind, including laser pointers, on campus.
- Avoid bringing toys including handheld electronic toys and card games of any kind on campus without permission.
- Abstain from cursing, sexual immorality, dissension, self-abuse, plagiarism, and cheating. (Galatians 5:19-21)
- Avoid behavior, both on and off campus, which would dishonor Jesus Christ or the school.
- Obey all classroom rules as specified by the teacher.
- **Eat and drink (other than water) only in the lunchroom. Students are not allowed to keep open containers of food or drink in their lockers (this includes “take out” cups). Drink containers taken into classrooms must have spill-proof caps and contain only water.**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT: 24/7/365**

Students are expected to represent Oconee Christian Academy in a positive manner even when they are not on school grounds or attending school functions. **This includes the expectation that students will exhibit Christ-like behavior while online.** Students and their parents acknowledge and understand that students are subject to discipline for conduct occurring off-campus or during non-school hours, including weekends, holidays and summers. The administration will deal directly with any student who draws attention to OCA in a negative manner which will result in disciplinary action or a student’s dismissal from the school.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

To maintain order and discipline at OCA and to protect the safety and welfare of students and personnel, school authorities may request a search of a student, student lockers, or student automobiles under the circumstances outlined below and may seize illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search.

- **Personal Searches:** A student and/or personal effects (e.g., pockets, purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials.. Registration of the child constitutes parental consent to such searches. If the student refuses and the school feels a personal search of the student’s person or belongings is warranted (in the

interest of safety for that student or another student), then the parents will be phoned and must come to school to perform the search. If the parents fail to come to the Academy to perform the search in a reasonable time (one hour) and/or the student refuses to empty his/her pockets or remove from his or her person what is suspected, then the student's privilege to attend this Academy will be revoked. In certain cases, law enforcement may be called for assistance.

- **Desk/Locker Searches:** Student desks and lockers are OCA property and always remain under the control of OCA. Students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property.

Students are responsible for whatever is contained in desks and lockers issued to them by the school. Periodic general inspections of lockers are conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent, without parental consent, and without a search warrant.

- **Automobile Searches:** Students are permitted to park on OCA premises as a matter of privilege, not a right. Oconee Christian Academy retains authority to conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and inspections of the exteriors of student automobiles on campus. The interiors of student vehicles may be inspected whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that illegal or unauthorized materials are contained inside. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, without parental consent, and without a search warrant.
- **Seizure of Illegal Materials:** If a search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings will be turned over to law enforcement authorities.

### **SOLICITATION/DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS**

Distributing, selling, or advertising any items unrelated to OCA, including products sold among co-workers, must be submitted to school administration for approval. This includes solicitation via email.

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## HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES

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For the safety and security of all students and staff, OCA operates as a closed campus. All doors are locked after morning drop off.

### **BACKGROUND CHECKS**

All volunteers, including parents, are required to undergo a background check before volunteering at any school event, including chaperoning a field trip.

### **CONCEALED WEAPONS**

In keeping with the South Carolina Code of Laws Section 16-23- 430, only authorized law enforcement personnel may bring a firearm or any other type of weapon, device, or object which may be used to inflict bodily injury or death into the OCA building.

All other persons on campus who are authorized to carry a concealed weapon must keep weapons inside an attended or locked motor vehicle and secured in a closed glove compartment, closed console, closed trunk, or in a closed container secured by an integral fastener and transported in the luggage compartment of the vehicle (Article 4, Chapter 31, Title 23). An exception may be made if an individual has been pre-approved by the Board and Head of School and has proper training credentials for safety and security purposes.

Students are not allowed to be in possession of weapons of any kind or realistic facsimiles of weapons on school grounds or at any school event. Non-compliance with this rule may result in expulsion.

### **CUSTODY DOCUMENTATION**

OCA adheres to state and federal laws pertaining to child custody. Parents are expected to provide and update all relevant documents concerning custody or visitation of each student enrolled at OCA.

Students will be released to an individual other than a custodial parent only when express permission is first given to OCA by a custodial parent or a valid legally binding instrument granting release is on file with OCA.

OCA will communicate to the noncustodial parent as long as a court order does not prohibit it.

