



**Adventist  
Christian School**

# **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2025-2026**

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## Accreditation

Adventist Christian School (ACS) is operated by the Augusta First Seventh-day Adventist Church under the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities is a member of the National Council for Private School Accreditation, an organization approved by the U.S. Department of Education and by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to enroll non-immigrant students, accredit Seventh-day Adventist schools.

In Georgia, Seventh-day Adventist school accreditation is additionally approved by the Georgia Private School Accreditation Council, which was accepted by the State Board of Education on August 13, 1998, as an accreditation agency.

## Philosophy of Education

The Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education is Christ-centered. Adventists believe that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God's character and purposes can be understood as revealed in the Bible, in Jesus Christ, and nature. The distinctive characteristics of Adventist education—derived from the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White—point to the redemptive aim of true education: to restore human beings into the image of their Maker.

An education of this kind imparts far more than academic knowledge. It fosters a balanced development of the whole person—spiritual, physical, intellectual, and social-emotional—a process that spans a lifetime. Together, homes, schools, and churches cooperate with divine agencies to prepare learners to be good citizens in this world and for eternity.

## Mission

To reflect Jesus, to love All, to serve Everyone, and to educate with Excellence.

## Vision

Our vision is to be a lighthouse of Christ-centered education that cultivates academic excellence, spiritual growth, and servant leadership, equipping students for a life of service in this world and eternity.

## Core Values

1. **Christ-Centered Education** – We provide a transformational, Christ-centered learning environment that prepares students for a life of faith, service, and leadership.
2. **Academic Excellence** – We pursue excellence in education, fostering critical thinking, character development, and a commitment to lifelong learning.
3. **Faith & Spiritual Growth** – We cultivate a deep, personal faith in Christ, training students to live purposefully and prepare for both community impact and Heaven.
4. **Servant Leadership** – We equip students to lead with integrity, humility, and a heart for service, reflecting Christ's love in all we do.
5. **Community & Partnership** – We engage with families, churches, and the broader community to create a supportive, collaborative environment that strengthens faith and learning.

6. **Character & Integrity** – We instill values of honesty, kindness, and peace, shaping students into individuals who reflect God’s love in their daily lives.
7. **Kingdom Impact** – We prepare students not only for academic and career success but also to be citizens of Heaven, living out their faith in a way that transforms lives and communities.

## Goals

1. **Spiritual Development**  
To strengthen Christ-centered spiritual development by fostering a school culture that nurtures personal faith, discipleship, and servant leadership through biblically integrated instruction, intentional spiritual practices, and meaningful community service opportunities.
2. **Academic Excellence**  
To advance a culture of academic excellence through continuous improvement of innovative teaching and learning practices that challenge students, support diverse learning needs, and foster critical thinking to enhance student engagement and achievement.
3. **Student Experience and Well-being**  
To foster a positive, supportive environment that promotes student well-being, emotional support, and character development.
4. **Community Awareness and Engagement**  
To increase the school’s visibility and strengthen its reputation within the local community through strategic outreach and partnerships.
5. **Program Expansion and Improvement**  
To expand academic and extracurricular offerings to provide diverse learning experiences that meet students' interests and needs.
6. **Financial Stability and Growth**  
To strengthen financial stability to support tuition affordability and school sustainability by improving fundraising efforts, building partnerships, and enhancing resource management.
7. **Communication**  
To enhance internal and external communication to improve information flow, engagement, and understanding among parents, staff, students, and the church community.
8. **Church and School Relationship**  
To build stronger connections between the school and the church community to foster increased support, involvement, and enrollment.
9. **Enrollment and Retention**  
To develop strategies to grow and maintain student enrollment while strengthening retention efforts.

## Objectives

The objectives of ACS are to develop in each student the following character traits:

- Love and appreciation for the privileges, rights, and responsibilities guaranteed each individual.
- Wholesome respect and attitude for each unit of society: home, church, school, and the government.
- Total spiritual, physical, mental and emotional health.

## School Constituency and School Board

The Constituency of ACS is composed of the members of the Augusta First Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Church Nominating Committee nominates School Board members for terms of one to three years from a constituent member who supports Seventh-day Adventist Education and represents a cross-section of the constituency. Board members are approved and voted on by the constituency in a Church business meeting.

The School Board oversees the school's operation within the principles of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the guidelines and policies adopted by the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventist, and School's Constitution.

The School Board consists of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, School Principal/Head Teacher, Parent Teacher Association Leader, Church Pastor, IT leader, and members at large.

The Church Pastor, Parent Teacher Association Leader, and the School Principal/Head Teacher are members of the Board by virtue of their position. Specific officials of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the Southern Union of Seventh-day Adventists are ex-officio members of the School Board.

Regular School Board meetings are open to all constituent members, parents, or guardians who wish to attend, but the School Board Chair must be notified one day prior to the scheduled board meetings. Executive meetings are open only to School Board members and parties invited by the Chair.

## Personnel

All faculty and staff are active members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in regular standing and are committed to the success of the school's program. All personnel and volunteers are required to complete a criminal background check (FB 20) and child protection training through Sterling Volunteers (formerly known as Verified Volunteers) upon first-time hire and renewed every three years.

## Parent-Teacher Association

ACS has an active Parent Teacher Association, which exists to support the Church's mission to advance Christian education in the home and school. The Parent-Teacher Association Leader is nominated by the Church Nominating Committee and is approved and voted by the church constituency. **Any church member, parent, or guardian of a student enrolled in the school may become a member of the association.**

The objectives of the association are:

1. To encourage all constituent families of school-age children to regard Seventh-day Adventist education as the most favorable means for their children's balanced development and spiritual well-being.
2. To provide social and educational opportunities that involve church members, parents, teachers, and students.

