



## **Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Process** **Addendum to Lakeland Christian Academy's Elementary and Intermediate Policies and Procedures**

Obedience, respect, and responsibility are key virtues that students must develop. Obedience to rules and guidelines is essential to the development of maturity (Luke 2:51, Hebrews 5:8). It results in genuine freedom in life (John 8:32). Respect is necessary for all successful and meaningful relationships (Luke 10:36-37, Romans 12:18), and the building of personal responsibility fosters a sense of achievement. Both responsibility and achievement are necessary ingredients to the development of a proper sense of self-worth (I Corinthians 10:31, Ecclesiastes 9:10, Romans 14:12).

As we seek to provide a balanced and disciplined learning environment for the students of Lakeland Christian Academy, we realize that human wisdom falls short of God's standards. We do not claim to be perfect in all our decisions, but we do try our best to discipline in a way that is biblical and pleasing to God. As partners in the discipline process, it is important that the home and the school work cooperatively for the students' good. Since we teach the students to obey and submit to their parents, it is imperative that parents maintain that continuity by upholding and teaching the principles taught at school. We can instill in students proper Christian educational and moral principles only through a program that includes clear disciplinary procedures, and, as students and parents, your cooperation in that program is crucial. (Please be aware that the administration reserves the right to make discipline decisions on an individual basis.) Spanking is not practiced at LCA at any grade level.

Our goal should always be to obey the Scripture that says, "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17, NIV). In the best interest of the entire school community, certain guidelines of conduct must be maintained by all students of LCA, both on and off campus, so that we might all live and work happily together.

These general guidelines for student conduct (Code of Conduct) are listed below:

1. Practice courtesy and consideration in your association with teachers, school employees, fellow students, and visitors. Respect their person and property. (See Ephesians 4:28-32.)
2. Respect the authority of teachers, administrators, and staff members, and treat them courteously, respectfully, and obediently as unto the Lord. (See Hebrews 13:17 and I Thessalonians 5:12-13.)
3. Abstain always (24/7/365) from the use or possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, drugs, and pornography, as well as from gambling and other undesirable practices that are generally recognized to be harmful to health and Christian character. (See I Corinthians 6:19-20.)
4. Abstain from profanity and vulgar or abusive speech and actions. Such speaking and acting are harmful to others and is certainly not appropriate or conducive to your moral and spiritual development. (See Ephesians 4:29.)

5. Refrain from a public display of affection on campus. As students, you are expected to conduct yourself in a discreet and Christian manner. Therefore, while on campus, you should follow a “hands off” policy.
6. Leave all annoying or dangerous items such as knives, water pistols, lighters, guns, and matches at home.
7. Do your own work – do not give or receive help on tests or homework unless the teacher has granted this privilege on a specific project. Your record should reflect your individual effort. Since honesty is a Christian virtue that should be displayed by all students, we consider cheating a serious offense. During a test, a quiz, or an exam, it is your responsibility to avoid every appearance of cheating. All books and papers must be out of sight. No talking is allowed. In fact, talking during a quiz or test may be dealt with in the same manner as cheating. Giving unauthorized help is treated as the same as receiving such help.
8. Avoid plagiarism, which is a serious offense. The definition of *plagiarism* is “the use of another writer’s ideas or words without giving the writer credit for them.”

All school rules apply on all field trips and on all school-sponsored events, both on the school campus and away from it.

### ***Student Behavior Code***

LCA has four schoolwide guidelines with consequences for not following the guidelines. The 4R’s are:

- **Be Ready** – listen, learn, and follow instruction (self-oriented)
- **Be Responsible** – do your best each day (classroom-oriented)
- **Be Respectful** – of others and property (others-oriented)
- **Be Christ’s Representative** – Christ-oriented

There are four levels of infractions from minor infraction which usually denote bad habits of learning like not listening, not being on task, or not following directions; moderate infraction which denotes academic issues such as not doing homework; and major infractions such as talking back to the teacher, using bad language, bullying, harming another person, making threats, etc. Our purpose is to train up a child rather than punish him/her. Punishments do not address heart issues but training does. Such discipline requires a lot of thought and cooperation between school and home. Teachers and administration may ask for conference to collaborate on how to best discipline your child for life-long consequences.

Students are expected to represent LCA in a positive manner always, even when they are not on school grounds and/or attending school functions or extracurricular activities. Students and parents acknowledge and understand that students are subject to disciplinary action by the school for conduct occurring off campus or during non-school hours, including weekends, holidays, and summers. LCA reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a student for misconduct on or off the school campus, 24/7, and without regard for whether the form of discipline is identified specifically herein and without regard for whether it is specified as improper off campus. While LCA has no control over student activity off campus that is not school sponsored and does not supervise student conduct off campus during an activity which is not school sponsored, misconduct during such activity may come to the attention of school authorities and may result in the administration of discipline, including suspension

or dismissal.