If an event is open to the school community, a noncustodial parent will be allowed to attend unless a court order prohibits it.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

In accordance with state laws, OCA regularly conducts fire, lockdown and tornado drills to prepare students, faculty, and staff for emergency situations. An evacuation route is posted in each room. All students will be expected to regard these drills with seriousness and follow the instructions given concerning them.

## **HEALTH PRACTICES**

### **Student Medication**

If a student must take medication during school hours, by law it **must** be kept in the health room and administered by the school nurse or office staff. The **parent or guardian must sign an authorization** indicating the student's name, name of medication, and directions for administering. The medication must be brought **to the school office** in the original prescription container with the student's name and directions for administering clearly marked on the container. Please **do not** send the medication in the student's lunch box. Over-the-counter medications (i.e., vitamins, Tylenol, cough drops etc.) will be handled in the same manner as those prescribed by a physician. Without the signed authorization form, no medicines will be dispensed. Authorization forms are available in the office.

### **Student Illness**

Sick students (generally indicated by an above-normal temperature or vomiting) should be kept at home until well. Students should have normal temperatures for **at least 24 hours** and have had no vomiting for **at least 12 hours** before returning to school. The American Academy of Pediatrics standard for a fever is 100.4°F or above. Any temperature between 97°F and 100.4°F is considered normal.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

OCA will make its own decision regarding operation. School closing or delayed opening will be announced after 6:00am on the OCA Facebook page, through a phone message, by a Gradelink email.

In the event of a delayed opening, MS/HS students will enter the class schedule during the appropriate period when school begins.

## **MANDATORY REPORTING**

As a matter of law, our staff is required to report suspected acts of child abuse to the Department of Social Services.

## **OFF-LIMIT AREAS**

Students are not permitted in teachers' rooms, offices, the lunchroom, kitchen, "faculty only" areas, or any locked area without express permission and adult supervision. Students are not to disturb classes in session by looking in or waving in front of the classroom windows or doors. After arrival at school, no student is allowed in cars or the parking lot without permission. Students should leave campus within 15 minutes after dismissal unless they are participating in an after-school activity. The sidewalk should be used for access to the building instead of walking across the grass or landscaped areas around the school.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Students are expected to respect the property of other students. No student may enter another student's desk, cubby, or locker. Students are responsible for marking their name on **all** personal items (books, notebooks, coats, jackets, backpacks, sports gear, etc.) they bring to school. Teachers reserve the right to confiscate any magazines or books deemed inappropriate. Restricted items will be confiscated and returned to the student's parent. Students are discouraged from bringing valuables to school. Watches, eyeglasses, and other personal items are strictly the responsibility of the student, not the school.

## **PETS**

Pets are not allowed on school grounds except for instructional purposes with prior administrative permission.

## **SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE ACT**

In keeping with South Carolina Code of Laws Article 2, section 59-63-110 "Safe School Climate Act" Oconee Christian Academy has adopted a policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation, or bullying. A safe and civil environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, are conducts that disrupt both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment.

Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers should demonstrate appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means a gesture; an electronic communication; or a written, verbal, physical, or sexual act that is reasonably perceived to have the effect of:

- harming a student physically or emotionally, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage
- insulting or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with the orderly operation of the school.
- seeking reprisal, retaliation, or false accusation against a victim, witness, or one with reliable information about an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

"School" means in a classroom, on school premises, in a school-related vehicle, at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises, or at another program or function where the school is responsible for the child.

A school employee, student, or volunteer who witnesses or has reliable information that a student has been subject to harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall report the incident to the appropriate school official. Investigation of incidents is a vital part of the school's duty to protect students and will be done in cooperation with local law enforcement authorities.

## **STUDENT SUPERVISION**

All students on campus are required to be supervised by an employee of the school or supervised by their parent at all times.

## VISITORS

Access to the campus of Oconee Christian Academy is monitored for the safety and protection of our students, faculty, and staff. All visitors, including parents and volunteers, must report to the school office and acquire a visitor's pass. The visitor's pass must be clearly displayed while on campus. All items (lunches, P.E. clothes, etc.) must be delivered to the school office marked with the student's name. No one may go directly to a classroom or to any other area of the campus without first checking in at the office. At the staff's discretion, visitors may be asked to show identification. Visitors outside the building also need to come to the office before going on the grounds and get a visitor pass stating they are cleared by the office to be on campus. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules of Oconee Christian Academy when on campus.