3. To promote and assist the school in acquiring and maintaining the resources needed for the welfare and benefit of the students, teachers, and school personnel.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

In compliance with all applicable federal and state regulations, ACS does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnic background, country of origin, or gender in the administration of education policies, application for admission, scholarship, loan programs, and extracurricular programs.

## **Right of Privacy**

Student records contain only the information necessary for the process of education. Cumulative folders are available for review by the students and their parents or guardians (if the student is under 18 years of age) and are not accessible to unauthorized individuals.

## **Admission Policies**

ACS accepts children in accordance with the mandatory requirements of the State of Georgia. The School Board has the authority to approve or deny the admission of students. Placement within the system is based upon criteria stated in the policies of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the State of Georgia.

ACS accepts any families subject to the following considerations:

1. Parents and guardians of prospective students must be oriented to the goals and objectives of ACS.
2. The Bible-based curriculum and educational standards of ACS must be maintained.
3. Student behavior and scholastic ability must be considered before the student is accepted into the school program.
4. Students suspended for behavior concerns from other academic institutions are not accepted in this institution.
5. A placement Test will be given to the students to measure academic ability to be accepted into the program.

## **Grade Placement**

ACS reserves the right to place a student in the grade determined by placement tests and the recommendations of the teachers or School Principal/Head Teacher. The child's teacher bases grade promotion on the scholastic achievement, the age/maturity of the student, and evaluation. Final approval/denial of the request rests with the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Education Department and the local School Board.

## Pre-kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade Admission Policy

According to Georgia Standards of Excellence to be eligible for admission, children must be physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially mature to do work at the prescribed level. Prior to accepting an applicant, the following age criteria must be met:

Academic Level	School Age
<b>Pre-Kindergarten- (This is an Academic Program)</b>	Child <b>must be four (4) year old</b> on or before September 1 <sup>st</sup> to enter the program.
<b>Kindergarten</b>	Child <b>must be five (5) years old</b> on or before September 1 <sup>st</sup> to enter the program.
<b>First Grade</b>	Child <b>must be six (6) years old</b> on or before September 1 <sup>st</sup> to enter the program.

There are **no exceptions** to these requirements. A copy of the birth certificate must be presented and filed in the school office.

Applications are available at the school office. The application should be completed, signed by the parents or guardians, and brought to the school. New students should submit academic and behavior records from their previous school, including the most recent report cards.

## Kindergarten Attendance and Academic Program Statement

Even though Kindergarten is not mandatory in the State of Georgia, once a student is enrolled in our kindergarten program, attendance and participation become essential to their educational journey. Our kindergarten curriculum is a structured academic program that provides a strong foundation for future learning. It is based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and aligned with the standards in the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists set forth. Through this program, students engage in developmentally appropriate instruction that nurtures their spiritual, academic, social, and emotional growth.

## Academic Policies and Behavior Policies

Academic probation is intended to be a warning to the parents and students that there is a serious problem that needs to be addressed. Students on academic probation have the next school quarter to meet the academic standards. If standards are not met, the student will not be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored extracurricular activities for the following quarter.

### Academic Probation

A student may be put on academic probation for the following reasons:

- Below-average grades in core academic subjects.
- One "F" in core academic subjects in the quarter.
- A large number of incomplete assignments.
- Violation of the behavior policy outlined later in this handbook.



**Academic Probation Procedure**

- The teacher will develop a plan to help and encourage the student to address their academics or behavior change.
- The teacher will contact the parent(s)/guardian by phone or in person concerning the reasons for academic probation. A plan of action that incorporates the student, the parent(s) or guardian, and the teacher to help the student get back to regular academic standing must be presented to the principal.

**Possible Consequences**

- The student may have to forfeit some free time during the school day.
- The student may be excluded from extracurricular activities.
- Eight grade students may receive a Certificate of Completion, instead of a diploma.
- Students that do not make academic progress may be asked to withdraw from the school.

For more information, refer to the **ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIOR DISCIPLINE  
PARENT AND STUDENT AGREEMENT**

## **Eighth Grade Graduation Requirements**

**Diploma**

An eighth-grade student must complete and pass all the required subjects. These include Bible, Mathematics, Reading, Writing, Language Arts, Social Studies or World Geography, Science, Art, Music, Foreign Language, and Physical Education.

The student must meet their financial obligation and be in good standing to participate in commencement exercises, receive a diploma and final transcript.

**Incomplete Grades**

A grade of Incomplete (INC) may be given in cases where the teacher, in consultation with the principal, determines it is appropriate. Normally, without appropriate supporting documentation, students who receive an incomplete have two weeks to complete the required work. If the work is not completed by the end of the two weeks, grades will be calculated by including zeros for the missing work.

**Make-up work Due to Absence**

A student who has been absent due to illness or family emergency is responsible for making up all missed work in accordance with the school-wide policy. **Students with proper documentation have as many days to make up assigned work as they were absent.**

Suspended students may make up their work for 70% of the actual earned grade. Work not completed within the allowable time frame will result in a grade of zero.

## Retention

### Purpose

- To support each student's growth and mastery of foundational skills.
- To ensure readiness for the next grade level academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.
- To uphold high academic standards rooted in Christian values of compassion, grace, and excellence.

### General Guidelines

#### Retention may be considered when...

- A student is performing significantly below grade level in core subjects (reading, language arts, or mathematics) despite documented interventions.
- A student's social and emotional development suggests that repeating the grade would strengthen confidence and maturity.
- Excessive absences have substantially limited learning opportunities.
- For younger students (PreK to 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade), retention decisions focus more on developmental readiness rather than academic performance alone.