1. School property shall be protected. Defacing or damaging school property which is malicious or careless in nature will result in both appropriate disciplinary action and the replacement of such property, or reimbursement at fair market value, by the student and/or his parents or legal guardians as deemed by the school.
2. LCA reserves the right to invite law enforcement to visit at any time during the school year to search for drugs. Any alcoholic beverages, drugs, or drug paraphernalia found under the student's control will constitute possession.

### ***Discipline Policy (K-7)***

All classes follow the same procedures:

1. Warning
2. Official parent contact
3. Conference with parent
4. Office Referral
5. Saturday school – paid for by the parent
6. Third office referral may result in suspension or expulsion from LCA

*Offenses that may result in a disciplinary action include, but are not limited to, the following:*

1. Excessive tardies (more than four in a grading period), regardless of reason, to school
2. Failure to be prepared for class after warnings (e.g., no paper, no writing instrument)
3. Being in unauthorized areas, including the elevator
4. Unwholesome language or profanity
5. Littering anywhere on school property
6. Meddling with another student's property
7. Continued talking or disrupting class
8. Bringing prohibited items to school: water pistols, water balloons, lighters of any kind, or laser pointers
9. Unauthorized use of cell phone during school (phone may be taken until the end of day)
10. Food, candy, or drink (except water in a closed container) in the classrooms without permission
11. Public display of affection
12. Failure to report to detention
13. Disorderly conduct in hallways or bathrooms
14. Disrespect or direct disobedience to school authority
15. Uniform/dress code violation (second and third offense, after one warning). A fourth violation of a uniform violation will also result in the parent being contacted to bring a change of clothing. There is no reset for dress code violations.
16. Distracting appearance (see Dress Code for guidelines)

### ***Suspension***

An out-of-school suspension (OSS) will be given for certain offenses. Students may make-up any tests or quizzes missed during this time, per teacher timelines.

Any student athlete placed on suspension will be required to sit out at least one game (next game on schedule) for any sport then in season. This game may or may not be during the suspension.

A student who is suspended may be placed on behavior probation. Suspensions are not considered part of a student's "permanent record" with two exceptions: 1) a serious threat or act of violence was involved and 2) three suspensions for any reason given within one academic year.

*Offenses that may result in suspension include, but are not limited to, the following:*

1. Skipping school
2. Vandalism, including misuse of the restrooms
3. Unauthorized use of cell phone during school (third offense in same class)
4. Cheating/plagiarism (and a "zero") for second offense during school year. First offense: "zero" only.
5. Severe bullying or harassment, including threats
6. Racist slurs or jokes
7. Theft
8. Sexual harassment of any type
9. Fighting
10. Possession of any type of knife, including pocketknives and boxcutters
11. Smoking or vaping at any time, on or off campus
12. Viewing of pornography at school. (Reports of pornography viewing outside of school will result in parent contact for first offense. Additional verified reports may lead to suspension or expulsion.)
13. Consumption of alcoholic beverage at any time/anywhere: three-day OSS. A second offense of consumption of alcoholic beverage by a student at any time for the rest of their enrollment at LCA will lead to expulsion.

### ***Dismissal***

LCA reserves the right of suspension or dismissal at any time during the school year. Any student who persistently neglects work, who fails to meet academic or other standards or qualifications or who exercises poor conduct, one who fails to cooperate, or whose parents fail to cooperate, may be asked to withdraw from the school. Dismissal will be determined by the Principal. There is no right of appeal to the Board of Directors.

A student who has lost the privilege to attend LCA may attend LCA related events at the discretion of the Principal. If the Principal deems that a student may attend school events, a parent must accompany the student.

Dismissals may occur when any of the following take place: possession, distribution, solicitation, or use of illegal drugs of any kind (including counterfeit drugs or drug paraphernalia), or the misuse of any prescribed drugs of any kind, on or off school property; possession, consumption, supplying, or selling of alcoholic beverages on or off campus; repeated conduct violations that resulted in suspensions; failure of parents to cooperate with the school's discipline of their children; assault or battery of staff or students; sexual misconduct such as physical conduct and/or contact of a sexual nature; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; sexual innuendoes and gestures or other serious sexual misconduct; computer/internet use for illegal or immoral purposes; possession or use of a weapon of any kind in a threatening or dangerous manner which could reasonably be perceived to be capable of inflicting

serious harm; or possession, transfer, sale, or discharge of any gun (including a starter or pellet gun), firearm, or any other explosive device, of any type, whether loaded or unloaded, on or off campus.