**It is respectfully requested that all visitors set a good example for students by complying with OCA dress code whenever on campus.**

Visitors may be allowed to eat lunch with students at the discretion of administration. Lunch visitors will be required to sign out at the end of the lunch period.

- Any former student wishing to visit must visit during lunchtime and have prior approval of the administration.
- Family members of students and pastors may on occasion eat lunch with their student(s).

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## SPECIAL EVENT POLICIES

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### CHAPEL

Chapel is an important time of spiritual growth for both students and faculty. Students are expected to demonstrate attentiveness, courtesy and respect during chapel. Students should also bring their Bibles to Chapel each time. Parents are welcome to attend chapel services. Elementary Chapel will be on Thursdays from 9:00am to 9:30am. Upper School Chapel will be on Thursdays from 9:39am to 10:22am.

### CLASS CELEBRATIONS

All celebrations, seasonal and otherwise, must be linked to instructional objectives or student achievement and must be pre-approved in writing by the Head of School. Parents may send refreshments for a class to honor their child's birthday. The refreshments may be served during break or lunch only. Birthday parties **may not** be held during regular instruction hours. Invitations to individual home birthday parties **may not** be handed out at school unless the entire class is being invited, and invitations must be given to the homeroom teacher by 8:00am.

With the teacher's initiation, we encourage parental participation in the organization of and preparation for class celebrations, keeping in mind that all school volunteers must be approved through a background check..

### FIELD TRIPS

A note of explanation and a parent permission form, which must be signed and returned, will precede all field trips or other off-campus special events. Dress code and discipline policies established for the school will also apply to such events. Exceptions to the dress code must be pre-approved by administration.

OCA will rely on parent chaperones for transportation and supervision of students on field trips. Safety is always our top priority when transporting students off campus. The following are some guidelines to help make each field trip an enjoyable and educational experience for parents and students.

#### **Parent & Student Responsibilities**

- **All field trip forms, money, and paperwork need to be submitted for the field trip by the date stated or the student may not attend the field trip.**
- If transporting any student other than their own, parents must provide the declaration page of their insurance policy (insurance cards are not sufficient) showing the required coverage of \$100,000, \$300,000, \$100,000, as well as a copy of a valid Driver's License, to the school office.
- Parent chaperones must be willing to sign and submit to a background check which must be completed at least one week prior to the day of the field trip.
- While OCA teachers are in charge on the field trip, parent chaperones must be responsible for the students that ride with them, not only in the vehicle, but also at the destination. They must be aware of the students' location at all times. During the

event, chaperones should minimize distractions such as visiting with other parents or being on their phones. Chaperones should set a Christian example in all they say or do.

- By law, all students must be buckled in seat belts or appropriate age-level restraint devices when being transported to or from school activities.
- Students may only drive in their vehicle alone and with written parental permission.
- Movies viewed in vehicles must be rated “G” or on rare occasions “PG” if approved in advance by administration and the parents of every child.
- While in attendance at plays, concerts, or any other type of auditorium event, OCA students must demonstrate polite, respectful behavior by remaining quietly seated throughout the production.
- Siblings are not allowed to attend field trips for insurance liability purposes.

### **Cell Phone Use During Field Trips**

In an effort to enable students to communicate with parents while on field trips and to facilitate educational activities, students may take cell phones on field trips with the appropriate usage outlined by the teacher(s) in charge..

### **Choosing Not to Attend a Field Trip**

If you choose for your child not to attend a field trip, he/she will receive an alternative educational assignment to complete. The teacher and/or administration will make arrangements for the student to be supervised on campus while his/her class is away. If a student stays home instead of attending a field trip, he/she will be counted absent and will be assigned the educational assignment as make-up work.

## **SEASONAL EMPHASIS**

The school policy on seasonal emphasis issues encountered at Christmas, Easter and other holidays should be consistent with our Biblical orientation. We will strive to emphasize the Christian aspects of each seasonal celebration. We will also strive to protect, as much as possible, each family’s specific holiday convictions.