Retention is not used as a punishment, but as a supportive measure to help students build a stronger foundation for future success.

### Procedure

#### 1. Identification

Teachers identify students who may be at risk for retention through classroom performance, assessments, and observation.

#### 2. Intervention & Documentation

Targeted interventions are implemented (small group support, tutoring, accommodations) and documented over a reasonable period.

#### 3. Parent Communication

Teachers and School Administration discuss concerns with parents as early as the first quarter or during the first semester and again in the second semester, to ensure transparency and collaboration.

#### 4. Review Meeting

Near the end of the academic year, a team including the teacher(s), parents, school counselor (if applicable), and principal meets to review the student's progress, interventions, and data.

#### 5. Decision

The final decision is made by the principal, in consultation with teachers and parents, with the student's best interest as the primary focus. The decision is documented in writing and shared with parents.

### Special Considerations

- Students receiving special education services: Retention decisions must follow their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) I-Care plan guidelines.
- English Language Learners: Retention will not be based solely on language proficiency.

## Grading Scales

ACS uses a weighted grade point system to determine class grade at the conclusion of each quarter.

### Grading/Performance Scale for Prekindergarten

Numeric Grade	Marking Code
3	Proficient
2	Developing
1	Beginning
NA	Not Assessed at this time

### Grading/Performance Scale for Kindergarten to 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

Letter Grade	Numeric Grade	Skill Grade
E+	96-100	Excellent
E	90-95	
E-	86-89	
S+	80-85	Satisfactory
S	76-79	
S-	70-75	
N+	66-69	Needs Improvement
N	60-65	
N-	0-59	

### Grading Scale for 3<sup>rd</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Grade

Letter Grade	Numeric Grade	Marking Code
A+	97-100	Excels in understanding content and applying concepts
A	94-96	
A-	90-93	
B+	87-89	Masters most content and skills
B	84-86	
B-	80-83	
C+	77-79	Demonstrates basic understanding of the concepts and skills
C	74-76	
C-	70-73	
D+	67-69	Understanding of concepts and skills are limited and incomplete
D	64-66	
D-	60-63	
F	0-59	Shows an unacceptable level of understanding and/or effort

## Academic Honors

### Honor Roll

Students in Grades 3<sup>rd</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> may earn an honor roll certificate according to the following:

**Principal's List:** All A's

**Honors:** A's and B's

## Discipline Policy

ACS provides a safe, secure, and respectful environment for learning. In accordance with the Biblical teaching about love, respect, and kindness to one another, it is the school's policy to expect and maintain an environment free of bullying or of any verbal and physical misconduct that infringes on the safety or educational experience of any individual in our community.

As responsible members of our ACS school community, all children learn that they are expected to treat others with respect and compassion. We design our curriculum to reflect the school's values and beliefs in social justice with respect for differences. Students, along with their parents, learn to reinforce our standards, policies, ethics and beliefs regarding appropriate conduct for Christians.

### Bully Prevention Policy

We believe that bullying behaviors are harmful to students' physical, emotional, social, psychological, and academic experiences. These behaviors negatively impact the victims, bystanders, and bullies and create a negative school climate.

ACS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and Policy complies with current federal and state laws against bullying for the purpose of preventing behaviors that will impede learning or interfere with the safety or well-being of our students, employees and volunteers.

Stricter standards of behavior may apply under our general policies, ethical guidelines and beliefs as a community of faith. Our goal is to prevent inappropriate verbal and physical conduct before any student becomes a subject to bullying. Even though these definitions refer to patterns of conduct, the school reserves the right to apply disciplinary measures and other corrective action in the case of a single expression, act, or gesture.

Our school prohibits student-to-student behaviors characterized as bullying, as defined and described below, as well as situations where an adult staff member bullies a student or another staff member, or a student bullies a staff member.

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, activities, programs, and field trips. Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited using technology, or an electronic device that is owned, leased, or used by our school.

ACS will not tolerate any form of bullying, nor will we tolerate retaliation against any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses, or has reliable information about a bullying incident.

## Definitions and Terms

**"Bullying"** is the repeated use of an intentionally aggressive or hostile behavior that involves an imbalance of power between the person who is bullied and the bully. Bullying takes many forms, including but not limited to physical or verbal assaults, intimidation or non-verbal threats, social exclusion or isolation, or the use of technology or writing to convey embarrassing, slanderous, threatening, or intimidating messages. Bullying can include social exclusion or actions by more than one perpetrator, as well as harassing or intimidating behavior in person or via social media, including texting, phone, voice mail, other social media posting, and posting on online.

Bullying can be categorized by, but is not necessarily defined by, teasing, put-downs, name-calling, or false accusations, which are repeated continuously. Bullying behaviors cause emotional or physical harm to the targeted person or his/her property and/or the people related or connected to the person. These behaviors place the targeted person in reasonable fear of harm to self or property, creates a hostile environment at school for the targeted person, infringes on the rights of the targeted person, and/or substantially disrupts the learning process or orderly operation of the school.

**"Cyber-bullying"** is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as cell phones, computers, other electronic devices or the internet. It includes but is not limited to email, instant messages, text messages, other social media postings, and internet postings, whether on a webpage, blog, or otherwise. This conduct is not allowed under the discipline policy of the school.

A **"hostile environment"** is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe to alter a student's educational experience. Creating this kind of environment is conduct that is not allowed under the school's discipline policy.