### ***Disciplinary Probation***

1. **Purpose:** Disciplinary Probation is to prevent the possible dismissal of a student due to behavioral issues and to create a viable, tangible incentive for the student and parents to seek out behavioral and spiritual reform.
2. **Criteria:** This program should be initiated at the discretion of the Principal. It is to be administratively subjective. Some criteria to direct the administration in making this decision are 1) the student has manifested a physical threat to other students or faculty, 2) the student has become a negative influence on his peers to the extent of drawing his peers into similar actions (i.e. smoking, disrespect, impacting the learning environment negatively, inappropriate behavior, etc.), 3) the student has been a habitual offender of the disciplinary policy of the school, or 4) the student has been suspended for a serious breach of conduct.
3. **Program:** A written notice of possibly placing a student on disciplinary probation will be initiated by the Principal. The Principal will notify the parents of the possibility of the probation. At the administration's discretion, a conference will be held with the parent and student regarding disciplinary problems. Based on this conference, the Principal will decide whether this student merits a probation or expulsion. If the administration deems it beneficial to place the student under a disciplinary probation, a Disciplinary Probation Contract will be drafted for the student outlining the behavioral guidelines that the student is expected to maintain, the duration of the probation, and the consequences of fulfilling the probation or failing to fulfill the probation.
4. **Procedure:** The Disciplinary Probation Contract is to be signed by all parties involved (i.e. student, parent(s), and Principal). Copies are to be distributed to all parties. It will be the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that the contract is being upheld. Violation of the contract by the student will be noted by the Principal. The student will then face other consequences, including possibly expulsion.

### ***Restoration***

LCA reserves the right to deny readmission to any student whose actions demonstrate that it is in the school's best interest not to allow readmission. The request for readmission should be in writing to the Principal. Restoration at a Christian school is always a difficult matter. Students who have been expelled from LCA 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 wait a minimum of six months before reapplying. During that time, the student must be involved in a program of church attendance as well as student and parent counseling. During the restoration period, schooling must continue at another school or home school. Upon completion of the reinstatement restoration program, recommendations by the student's pastor and school-designated counselors will be considered by the Principal to determine the student's reinstatement. Students returning will be on disciplinary probation for one year.

### ***Re-Admission***

Any student dismissed from LCA, or allowed to withdraw, will not be allowed to apply for readmission for at least one semester or six months. Requests for readmission should be made in writing to the Principal. LCA reserves the right to deny readmission.

### ***Re-Enrollment***

LCA 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 detentions, progress reports, and poor attitude a lack of interest in being at LCA will be interviewed by the Principal. 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 the parent(s) 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.

### ***Drug and Alcohol Policy***

Lakeland Christian Academy believes that the consumption, buying, selling, or transfer of drugs and/or alcohol by our students cannot be tolerated and may result in dismissal of the offending student or students. The administration of LCA reserves the right (as per the safety of that student or any other student) to require random drug testing with the understanding that confidentiality will be maintained. If the parents and/or student refuse, then the student's privilege to attend LCA will be revoked.

### ***Non-Violence Policy***

LCA has a no tolerance policy involving threats or perceived threats of violence by students. Parents should understand that the school's first responsibility is the protection of all students and staff. The school takes this responsibility very seriously.

Students are not allowed to talk about committing an act of violence, threaten to commit an act of violence, or joke about committing an act of violence toward anyone at LCA. Students are also not allowed to possess any instructions on how to commit an act of violence. If the administration determines that a threat of violence is credible and specific (directed toward specific students or staff), the student will be immediately suspended out of school and a recommendation to expel will be considered by the Principal. For the purposes of this policy, credible means a reasonable belief or suspicion, determined by the administration, that the threat was or might be genuine, or that the student was or might be capable of carrying out the threat.

In those circumstances in which the administration determines that the threat is not likely credible, the school may suspend out of school the student pending a parent meeting. These include all cases in which the student was "just joking." If circumstances warrant, the school may conduct further investigation. The school may require students in this circumstance to obtain counseling from a Christian counselor or other professional agreeable to the school until the counselor advises the school that the student, in the counselor's opinion, does not present a threat of danger.

### ***Search and Seizure***

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

**Personal Searches:** A student and/or personal effects (e.g., 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. Students may be asked to empty their pockets, pocketbooks, wallets, book bags, etc. without the parent's permission or the student's permission. 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 are required (as per the safety of that student or any other student), then the parents will be phoned and must come to the office to perform the search. If the parents fail to come to the school to perform the search within 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 LCA will be revoked.