Faculty and staff will make sure that all school decorations, presentations, and classroom discussions focus on the Christian history and celebration of the holiday. For instance, our Easter celebration will focus on the Biblical aspects of Jesus’ death and resurrection, while our Christmas celebration will focus on the Biblical account of Jesus’ birth. Halloween celebrations and the display of Halloween characters are not permitted.

## **SENIOR PRIVILEGES**

Senior privileges are just that: privileges. These are granted by the Administration to individual classes on a year-by-year basis.

Senior class off-campus lunches may occur once a month if scheduled and supervised by a teacher. Parent permission form for the year must be on file in the main office.

## **STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

### **Beta Club**

Membership in OCA's chapters of Beta Club and Junior Beta is based on academic achievement. To qualify for Junior Beta Club, a middle school student must have earned all A's and B's the previous school year. To qualify for Beta Club, a high school student must have a cumulative weighted GPA of 3.75 or higher. Members must meet academic, service, and behavior standards to remain in the program.

### **BOOST**

BOOST provides a structure through which students can support other students' spiritual growth. Its members must express a personal relationship with God, exhibit a lifestyle that honors Christ, and possess a desire for the student body to grow spiritually. Membership is open to all high school students.

### **Student Government**

The purpose of Student Government is to serve OCA, to give students a voice in the school activities, and to develop student leadership skills. Middle school and high school students may run for class representative.. High school students may run for Student Government officer positions. Student Government members are expected to set a good example for their peers in all situations.

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# ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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## **Mission of Oconee Christian Academy Athletics:**

It is the mission and purpose of the OCA Athletic Department to partner with parents in providing a positive athletic experience for students in a manner that is consistent with biblical truth, using athletic involvement as a tool to teach lessons for life. Additionally, it is our mission:

- To build Christian character and glorify God through competition with other schools and teams.
- To use athletics as a part of developing the total student.
- To develop school spirit and unity.
- To cultivate relationships among participating students and families.
- To be a witness for Christ through our effort and attitude.

OCA encourages students to participate in sports as a way to glorify God. Athletic participation at OCA is a family affair. There should be a mutual understanding between parents, students, coaches, and administrators of the commitment and effort required. Athletic participation at OCA is not a right but a privilege that should be valued and protected.

## **Athletic Verses:**

**Humility:** “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.” Philippians 2:3 ESV

**Passion:** “Do you not know that in a race all runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.” I Corinthians 9:24 ESV

**Unity:** “If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.” Mark 3:24 ESV

**Thankfulness:** “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” I Thessalonians 5:18 ESV

**Accountability:** “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.” Galatians 6:1 ESV

OCA is committed to helping our students learn and grow as followers of Jesus Christ. Learning to serve and sacrifice in humility and to develop good work habits will help them grow and develop in character, wisdom, and discernment.

OCA encourages students to participate in whatever sports are in season rather than specializing in one sport for the entire year. Students should discuss athletic participation with parents and coaches before embarking upon the rigorous schedule required for sporting events.

OCA expects parents of student-athletes to serve in all activities sponsored by the Athletic Department including volunteering in the concession stand, at the ticket gate, or wherever volunteers are needed.

**League Affiliation** – OCA competes through the **South Carolina Independent Schools Association (SCISA)**. We will compete in our region with other 1A schools and compete for region and state championships.

**Athletic Director** – The Athletic Director is selected by the Head of School and is approved by the Board of Trustees at OCA. He or she will report directly to the Head of School, giving full reports of the actions and activities of the athletic program. The Athletic Director is responsible for selecting head coaching positions with final approval from the Head of School. The head coach, with final approval from the Athletic Director, will choose an assistant coach. The Athletic Director authorizes the purchase of equipment, uniforms, team apparel, and supervises each sport's schedule.

**Coaches** – Coaches are free to set their own rules and conduct their practices and/or workouts in such a fashion that embraces the values of the school, school policies, the Athletic Handbook, policies of **SCISA**, and are approved by the Athletic Director. Coaches have the freedom to hold tryouts if necessary. Coaches may remove a player from a team for disciplinary reasons if necessary, with approval and guidance from the Athletic Director.