**"Retaliation"** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during a bullying investigation, or witnesses bullying. This conduct is not allowed under the discipline policy of the school.

**"Rough and tumble play"** is physical interaction between two individuals who have agreed to engage in such activity for fun or sport but because of its physicality can lead to injury, or where the roughness exceeds the expectations of one or more of the participants, can lead to a fight. Rough and tumble play poses a risk of harm to the participants and is conduct not allowed under the discipline policy of the school.

**"Fighting"** is a physical interaction between individuals where anger and fear and a need for retaliation may also be involved. Fighting poses a risk of harm to the participants and is conduct not allowed under the discipline policy of the school.

### Hazing/Initiation/Pranks/Practical Jokes

Students have the right to feel safe from demeaning and degrading treatment. Hazing, initiations, pranks and practical jokes are not allowed. While these types of activities may be done in fun with no intent to harm or hurt others, the consequences frequently conflict with our goals as Christians to uplift and encourage one another. Involvement in any such conduct is unacceptable and will be subject to the School's Discipline Policy. Hazing and initiations are prohibited by law.

### Reporting of Bullying/Cyber-Bullying

Any person who is the recipient of bullying behavior in any form or has witnessed an incident of bullying or has relevant information about any form of bullying prohibited by the school's policy is urged to promptly report the matter orally or in writing to the principal or any staff member with whom the individual is comfortable. Any person who is subject to retaliation in violation of this policy or knows of

such an incident is encouraged to make a report. While the School cannot promise strict confidentiality because information may be shared in order to conduct an effective investigation, the School Administration releases information concerning complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation only on a legitimate need-to-know basis.

## Cell Phones, Smart Watches, & Portable Electronics

**Due to our interest and priority in maintaining a positive learning environment and academic integrity, ACS does not allow for students to have access to their cell phones, smart watches, and portable electronics while at school.** Cell phones and smart watches need to be turned in to the homeroom teacher before classes start and retrieved at the end of the day.

### First Offense

If a cell phone or any electronic device is heard, seen, or used during school, the electronic device will be taken away and held in the principal's office for 48 hours. The electronic device will only be returned to the parent after the 48 hours period.

### Second Offense

If there is a second violation of this policy after the first offense, the electronic device will be taken away and held in the principal's office for up to one week and the parent must retrieve the item from School Administration.

### Third Offense

After a second offense, the electronic device will be taken away and held in the principal's office for up to the remainder of the semester. The student's parent will be apprised of the action taken and conditions under which the electronic device can be retrieved.

## Discipline Policy Procedures

School Administration and ACS staff hope that all students will choose to do what is right at all times. However, if that assumption fails to hold true, ACS will use the following guidelines to restore discipline:

**Step 1.** The teacher of the student needing disciplinary action will talk with the student in private to seek a solution to the problem.

**Step 2.** The student may be sent to the principal, and the parent will be notified.

**Step 3.** The principal and the teacher will allow the student and parent to be heard. If the student wishes to remain enrolled in the school, then he or she will be expected to follow the recommendations for continued attendance that are laid out by the principal. The principal may utilize any of the following corrective measures or suggest a specific redemptive course of action. In each case, a period of probation may be implemented. If a student must appear before the principal again for a disciplinary problem during a probation period, they may be referred to the final process mentioned below.

- A.** An in-school suspension and the student will be obligated to make sure all of his/her assignments are done for the next day.
- B.** An out-of-school suspension and sent home. The parent will be responsible for the welfare of their child and make sure that all assignments are completed before he/she can return to the classroom.

- C. To avoid expulsion, the student and the parent(s) must meet with the teacher and the School Board and show the Board how the problem will be resolved. At this time the Board will entertain a motion to either accept the parent's solution or ask that the child be withdrawn from the school. If there is no satisfactory solution offered by the parent, and the child is not withdrawn, then the School Board may expel the child.

### **Suspension**

A temporary removal of a student from his/her regular classroom or school.

### **Expulsion**

A permanent dismissal from school. Only the School Board may expel a student from school. The parents may petition the School Board to re-enroll their child.

***NOTE: All policies or regulations announced during the school year have the same authority as those published in this handbook. Any revisions to the Student Handbook will be shared and announced.***

## **Social Relationships**

To help students form healthy friendships, the following guidelines have been established:

- A. Students are expected to interact with each other in a respectful and appropriate Christian manner.
- B. Students are expected to keep their hands to themselves.
- C. While the following behaviors are acceptable in appropriate relationships and within the right setting, the school campus is never the appropriate place for them. As such, they are considered as "inappropriate contact".

At ACS, inappropriate contact is classified as excessive displays of physical affection. Such inappropriate contact includes, but is not limited to holding hands, prolonged hugging of any nature, kissing, sexual contact, lying next to another student, and wrestling or "rough housing." Examples of appropriate contact on the school campus or at school events are handshakes, high-fives, fist bumps, pats on the upper back, and brief side hugs.

- D. Students who do not follow guidelines on appropriate social contacts or whose relationship seems unhealthy or inappropriate may be placed on social restriction for a period of time determined by the principal. Social restriction means that students may not interact with each other by talking, writing notes, or by intentionally being around each other except when dictated by special class activities. All communication is off-limits and is effective immediately when implemented by any faculty or staff member.
- E. If a non-student is socially involved with a student, the non-student is subject to school policy when on campus or at school events.