**Seizure of Illegal Materials:** If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings shall be turned over to the proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

### ***Bullying Policy***

It is the policy of Lakeland Christian Academy to maintain a safe learning and work environment that is free from bullying. Students, staff, and the school community are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, Christian manner, and demonstrate a level of respect and dignity towards others. We prohibit all forms of bullying. Bullying is harmful behavior initiated by one or more students and directed toward another student or students.

### ***Examples of Bullying***

1. Verbal: name calling, put downs, racist remarks, teasing, threats, spreading rumors, sending inappropriate (violent, sexual, malicious, etc.) notes or pictures in any medium (including the internet and social media)
2. Physical: pushing, hitting, shoving, biting, hair pulling, scratching, spitting, tripping, damaging or stealing the victim's property, locking a person in a room, making mean faces or rude gestures, initiating or forcing inappropriate touching, etc.
3. Social: ostracism or exclusion, ignoring, being unfriendly, alienating, etc.
4. Psychological: acts that instill a sense of fear or anxiety, etc.
5. Miscellaneous: any act that insults or demeans an individual in such a way as to cause distress, reluctance to attend school, a decline in work standards, or problem behaviors

### ***Bullying Awareness***

Because adults must take the initiative in combating bullying, they must be watchful for bullying warning signs, closely supervising children in the classrooms, hallways, restrooms, gym, locker rooms, cafeteria, etc. Teachers will periodically conduct class discussions to educate students in seeking help from an adult, reporting incidents, speaking up and supporting the victim, expressing disapproval of bullying behavior, responding to the bully, walking away from bullying behavior, etc. At the beginning of the school year and as needed later during the school year, the Principal or designee shall ensure that the student body is familiar with the Bullying Policy.

### ***Reporting Bullying Conduct***

Students who feel they have been bullied should first, if possible and practical, attempt to resolve the issue with the party directly involved, in accordance with the Matthew 18 principle. (See below under *Conflict Resolution*.) If this is not successful or is impractical, then the student should tell a staff person or submit a Bullying Incident Report, located in any administrative office, to a school official.

Any member of the school staff receiving a suspected bullying report (verbal or written) shall address the matter as soon as possible, preferably before the end of the school day. The staff member shall assess the situation to determine if the behavior meets the criteria for bullying or if the behavior is an isolated incident that can be resolved within the classroom. Not all conflict constitutes bullying. If the behavior meets the criteria for bullying, the staff person must report this to the Principal immediately to protect the alleged victim. The staff person shall remind the victim/witness that “No one deserves to be bullied and we are going to do everything we can to stop it.” The staff member is also to commend the victim/witness for bringing the matter to the attention of school staff.

The Principal will promptly and thoroughly address reports of bullying. He/she will meet individually with the victim/ witness and the alleged bully privately. If it is determined that bullying has occurred, he/she will act appropriately within the discipline codes and will take reasonable action to end the bullying. The Principal shall notify the parents/guardians of both the victim and the offender, preferably before the end of the school day or within 24 hours. Steps will be initiated to address and resolve the issue. An intervention plan will be developed with the parents of the bully. The Principal will inform the student that he/she may be monitored, and the student’s movements outside the classroom may require supervision until trust has been rebuilt and all bullying behaviors cease. Parental notification and the intervention plan shall be documented on the Bullying Incident Report. A copy of the Bullying Incident Report shall be given to the offender’s parents. The Principal will share a verbal report with the necessary teachers to assist in determining whether a pattern of bullying behavior or abuse exists.

Individuals who knowingly report false allegations or corroborate false accusations will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Conflict Resolution**

As with any institution, there is the potential for misunderstanding, disagreement, and even wrongdoing. Nevertheless, it is God’s will that we work together in harmony, always giving a “good report” and striving for unity. When conflicts and disagreements occur, the following principles should be followed, which are based upon Matthew 18:15-17:

1. Keep the matter confidential (no gossip).
2. Keep the circle as small as possible (two parties).
3. Be straightforward (face-to-face).
4. Be forgiving.
5. If still unresolved, the individuals should agree to share the matter with the Principal.
6. If it is a student behavior issue and still unresolved, the Principal should be brought into the process by the teacher.
7. The Principal will normally have the final say on the matter. If the offended party believes written school policy has not been followed, then the matter may be appealed to the Superintendent.

8. If the Superintendent determines that written school policy was followed and a reasonable decision was made by the Principal, then the matter ends. The Board of Directors may only become involved if there is sufficient evidence that the administration did not follow written school policy.

In summary, the Matthew 18 principle requires that parents talk to teachers about their children's problems before they talk to administrators. If unresolved at the two-person level, the matter should be prayerfully addressed at the next logical level.

***School Communications***

It is the custodial parent's duty to communicate with the noncustodial parent regarding school announcements and notes.