**I. ELIGIBILITY FOR PRACTICE OR PARTICIPATION:**

- **Be enrolled as a student and current on ALL financial obligations to OCA.**
- **Annual Physicals**  
To be eligible for practice or participation in athletic contests, a student must have a medical examination by a physician once every 365 days. An OCA Examination Form is available if needed. The Physicians' Sports Physical Forms if properly completed are acceptable. The Sports Physical must be completed and placed on file in the athletic office **PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF PRACTICE.**
- **Parental Consent**  
An Athletic Participation Permission Form must be completed, signed, returned, and on file in the athletic office **PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF PRACTICE.**

**\*A boy may not participate on a girls' team for any reason.**

**\*A girl may not participate on a boys' team for any reason.**

**ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY:**

**The primary purpose of school is EDUCATION. Participation in Athletics is a privilege for those students who are academically eligible.**

- A. In order to participate in SCISA athletic activities, a student must be enrolled in and attending the member school in order to participate in that school's athletic program. The student must also meet all other necessary requirements for participation.

*SCISA's full athletic handbook can be found at:*

[https://www.scisa.org/images/athletics/21-22\\_Constitution.pdf](https://www.scisa.org/images/athletics/21-22_Constitution.pdf)

- B. Athletes are responsible for all their academic work. Athletic teams will sometimes have to leave school early. It is the athlete's responsibility to turn in and get any assignments for that day. Athletic events can never be used as an excuse for unfinished academic work.
- C. Students must maintain an overall average of 70. Any student who is failing a class (59 and lower) may not participate in any sport. **Eligibility is to be declared on the 4th school day**

after the end of the marking period. A student shall become eligible or ineligible at 12:01AM on the 4th school day after the end of the marking period.

- D. If a student has not met the academic requirements, two weeks will be given for a grade re-check. Students will continue to practice but may *not* participate in any contests during these two weeks. If the student is still not meeting academic requirements at the grade re-check, the student will be given another two weeks to improve grades. During these two weeks the student will *not* be allowed to participate in **practice or contests**. If the student is not eligible after four weeks, the student will no longer be able to participate in that sport during that season.

#### **AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY:**

- A. A student is ineligible to participate in athletics if his/her 19th birthday is before July 1, 2022.
- B. **Junior Varsity:** In order to participate in junior varsity athletics, a student must not have reached his/her 16th birthday before July 1, 2022.
- C. **Middle School:** In order to participate in Middle School athletics, a student must not have reached his/her 15th birthday before July 1, 2022.

#### **GRADE LEVEL REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY:**

- A. **Varsity Teams:** Eligible students in grades **8-12** may participate on varsity teams in baseball, basketball, and soccer. Eligible students in grades **6-12** may participate on all other varsity teams.  
*To address player safety, coaches and parents must carefully evaluate the skill level, maturity level, experience, and physical competitiveness of students below the 10th grade before permitting participation on any varsity teams.*
- B. **Junior Varsity Teams:** Sport specific grade restrictions exist for Junior Varsity Teams. Eligible students in grades **5-10** may participate on junior varsity teams in cross country. Eligible students in grades **6-10** may participate on junior varsity teams in basketball, baseball, and soccer.  
*To address player safety, coaches and parents must carefully evaluate the skill level, maturity level, experience, and physical competitiveness of students below the 10th grade before permitting participation on any junior varsity teams.*
- C. **Middle School Teams:** Eligible students in grades **6-8** may participate on Middle School team sports. (5th graders will be allowed to participate if more players are needed to field a team.)

#### **AFTERSCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for participation in athletic events, including practices, athletes must be counted as present at school on the day an athletic contest is scheduled. Students must be present a half-day of school to participate in the contest. (3 ½ hours is a half-day for a full day).

#### **PRACTICE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY:**

OCA Athletics is comprised of TEAM sports that require every player to know his or her responsibilities and perform as part of a TEAM. If one player is not able to practice his or her responsibilities the entire TEAM pays the price. TEAMS develop during practice, not during games. Therefore, on-time attendance at all practices is necessary so each player develops and learns their TEAM responsibilities.

A player must understand that by joining any TEAM program, he or she has made a commitment to develop and help other players develop as part of the TEAM. Making this commitment to the TEAM is understood to take precedence over all other commitments.