## Child Abuse

Child abuse is a criminal offense and will be dealt with as such. If any child is suspected of being abused, it is the teacher's/principal's legal obligation to report his/her suspicion to the local Child Protection Services Division

## Financial Policies and Fees

Each year the ACS School Board determines the fees for tuition, registration and technology. These fees cover costs for textbooks, insurance, achievement tests, library books, school records, technology equipment, online subscriptions, teacher and personnel salaries, and other required expenses. The School Board is committed to supporting all parents or guardians of a child who desires to attain the high-quality Christian education offered in the school. At the same time, the School Board must assert its responsibility to keep the school financially solvent.

Therefore, the School Board adheres to a financial policy that clearly specifies the financial obligations for parents and guardians and outlines specific procedures for obtaining scholarship assistance if needed.

1. Registration and technology fees are not included in tuition. Registration fee (see *Financial Agreement*) is due upon registration. Technology fee (see *Financial Agreement*) is due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, along with the first month's tuition. **These fees are not refundable.**
2. Families with an outstanding balance will make arrangements in writing with the School Treasurer or a person designated by the School Board for payment of any outstanding balance. Students will not be allowed to attend class until registration is completed.
3. Tuition is paid on a ten-month schedule and is expected on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> calendar day of the month. Tuition is nonrefundable if the child has attended school for any portion of the month.

There is a multiple child discount:

- a. The first child will not receive a discount (oldest child is considered the first child).
  - b. The second child will receive a 10% discount on tuition only.
  - c. The third child will receive a 15% discount on tuition only.
  - d. The fourth child will receive a 20% discount on tuition only.
4. Payments options:
    - Cash app
    - Adventist School Pay
    - Square (credit or debit- processing fee will be charged)
    - Money order, or cash can be dropped off at the school.

Only Treasurer, School Principal/Head Teacher or the School Secretary may receive payments at the school and a receipt will be provided for records purposes.
  5. Parents or guardians of a student with unpaid tuition after the 10<sup>th</sup> calendar day of the month will receive a reminder that their balance is past due. If arrangements have not been made by the 15<sup>th</sup> calendar day of the month, a \$20 late fee may be billed to the account, and the School Board will be notified. At that time, the School Board may decide to suspend the child until payment is made. For student accounts in the arrears for 90 days or more, the School Board reserves the right to send that account to a collection agency.



6. Parents or guardians of a student in ACS, who are unable to meet their financial obligations to the school must follow the procedure laid out below:
  - a. Arrange a payment plan with the School Treasurer to be submitted for approval to the School Board. The plan must be in writing and signed by the Treasurer and by the parents or guardians of the student. Contact the School Treasurer for details.
  - b. ACS will not issue a report card for any student who has outstanding debt to the school. The School Treasurer will hold report cards until the student's account has been paid in full and settled with the school. Additionally, ACS will not forward transcripts, release records or issue diplomas for students who have an outstanding balance to the school.
7. Field trips and pizza lunch: Payments must be made by money order, or credit card. Personal checks are not accepted. Payments made by credit and debit card a service fee will be billed to all accounts for each transaction. Meals and field trips will be billed monthly.

## Volunteer Service

Each family will be required to volunteer at the school for 10 hours during the school year per attending student. A \$150.00 fee per student will be applied if this requirement is not met.

## Hours of Operation

**Early Care:** 7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.

**Academic instruction:** 8:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

**Aftercare:** 3:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Teachers are on duty until 4:30 p.m. Aftercare and afterschool programs are available with prior arrangement. Please make every effort to adhere to this schedule. Families whose children remain after 3:45 p.m. will be sent to the aftercare program.

## After-Care Policy

Aftercare is only available on a prearranged basis. A \$15.00 per day will be charged to the student's account. For more information, please contact the office.

## Field Trips

The following information applies to all off-campus trips. All school trips should be connected to academic or spiritual activities. All-day trips must be approved by the local school board, and in addition all overnight trips must be approved by the Conference Office of Education. (Use Overnight Trip Request form) Overseas and out-of-country school trips are not permitted for elementary students.

## Supervision

One or more teachers must accompany all school trips, and adequate gender-appropriate chaperones must be provided:

- Levels PreK-Kindergarten, 1 adult for every 3 students
- Grades 1-2, 1 adult for every 3 students
- Grades 3-4, 1 adult for every 5 students
- Grades 5-8, 1 adult for every 8 students
- Graded 9-10, 1 adult for every 10 students

Overnight trips require additional gender-appropriate chaperones.

## School Closures

ACS will follow Columbia County Public Schools closures due to severe weather or other emergencies. Parents will be notified if there is a school closing and will continue updates as needed.

## Attendance

ACS must meet the standards set by the State of Georgia for school attendance. Students who miss 10% or more of the required school hours may fail promotion. **Every parent/guardian must sign an attendance contract before school begins.**

The School Principal/Head Teacher may excuse absences due to the illness of the student, death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, or other family emergencies.

## Extended Absence

In case of an extended absence (5 or more days), the parent needs to contact the school secretary the first day the child is absent and give an explanation. A daily phone call is not necessary if the parent provides the secretary with a written excuse of all the dates of absences or a medical excuse.

## Procedure for Reporting Absence

When a student is absent, the parent must telephone the School Secretary **prior to 8:30 am.** on the day of the absence. Recorded messages must include the date of the absence, name of the student, reason of absence, caller's name, and phone number where the caller can be reached during the school day.

Following an unexpected or unexcused absence, the student must bring a written excuse from his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) upon return to the school. The student must be responsible for making up any required schoolwork.

Parents/Guardians arriving **after 8:15 a.m.** are required to park, and walk, their student into the school building. All tardy students must be signed in by the parent/guardian at the office.

## Attendance Truancy Policy

### Tardies or Early Checkouts

**A Tardy is any time after 8:15 a.m. An Early Checkout is any time before 3:15 p.m.**

- **5 tardies** = warning letter from principal.
- **10 tardies** = meeting with principal.
- **11 + tardies** = Report to the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Family and Children services as a Child abuse/neglect report.

### Absences

- **4 absences** = warning letter from principal.
- **5 absences** = meeting with principal.

- **10 + absences** = child is considering truant, and an official complain will be made to the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Family and Children services for truancy (In accordance with the Official code of Georgia Annotated 20-2-766.1).
- **Sick days require to have a doctor's excuse.**

## Homework

Each year that goes by, your student(s) will be given greater assignments to complete each day. It is expected that holidays and weekends will be free of planned homework unless a student has put off doing a project or classwork. Some students will need to take work home because they have not completed it during the school that day. Please speak to your child's teacher for details.

Grades K-10: Homework should not be assigned nor expected to be completed over weekends, holidays, or vacation days.

Grades	Time Recommended
<b>Grades 1 &amp; 2</b>	Total time should not exceed 20 minutes per night, not including unfinished classwork. Homework should be informal and primarily consist of reading with parents/guardians. It may be appropriate to do some practice of math facts, spelling words, or memory verses at home. An occasional project may be completed at home, but the bulk of the work on such projects should be completed during the school day.
<b>Grades 3 &amp; 4</b>	Total time should not exceed 30-40 minutes per night, not including unfinished classwork. Homework should be informal and primarily consist of reading with parents/guardians. It may be appropriate to do some practice of math facts, spelling words, or memory verses at home. An occasional project may be completed at home, but the bulk of the work on such projects should be completed during the school day.
<b>Grades 5 &amp; 6</b>	Total time should not exceed 50-60 minutes per night, not including unfinished classwork. Home reading should be encouraged at this level, but requirements should have some flexibility. In addition, occasional classwork, projects, or reviewing for tests will increase the time spent doing homework.
<b>Grades 7 &amp; 8</b>	Total time should not exceed 70-80 minutes per night, not including unfinished classwork. It may be necessary for students to complete some classwork at home in addition to home reading. Reviewing for tests, working on projects, etc. are appropriate at this level as well.
<b>Grades 9 &amp; 10</b>	Junior Academy students should plan on 1:30-2 hours of homework per school night. Projects are assigned by teachers with a suitable timeline for completion. Homework and projects both help develop skills in time management and an aptitude in prioritizing work.

## Student Conduct

ACS is concerned about the balanced development of the whole person-body, mind, and spirit and seeks to ensure that youth receive an excellent physical, mental, moral, social, and practical education. Parents and teachers must be united in these educational goals.

For this purpose, students shall conduct themselves in accordance with the standards and the policies, rules, and regulations of the ACS.

### Students are expected to...

1. Demonstrate respect and courtesy towards teachers, school personnel, visitors, other students, and property at all times.
2. Obtain permission from parents or guardians and the teacher or School Principal/Head Teacher prior to leaving the school property for any reason.
3. Participate in all required curricular activities as determined by the teachers and School Principal/Head Teacher.
4. Abide by the policies, rules, and regulations in this handbook and those enacted by the School Administration.

For more information refer to the

### **ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIOR DISCIPLINE PARENT AND STUDENT AGREEMENT**

### The following are strictly forbidden...

1. Possession or use of weapons of any kinds (GA Code § 16-11-127.1), possession or use of alcoholic beverages (GA Code § 3-3-21.1), or possession or use of tobacco products, hazardous substances, non-prescription medication, or illegal drugs or otherwise (GA Code § 16-13-32.4).
2. Indecent, disruptive, or disorderly behavior; profane or indecorous language; and possession or use of material that is offensive or has questionable moral value as determined by the Principal/Head Teacher.
3. Unauthorized possession or use of laptops, tablets, audio and video recording devices or players, cell phones, smart watches, or other electronic devices.
4. Fights, scuffles, or aggressive behavior in any form (physical or verbal) even if provoked.
5. Eating or snacking outside of appropriate times.
6. Pets or other animals brought to the school property, except as authorized by the School Principal/Head Teacher.
7. Bullying or hazing of any kind (to include mobile and online activity).

## Student Discipline

Discipline in ACS follows a conflict resolution approach which is designed to be redemptive, remedial, and corrective rather than punitive. The school seeks to help students model their behavior after the example of Jesus Christ.

### Conflict Resolution for Students

Teaching conflict resolution in schools is essential because student disagreements are normal. Children are growing their independence, forming unique views and preferences, and learning how to collaborate. These developmental factors make conflict among students unavoidable. Conflict is healthy, but only when handled effectively.

Teaching conflict resolution helps improve:

- **Student Success:** Conflict resolution creates optimal learning environments where students can fulfill their maximum potential.
- **Bullying Prevention:** Unresolved conflict can escalate to bullying. When students know how to resolve disputes, they enhance school safety.
- **Problem-Solving:** By teaching conflict resolution throughout students' PreK-12 education, schools can help develop lasting problem-solving skills.

### Principles that Govern the Administration of Discipline in the School

1. The School Principal/Head Teacher is responsible for establishing disciplinary procedures for student actions that violate the policies, rules, and regulations of the school, in compliance with the policies of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the standards of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
2. The School Board provides guidance in disciplinary policy or procedures, approves major disciplinary decisions, and makes recommendations to the School Administration whenever a breach of conduct has occurred that is serious and is brought to the attention of the School Board by the School Principal/Head Teacher. Actions recommended by the School Board will be carried out under the authority of the School Principal/Head Teacher.
3. Acceptable discipline includes detention, suspensions, dismissal, and/or other penalties.
4. Corporal punishment in any form is not acceptable for students in the school.
5. The teachers or other personnel of the school handle minor misbehavior or irregularities. Teachers will establish a set of rules and penalties for student misconduct, which is approved by the School Principal/Head Teacher and must be observed by the students. Repeated offenses will be referred to the School Board.
6. For behavior resulting in detention, suspension, or dismissal, parents/guardians will be immediately notified. Detention or suspension of a student for up to three days does not require the approval of the School Board. A suspension that exceeds three days or a dismissal of a student will be approved by the School Board.

7. Any serious or major violation of school rules and regulations will lead to immediate suspension. Any violation that involves physical violence or threats constitutes grounds for immediate expulsion.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

The teachers and school Principal/Head Teacher will regularly hold scheduled Parent-Teacher conferences during the school year to discuss each student's scholastic progress and needs. In addition, parents or guardians may request a meeting at other times during the school year with the teachers or Principal/Head Teacher. These meetings must be arranged beforehand and should occur outside of regular school hours.

## **Report Cards and Transcripts**

Report cards are distributed at 9-week (quarter) intervals. Parents or guardians may also receive interim progress reports. Official records will be forwarded to another school system or prospective employer at the written request of the former student or the former student's financially responsible parent or guardian (if the student is under 18 years of age).

The School Treasurer will withhold report cards at the close of the school year if the student's account is not paid in full. Additionally, ACS will not forward transcripts, release records or issue diplomas for students who owe the school. Please refer to the school financial policies or contact the School Treasurer with any questions.

## School Uniform and Dress Code

All uniforms must be clean and in good condition, not frayed or tattered. Pants or shorts must be fitted at the waist and shirts or blouses must be worn tucked in at the waist.

Clothing Items	Girls	Boys
<b>Dress Code</b>		
<b>Colors</b>	<u>Pant, Shorts, Skorts, Jumpers:</u> Navy Blue or Khaki <u>Shirts:</u> Any Solid Color Polo	<u>Pant or Shorts:</u> Navy Blue or Khaki <u>Shirts:</u> Any Solid Color Polo
<b>Tops</b>	Polo shirt short-sleeve or long-sleeve, knit with three-button placket and flat knit ribbed cuffs.	Polo shirt short-sleeve or long-sleeve, knit with three-button placket and flat knit ribbed cuffs.
<b>Pants</b>	Khaki or Navy Blue Uniform pants styles are acceptable. Straight leg or bootcut. <b>No cargo pants or leggings are acceptable.</b>	Khaki or Navy Blue Uniform pants styles are acceptable. Straight leg or bootcut. <b>No cargo pants are acceptable.</b>
<b>Shorts</b>	Khaki or Navy Blue <u>Knee-length</u> shorts either flat front or pleated. Uniform style	Khaki or Navy Blue <u>Knee-length</u> shorts either flat front or pleated. Uniform style
<b>Belts</b>	If worn, it must be secured at the waist and it must buckle.	If worn, it must be secured at the waist and it must buckle.
<b>Socks</b>	Solid color to match the outfit.	Solid color to match the outfit.
<b>Shoes</b>	Closed toe tennis shoes. Must be clean, in good condition and appropriate for gender. <b>No flip flops, sandals, or cowboy boots.</b>	Closed toe tennis shoes. Must be clean, in good condition and appropriate for gender. <b>No flip flops, sandals, or cowboy boots.</b>
<b>Outerwear &amp; Jewelry Policy</b>		
<b>Outerwear</b>	A solid-color pullover V-neck or cardigan, crew neck sweater, or vest is allowed.	A solid-color pullover V-neck or cardigan, crew neck sweater, or vest is allowed.
<b>Coats and Jackets</b>	Any solid colored or multi color combination coats and jackets are permitted for outdoor use during the cold weather months. Jackets and coats should not	Any solid colored or multi color combination coats and jackets are permitted for outdoor use during the cold weather months. Jackets and coats should not

	have any words or designs and should reflect the values of the school.	have any words or designs and should reflect the values of the school.
<b>Hoodies</b>	Solid color hoodies are permitted in the classroom, but the hood is not to be worn inside the school.	Solid color hoodies are permitted in the classroom, but the hood is not to be worn inside the school.
<b>Jewelry</b>	ACS emphasizes natural beauty and simplicity as a reflection of God's creation. <b>Earrings, rings, neckless, and bracelets are not allowed in our school or at any school-sponsored activities.</b>	ACS emphasizes natural beauty and simplicity as a reflection of God's creation. <b>Earrings, rings, neckless, and bracelets are not allowed in our school or at any school-sponsored activities.</b>
<b>Headdress</b>	Headbands, ribbons, and bows for girls are allowed.  <b>Hat, scarves, and bandanas are prohibited inside the school building.</b>	<b>Hat, scarves, and bandanas are prohibited inside the school building.</b>
<b>Special Events &amp; Gym Uniforms</b>		
<b>Performance Uniform</b>	Navy Blue pants, white button-down oxford, yellow bow, and blue beret. (Bows and berets are sold at the school)	Navy Blue pants, white button-down oxford, yellow bow, and blue beret. (Bows and berets are sold at the school)
<b>Physical Education Uniform</b>	Knee-length shorts or sweatpants, Shirts below the waistline, and tennis shoes.  <b>Not allowed include: Leggings, crop tops, tank tops, or any inappropriate clothing and clothing with any words or graphics.</b>	Knee-length shorts or sweatpants, Shirts below the waistline, and tennis shoes.  <b>Not allowed include: any inappropriate clothing and clothing with any words or graphics.</b>

*Exceptions to the dress code must be approved in advance by the Principal/Head Teacher.*



## Internet Acceptable Use Policy

ACS recognizes the importance of providing opportunities for students to access the Internet and use it as a learning tool. However, the risks from exposure to unsuitable material and/or correspondence with indecent individuals mandates strict rules be enforced for students who use the Internet. The Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has adopted an *Internet Acceptable Use Policy* to be enforced in the school.

All students who access the internet from our school computers must read, sign, and abide by rules outlined in the **Internet Acceptable Use Policy Agreement**. Parents/ guardians must also read and sign the document, by which they consent to the use of the Internet by the student.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy agreements are organized by grades from Pre-Kindergarten to 10th.

## Medical and Safety Information

All new students require a recent medical examination (within 3 months of enrollment), as do students entering 4th and 7th grades (**Georgia Form 3300**). All students must also have current immunization records (**Georgia Form 3231**). Exemptions for immunizations are allowed for medical reasons or based on religious beliefs. However, for a child to be exempt from immunizations on religious grounds, the parent or guardian must furnish the school with a notarized affidavit stating that immunization conflicts with his or her religious beliefs.

The School Principal/Head Teacher must be informed of any medical conditions that may affect the performance of the student, including the use of prescription medication.

School personnel should not assist in administering medication to students unless the parent requests such assistance in writing and a doctor provides written instruction. The parents or guardians of the student must sign a form authorizing teachers to dispense prescription medication and non-prescriptions medication.

School personnel are equipped to handle only minor emergencies. In the event of an emergency or major injury, **911 will be called**. The Principal/Head Teacher may send a student home who is ill, in need of medical attention or is considered a health risk to others. Children who have had a fever must be free of their fever for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

The school makes provisions for adequate student accident coverage. Our school is required to conduct regular fire, tornado/severe weather, and other emergency drills in accordance with state and federal laws. Regular safety inspections of all school facilities and properties are conducted.

## Asbestos Management Plan

The inspection and management plan for Asbestos-Containing-Building-Materials required by the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act has been performed for this facility. The management plan has been submitted to the state for review and approval, and a copy is on file at the school office and is available for public inspection upon reasonable notice. No asbestos was used in the construction or is used in the maintenance of the school building.

## **Student Off-Campus Activities**

Advance notices will be sent home informing parents or guardians of any trip that would take the student away from school property. Consent forms must be signed and returned by a parent/guardian prior to the scheduled off-campus activities. Parents of pre-kindergarten students must transport and chaperone their child if they wish to attend the off-campus activities.

## **Lunch**

Students should bring their own lunches daily, which should provide a balanced, nutritious meal for proper growth and development. Hot lunches may be available for purchase. If lunches are available for purchase, lunches will be billed on your monthly statement.

## **Personal Property**

Students, parents, guardians, or visitors who bring personal property or effects to the school are solely responsible for these items. ACS is not liable for loss or damage to personal property.

## **Visitors**

ACS welcomes visitors who wish to observe students and teachers during regular school hours. Visits must be brief, unobtrusive, and visitors must register with the school office before entering a classroom.

Students must obtain permission from their teacher at least one day prior to bringing visitors to the school. An adult must accompany any children who visit the school.

Visitors are expected to abide by the rules and regulations of ACS during their visit. The Church and School facilities are private property, and the Church Pastor(s) and/or School Principal/Head Teacher have the right to ask that a visitor leave the property grounds for any reason.

## **Implementation and Enforcement of Policies, Rules and Regulations**

ACS reserves the right to formulate, implement, and enforce the policies, rules, and regulations that govern the school, through the actions of the School Administration, the School Principal/Head Teacher, and the School Board. ACS is guided by the principles of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the policies of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

To assure safe and proper operation of ACS, the School Administration and the School Board may enact policies, rules, and regulations throughout the course of the school year, which shall have the full force and effect of those previously enacted.

## **Conflict Resolution Procedure for Parents**

Parents or guardians must follow these procedures in sequence to resolve grievances and complaints that pertain to school's teachers or personnel:

1. The complainant should individually meet with the teacher or personnel member to attempt to resolve the complaint or grievance. These should not be discussed with any other party under any circumstances.

2. If the complaint or grievance remains unresolved after meeting with the teacher or personnel member, the complainant should discuss these concerns with the School Principal/Head Teacher. A meeting with the three parties should be arranged. The Principal/Head Teacher will chair the meeting and must keep minutes of the meeting for review by all parties at the completion of the meeting and for documentation at the school office.
3. If the complaint or grievance involves the School Principal/Head Teacher, the School Board Chair facilitates the meeting and notifies the Office of Education of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventist.
4. If the complaint or grievance remains unresolved after the meeting between the three parties, the complainant should appeal to the School Board in writing. At this juncture, the Office of Education will be directly involved, and a representative invited to attend the School Board meeting.
5. All parties, including the complainant and the teacher or personnel member, will be invited to the School Board meeting in Executive Session. Both parties will have the opportunity to state their position, discuss the issues pertaining to the complaint or grievance, and express how they propose to resolve the conflict.
6. When the School Board Chair determines that both parties and School Board members have fully addressed their concerns, the parties will be dismissed. The School Board will then proceed to fully discuss the issues presented and render a decision. The School Board Chair will inform both parties, verbally and in writing, of the decisions and actions taken by the School Board.
7. If any of the parties involved are not satisfied with the decisions or actions were taken by the School Board, they must notify the School Board Chair in writing, clearly stating reasons for dissatisfaction. The chair will consult the Office of Education of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventist for direction.