**PRACTICE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Players are required to attend ALL practices, tournaments, and program events. If an event must be missed, prior approval must be obtained from the coach.
2. Players are required to be ON TIME to ALL practices, tournaments, and program events. ON TIME means you are dressed out and ready to begin warming up before the practice begins.
3. If you are LATE or MISS practice, there will be consequences such as running or playing time reduction. If a practice is missed a day before a contest, the player may not be able to START the contest.
4. If tardiness or unexcused absences persist this provides cause for further reduction in playing time or dismissal from the team.
5. Coaches will address excused absences and playing time accordingly. An excused absence could be a serious illness or death in the family or mandatory school events. Players are responsible for communicating with the coach.

**II. PLAYING TIME POLICY:**

- A. The amount of time an athlete plays is determined by many factors. The head coach determines the playing time of each athlete. All team members have different roles within the team structure and are evaluated accordingly by the coaches.
- B. Middle School and JV teams are competing to win while looking for opportunities to allow for individual success when the situation allows for it during the game.
- C. Varsity teams will have an emphasis on winning and being successful. The coach will choose a starting team for each game and substitute players at the appropriate times.
- D. If a player has difficulty understanding why he or she is not playing, the player should discuss the concern with the coach before or after practice in a respectful manner.

**III. QUITTING POLICY:**

- A. Once a student is on a team, he or she will not be allowed to quit after the first day of practice without a parental conference with the head coach, unless that athlete suffers from a serious injury or is seriously jeopardizing academic progress.
- B. The Athletic Department reserves the right to refuse participation in another sport if the reason for quitting is deemed inappropriate.

**IV. RECRUITING POLICY:**

The recruiting or proselytizing of student athletes shall be considered a violation of the spirit and philosophy of the rules and regulations governing SCISA Athletics and considered unsportsmanlike conduct. A student should not be subjected to undue influence or any special inducement by any person or group in an attempt to entice the student to transfer primarily for athletic purposes. Recruitment in this manner shall cause the student to be ineligible upon transfer and shall jeopardize the standing of the school in the Association.

*Some examples of undue influence are:*

1. *The student is asked by a member of the school faculty, a coach or member of a “booster club” to transfer from one school to another. School personnel cannot make the initial contact.*
2. *Special Privileges given to parents such as employment or financial aid.*
3. *Financial aid for transportation, room, board, or tuition.*
4. *Given Special Privileges given to parents such as employment or financial aid. any consideration not afforded other students. Example: financial assistance cannot be awarded because of the student’s participation is a specific sport or sports in general.*

Note: Prior to enrollment a prospective student-athlete may visit a school provided the arrangements for the visit are cleared through the school administration of the school to be visited.

- **Homeschool Student Participation**

According to SCISA, a homeschool student may participate in OCA Athletics if he or she is enrolled in at least four academic classes that meet daily. He or She must pay the tuition and sports fee and abide by the rules and regulations as outlined in the student and athletic handbook.

Additionally:

- Homeschooled students may not be dually enrolled (or dually participating).
- When a homeschool student enrolls in an on-campus course, he or she must complete the course and continue enrollment to stay eligible for athletic participation.
- Homeschool students who dis-enroll after being enrolled, will not have athletic eligibility.
- Students cannot join and withdraw from classes based on the season. If a student enrolls and plays baseball at the end of the school year, the enrollment must continue throughout the next year for athletic eligibility.

## **V. PRACTICE RULES AND REGULATIONS:**

Practice will be held on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Wednesday practices can be held on campus on an as-needed basis but must be dismissed by 5:00 pm. Practice times and duration vary with the sport and are determined by the coach and Athletic Director. On half-days and non-school days, the coaches can hold mandatory practices when it is necessary for team development. No practices or team meetings shall be held on Sundays or holidays without the approval of the Athletic Director.

### **ORGANIZED PRACTICE:**

SCISA establishes a first organized practice date for all sports. Organized practices must not take place before these established dates. An **organized practice** is defined as: an athletic situation involving **a coach and more than the allowed number of student-athletes** where instruction, correction, drills, and/or skills associated with that sport are taking place. (Note: see player restrictions listed for each sport)

### **Player Restrictions during Out-of-Season during the school year:**

- Soccer, Baseball: No More than four (4) student-athletes
- All other sports: No More than three (3) student-athletes

## **FIRST PRACTICE DATES:**

Monday, August 1, 2022 - First Day of Organized Practice for Fall Sports

Monday, October 1, 2022 - First Day of Organized Practice for Winter Sports

Monday, January 30, 2023 - First Day of Organized Practice for Spring Sports

## **Summer Practice Policy - Summer schedule runs May 31 - July 29, 2022**

- Teams are limited to twelve (12) total practices/games. Teams shall not have more than two (2) practices/games per week which last no more than 1 1/2 hours per practice.
- Camp: Teams attending a camp during this period will count the number of days at camp against the 12 total practices.
- Closed Dates: One week associated with July 4th; and the last week of July prior to the first practice July 25-29.
- Camp attendance during a closed season is legal if: the camp is off campus, open and advertised to the general public, and not led by any member of the school coaching staff. SCISA recommends that summer work-outs should be voluntary in nature.

## **Conditioning & Strength Training**

General conditioning and strength training is legal throughout the year.

*Exceptions: Cross Country and/or track coaches are prohibited from leading conditioning sessions from the date of the State Cross Country Meet until January 4, 2023.*

## **Coaching Out-of-School Teams (Club, Travel, AAU...) July 28, 2022 - May 2023**

It shall be considered a violation if a coach (*any coach on your school staff; paid or volunteer*), coaches an out-of-school team that has more than 3 students from the coach's school. It is also a violation if one of your coaches practices more 3 players from your school at the same time even though they are on different "teams" (such as JV and varsity).

## **Open Gym or Free Play**

No teaching, correcting or instruction by any member of the school's coaching staff.

## **Violations**

Violations of the organized practice rule may result in a fine, suspensions, forfeitures and/or probation.

## **V. PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT:**

### **Athletes will:**

1. Maintain a good reputation at school and within our community.
2. Address coaches and officials with respect.
3. Never criticize the officials or coaches.
4. Address teammates and opponents with respect, questionable language, "slang" words, or "trash talking" will not be tolerated.
5. Develop relationships and good rapport with teammates, coaches, opponents, classmates, and teachers.
6. Develop unity within the team, our school family, and within the Kingdom.
7. Be motivated by the love of God.
8. Be good stewards of all athletic facilities, home and away.
9. Not use illegal drugs, illegal performance-enhancing supplements, tobacco, alcohol, or vapes.
10. Not haze or harass. This is illegal and will result in suspension from athletic participation.
11. Strive for victory in order to glorify God.

12. Commit to excellence.
13. Play and act like a champion.

### **GUIDELINES FOR A PLAYER DISQUALIFICATION/EJECTION FROM AN ATHLETIC EVENT**

**First Offense:** An official warning and a one game suspension. If the disqualification is for unsportsmanlike, or flagrant illegal conduct, a \$100 fine. Note: Additional games may be assessed due to the nature of the offense.

**Second Offense:** A \$200 fine and suspension until an appearance before the Athletic Committee or SCISA staff.

**Third Offense:** Will result in the termination of eligibility (reinstatement may only be granted by the Athletic Committee and a \$500 fine if reinstated by the Athletic Committee).

**Disqualification/Ejection of a Coach:** An official warning and \$250 fine. The Committee could also consider suspension if the incident so warrants.

*\*Fines will be paid by the offending player or coach*

*\*Players and Coaches will be required to complete the required return to play protocol as outlined by SCISA*

### **Spectator Code of Conduct**

\*OCA is responsible to see that our players, coaches, and spectators demonstrate good sportsmanship. We are required to have a designated representative, other than the coach, at all events and will be available if there is a problem.

#### **Fans will:**

1. Cheer positively for OCA rather than negatively against the other team.
2. Always be courteous to the officials and will not approach an official at any time.
3. Refrain from trying to disrupt an opponent (ex. Shooting foul shots)
4. Stay off the field or court.
5. Help in any way possible with cleanup after contests.
6. Never approach a coach with grievances before, during, or after a contest. Please set up a time away from contests to discuss any issues with the coach. If it is necessary to address an issue immediately please find the Athletic Director or Administrative Staff to help handle the situation.

### **Parent/Coach/Player Relations**

1. Love, respect, encourage, and pray for one another.
2. Concerns or questions in most situations can be solved by the coach and player meeting together. The Matthew 18 principles should be followed:
  - a. Meeting with the coach(es) and player.
  - b. Meeting with the coach(es), player, and parents. Set up a meeting to discuss concerns in private. Do not approach coach(es) before or after a contest.
  - c. Meeting with the coach(es), player, parents, and Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will not entertain most concerns unless they have first gone to the coach(es).
3. Parents are expected to be supportive of the coaches and to refrain from sharing negative opinions with others.

4. Parental displays of anger towards team members, coaches, officials, or other teams are unacceptable and may result in their child being removed from participation in athletics at OCA.
5. Parents should NOT coach players from the stands.
6. If a team member, or parent of a team member, organizes support against a coach, that team member will be removed from athletic participation at OCA.

**Coach Attire** – Coaches must also meet the OCA dress code. Business casual is the dress code for court sports. Field sports should be in accordance with the sports norm. Coaches should dress in appropriate OCA gear.

### **Travel to Games and Practices**

1. Student-athletes must travel to games and practices in students' or parents' vehicles.
2. Athletes may ride with adults or may drive themselves to practices. (If athletes must ride with other athletes a Student-Athlete Travel Waiver must be completed and on file in the athletic office.)
3. Athletes need to ride with adults to ALL away games, **unless approved beforehand**. For an athlete to drive themselves or to ride with another athlete, authorization from the Athletic Director will need to be obtained before game day and a signed waiver for the drivers and riders for that particular game must be on file in the athletic office.

### **School Discipline**

1. Athletes receiving a suspension from school will not be allowed to participate in or attend any athletic activity that day.
2. If our athletes and/or coaches display inappropriate behavior it will be monitored and dealt with at the discretion of the Athletic Director and the Head of School.

### **Apparel, Uniforms, and Equipment**

1. All team-promoting apparel worn by or purchased for OCA athletes must be approved by the Athletic Director.
2. Uniforms must be properly maintained. Any damage or loss of uniforms will be the responsibility of the athlete.
3. Clean uniforms are to be turned in to the coach, office, or Athletic Director within one week of the conclusion of the season. The uniforms are school property and cannot be kept. If uniforms are not turned in, the full replacement cost of a new uniform will be charged to the student's account and progress reports and/or grade reports can be withheld until all uniforms are returned to the school.
4. Uniforms are not to be used for practice or personal use.

### **Awards/Post Season Ceremony**

1. Awards are used in OCA Athletics to recognize God-given ability and achievement.
2. Ceremonies will be held after each sports season or collectively at the end of the year.
3. Awards are given at the coach and the Athletic Director's discretion.

### **Lettering in Sports and Letter Jackets**

1. Varsity Athletes can letter in OCA sports starting in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. To earn a letter, athletes must complete the season and compete in at least half of the total number of contests.

2. The purchase of letter jackets is the sole responsibility of the athlete. Jackets can be purchased through Diamond T Sports, VX Digital Printing, or Herff Jones.

### **Booster Club and Fundraising**

- **Admissions/Concessions** (Home Games) – All parents are responsible for working at least one admissions gate and one concession or can work two different games in one area. If a parent has multiple students participating, they are required to work two of each or four in one area.
- **Fundraising Participation** – Proceeds from fundraising efforts of the OCA Booster Club make up the greatest portion of the OCA athletics budget. Without the proceeds, our sports programs would be severely limited. To continue and advance our sports programs, it is a requirement for all athletes to participate in these fundraisers.

OCONEE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY'S ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT DEPENDS HEAVILY ON EACH STUDENT-ATHLETE'S FAMILY. PARTICIPATION IN OUR ATHLETIC PROGRAM IS A PRIVILEGE AND NOT A RIGHT AND COMES WITH MANY RESPONSIBILITIES. IT IS EXPECTED THAT BOTH THE ATHLETE AND THE ATHLETE'S FAMILY FULFILL THE RESPONSIBILITY AS SPECIFIED BY THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT AND EACH TEAM.

\*ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS REGARDING THE OCA ATHLETIC POLICY SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR.