

**RENTON  
PREP**  
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



# Family-Student Handbook

PLEASE REVIEW ITS CONTENTS WITH YOUR STUDENT

**Renton Prep Christian School**

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Effective as of August 2019

# CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	4
A. The Importance of Christian School Education	4
B. Statement of Faith	4
C. Mission Statement	5
D. Philosophy and Goals	6
E. Accreditations and Approval	7
F. Relationship of Renton Preparatory Christian School to Amazing Grace Lutheran Church	7
II. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	8
A. Admission Standards	8
B. Application Procedures	9
III. WITHDRAWALS/TRANSFERS	10
IV. FINANCIAL POLICY	11
A. Tuition	11
B. School Finances Used for Church Purposes	12
C. Controlling Policy	12
V. IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS	12
VI. CHANGE OF CHILD CUSTODY	12
VII. ACADEMICS AND ENRICHMENT	12
A. Curriculum	13
B. Integrated Curriculum	13
C. Bible Classes	13
D. Chapel	13
E. Field Trips	13
F. Readiness Work Policies	14
G. Snow Day or Weather Delay Policy	16
H. Competency Standards	16
I. Supplies	19
J. Concerts & Programs	20

<b>VIII. GUARDIAN POLICIES</b>	<b>20</b>
A. Media and Likeness	20
B. Emergency Closures	20
C. Notification of Information Changes	20
D. Communications	21
E. Lost and Found	21
F. Campus Visitors and Permission for Video/Audio Recording	21
G. Lunches	22
H. Illness/Medications	22
I. Carpool Guidelines	23
J. Notice Regarding Rights of Guardians	23
<b>IX. STUDENT POLICIES</b>	<b>25</b>
A. Expectations and Responsibilities	25
B. Anti-Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)	25
C. Discipline	30
D. Search and Seizure Policies	33
E. Telephone Usage	33
F. Bicycles	33
G. Birthdays and Special Parties	33
H. School Bus and Vehicle Rules	34
I. Weapons Policy	34
J. Drug, Alcohol & Tobacco Policy	35
K. Child Abuse & Neglect	35
L. Employment of School Staff by School Families	35
<b>X. DRESS AND GROOMING GUIDELINES</b>	<b>35</b>
A. General Guidelines	35
B. The School Uniform Information: Kindergarten Prep To 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	36
C. Events, Field Trips, and School Programs	37
D. Enforcement	37
<b>XI. ATTENDANCE POLICY</b>	<b>38</b>
A. Absences	38
B. Tardies	39

C. Arrival/Dismissal Procedures .....	40
<b>XII. EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM AND USE OF PLAYGROUND AFTER SCHOOL DISMISSAL .....</b>	<b>40</b>
A. Enrollment and Admissions .....	41
B. Extended Care Activities .....	41
C. Snacks .....	42
D. Procedures .....	42
E. Behavior Management and Discipline .....	42
F. Medication .....	43
<b>XIII. RPCS VIDEO AND AUDIO EQUIPMENT USAGE POLICY .....</b>	<b>43</b>
A. Camera Locations and Details .....	43
B. Purposes .....	43
C. Regulations .....	43
D. Scope, Principles, and Procedures .....	43
E. Hardware Policy Including Damage and Abuse Policy .....	46
<b>XIV. FAMILY SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>49</b>

# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. The Importance of Christian School Education

Historically, formal education was reserved for a small segment of the population. For people who did not have access to education or the ability to read or write, traditions and various learning were passed down through images and storytelling. Historically, Martin Luther wanted all children to be educated so that they could read Scripture and not just listen to what others told them Scripture said. He used the latest technology of the time to help people have access to knowledge. It is important for us to offer Christian education with the latest technology to give young people access to the truth of God's Word, but also to teach them to think for themselves. They will need to make decisions in their own lives for reasons that are real to them, not just because someone told them they should believe something. We want young people to delve into evidence, evaluate, and we want faith to be real to them.

Because we believe God loved us first, we are able to love others (1 John 4:10). Because we have been forgiven, we choose to forgive others (Colossians 3:13). Jesus taught how to love people who are different from us, people who may not be accepted by society, and people who have wronged us. We believe a careful distinction between the Law and the Gospel is the key to understanding Scripture, where the Law shows sin, and the Gospel shows our Savior. This becomes the foundation of policies and procedures we have set forward for interacting with others, asking for forgiveness when we have failed, and offering forgiveness when we have been wronged.

Our entire school culture is built on the foundations of living out our faith in Jesus, daily. It is not in isolated memorization. It becomes central to identifying purpose and passion in life and overflowing with a joy and hope that is in us. With that, we want to share that hope and healing to the world by contributing solutions to a global society. We want our learners to engage with the world and not hide from it. We want them to use their mind, their heart, and their spirit to make a positive impact in the world. To do that, it is also important that we train young people to evaluate, research, and learn to listen to and respect people with different perspectives, ask for help and know how to navigate the complexities of relationships. We want them to use the latest technology to amplify the positive aspects of what God has done in our lives.



For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not from yourselves; it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast”

(Ephesians 2:8).

## B. Statement of Faith

We believe that we are all equal, we are all imperfect, and all of us have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God (Romans 3:23). We believe that because of our imperfection, we are not declared righteous in God's sight by perfectly following the law, because we can never follow it perfectly, but God's law makes us aware that sin exists and that we are imperfect (Romans 3:20). We have hope (1 Thessalonians 4:14), even though we cannot do enough to cover or make up for our sin and imperfections as humans, because we have a Savior, Jesus Christ, God's son, who was fully God and fully human (John 1:14; John 10:30, 1 Timothy 3:16). We believe

there is one mediator between God and us, Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5). Because of God's love for the world, He gave His only son, Jesus, to be a final sacrifice through His death on the cross (John 3:16), fulfilling the law on our behalf (Romans 10:4), so that when we believe Jesus is who He said He is, and did what He said He did, we can have eternal life through Him in Heaven (Luke 23:43; 1 Thessalonians 4:14). This knowledge brings us a joy and purpose in life (John 10:10). We know that following Jesus does not make life perfect or make life necessarily easier, because we live in a world full of sinful people like ourselves. Jesus said that he has told us that in Him we can have peace: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

The Gospel reveals what God has already done for our salvation. The chief purpose of the Law is to show us our sin and our need for a Savior. The Gospel offers the free gift of God's salvation in Christ. The whole Bible can be divided into these two chief teachings. It is in the proper distinction between Law and Gospel by which the purity of the Gospel is preserved and the three *solas* of "grace alone," "faith alone," and "Scripture alone" are united. (see appendix)

Ecumenical means: promoting or relating to unity among the world's Christian churches. In addition to reading the Bible, we profess and teach the three ancient ecumenical creeds compiled during the early, formative years of the Christian era– the Apostles' Creed (ca. third century A.D.), the Nicene Creed (fourth century A.D.), and the Athanasian Creed (fifth and sixth centuries A.D.). In addition, the Book of Concord includes Luther's Small Catechism (1529 A.D.) and the Augsburg Confession (1530 A.D.), and five other 16th century statements, including Luther's Large Catechism and the Formula of Concord. (More detailed explanation on page 48).

## C. Mission Statement



**MISSION** – To offer a secure and technology-enabled Christ-Centered School where students learn to use their voice to contribute solutions to the challenges of our global community.

We encourage students to discover their own identity through an education based on Christian values while engaging in discussions from multiple perspectives. Critical thinking and problem solving help our students acquire the ability and skills needed to succeed in relationships and careers. We believe in inspiring learners to engage in productive struggle as individuals and collaborators so they learn how to view daily obstacles and challenges as a positive and necessary part of living.



**VISION** – To inspire a passion for harnessing emerging technology for teaching, learning, critical thinking and sharing the hope of becoming responsible and productive citizens, whose legacy will leave the world a better place.

A technology enabled education means more than incorporating devices in the classroom. Success in the technologically advanced economy requires more than a simple education. It requires an education built with modern tools. As technology advances, so does our approach, while keeping the values consistent and building a legacy through the talent and voice of students, teachers, and a global audience. Training both thinking skills and flexibility helps students, teachers, and collaborators advance ideas to put them into action.



**ACTION** – By providing a well-rounded; technology-enabled Christ-Centered Education.

However, success in the technologically advanced economy requires more than a simple education. It requires an education built with modern tools. At Renton Prep, we understand that a technology enabled education means more than incorporating computers in the classroom. The approach we use to carry out our mission in order to accomplish our vision is very simple. It stems from Christ's life and ministry, which then became our six core values – C.H.R.I.S.T.

## D. Philosophy and Goals

At Renton Preparatory Christian School, we believe that the basis of all teaching is God and His Word. Our desire is to share the love of Jesus Christ through education, friendships, and restored relationships. Our goal is that each student would come to know and love Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

We teach from a Christian perspective by offering students the opportunity to understand themselves and the world around them from a Christian worldview, while respecting and learning to understand a variety of perspectives that differ from our own. Field trips and community and global connections are a vital part of learning. Some of this education will be formal (Chapel, Bible classes and studies, counseling) and some will occur as the faculty and students interact in the normal flow of school activity. The goal is to facilitate the development of the child spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally. The School only employs Christian administration, faculty and staff. These are professing Christians who are: actively involved on a consistent basis with a local Christian congregation, wholeheartedly committed to serve as role models in their Christian walks, and maturing both professionally and in their Christian faiths.

Change in this world is constant and inevitable. Students are prepared to practice and demonstrate resilience. We work with learners on confidence and the quality of being trustworthy and performing consistently well. It is our belief that children are a gift from God to be nurtured and trained so that they may grow strong in character, wisdom, and knowledge (Luke 2:52).

We believe that school is an extension of the home, and we expect guardians to support the goals of the School as outlined in the Parental Commitment section (see [Section II. A.1. – Admissions Requirements](#) of this handbook).

### **Students attending Renton Prep shall:**

- through the grace of God, develop a personal relationship with the Triune God.
- respond to God's gift of grace by honoring Him in their thoughts, words, and actions.
- learn through making connections across content areas, experiences, and life outside the classroom.
- develop new media literacy skills.
- learn effective communication skills, both electronic and conventional, through varied experiences (writing, speaking, visual representations).
- be challenged with projects requiring novel and adaptive thinking.
- learn spiritual, emotional, social, and physical life skills.
- learn to work with others and independently.

- work collaboratively with different ages, skills, disciplines, and perspectives.
- learn through a student-initiated, technology-enhanced, experiences with feedback and critique.
- learn through Biblical foundations, Core Knowledge sequence informed by current National and International standards.
- learn through STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics), fine arts, and experiential field trips.
- participate in facilitated networks, extending learning beyond the classroom and learn from each other and experts in various fields.
- demonstrate knowledge through various forms of traditional and non-traditional assessment.

## Student Expectations and Core Values

**CHRIST:** Jesus Christ's life and ministry form the foundation of our six core values for students, in partnership with their guardians. Students are expected to discover, display, and apply the God-given talents and gifts that make them unique individuals as they prepare for a life of leadership and service to others.

### Renton Prep students must be willing and committed to:

- **CREATIVITY:** Forming and communicating new valuable ideas, products, or artifacts to reflect learning
- **HUMILITY:** Being a servant to all following the example of Christ
- **RESOLVE:** Persevering with determination to accomplish academic, social, and spiritual goals
- **INTERDEPENDENCY:** Contributing skills and talents and accepting assistance from others to benefit the community
- **SIMPLICITY:** Discerning the most important aspects of life and learning and effectively applying them
- **TRANSFORMATION:** Embracing change to become more Christ-like

## E. Accreditations and Approval

Washington Renton Prep is Internationally Accredited by AdvancED, and has also received STEM Certification by the same organization. Renton Prep has been recognized by Microsoft as a Showcase School and selected as one of 17 global schools to be part of their Flagship Schools program. Private School Approval has been awarded by Washington State Board of Education.

## F. Relationship of Renton Preparatory Christian School to Amazing Grace Lutheran Church

Renton Prep Christian Schools are ministries of and an integral part of Amazing Grace Lutheran Church and, therefore, the school's authority falls directly under the elected officers of the Amazing Grace Lutheran Church Council



## II. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

### A. Admission Standards

Admission to Renton Preparatory Christian School (RPCS) is by application. The School admits students of any color, race, national, or ethnic origin. It does not discriminate based on color, race, national, or ethnic origin. RPCS complies with all federal and state disability laws (as applicable to the School), and it will make reasonable accommodations to otherwise-qualified applicants. The School cannot guarantee a student's eligibility for continued enrollment after his or her initial admittance to the School.

The School views the education process as a family enrollment and therefore accepts families, not individual students. You understand that admission and continued enrollment at the School and participation in its activities, are privileges which may be temporarily or partially suspended, totally withdrawn or terminated by the School at its sole discretion (a) for failure to pay, when due, any and all amounts due to the School under this Agreement for the current or any prior school year during which the Student was or is enrolled at the School; (b) for academic or disciplinary reasons; (c) for failure of the Student or any of his or her guardians, legal custodians or guardians to fully comply with any and all policies, rules and regulations of the School as they now exist or as they may be amended or supplemented at any time; (d) in the event that the School determines, at its sole discretion, that there does not exist a constructive and positive working relationship between the school and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the Student; or (e) for such other reasons as the school may determine to be in the interest of the health, safety or orderly leading environment of the student, other students, faculty or staff. Although the School will attempt to provide written notice two weeks prior to dismissal, the School also has a responsibility for care of all the School's students and reserves the right to terminate this Agreement and to do so without prior notice if deemed necessary at the sole discretion of the School's administration. In the event that the School terminates the enrollment of your student for any reason after the start of the school year, you understand that any tuition and fees already paid WILL NOT be refunded and that you are obligated to pay the tuition based on the scheduled detailed in your electronic enrollment contract. Each guardian is required to sign the electronic enrollment contract, as well as a statement detailing the code of conduct.

#### 1. Parental Commitment

- a) We invest authority in the school to address behavior of our child as the School feels necessary, according to the discipline policy, as outlined in the RPCS Handbook for Families and Students. We have read, understand and agree to the discipline policy set forth. (Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:20-21)
- b) We agree to use the complaint form on the School website to report concerns rather than posting public comments: <https://www.rentonprep.org/complaint-reporting-form/>
- c) We agree that in case of questions or complaints, communication will be directed only to the school staff or personnel involved and not to other guardians, faculty, staff or outside parties not involved (Matthew 18).
- d) We hereby agree to support school functions and to attend mandatory guardian meetings.
- e) We are responsible for reciprocal communication including, but not limited to, emails, phone calls, and required signed documents.
- f) We understand that in the event of damage to school property by our child, assessments will be made, and responsible parties will be charged to cover school property including, but not limited to, breakage

of windows, abuse of books, furniture, any technological device, etc.

- g) We agree to pay the tuition and fees according to the terms of the Financial Agreement. We understand that report cards and transcripts will be withheld if required payments are not made.
- h) We agree to support all standards of the School including dress standards.

## 2. Student Commitment

The School is a private Christian institutions that seeks to provide a safe, positive Christ- centered atmosphere in which students are nurtured to maturity and challenged academically and spiritually. It is therefore important to determine acceptable guidelines for the behavior and lifestyle of its students, and that those students understand and support the purpose and programs of the School. Enrollment is considered probationary for all students.

### I recognize that the School is a Christian institution and accept its guidelines:

- a) I have discussed the rules outlined in the Family Student Handbook with my guardians.
- b) I will not engage in bullying, harassment, intimidation, isolation, or carry gossip about others.
- c) I am willing to be governed by all the rules of this school including policies on safety and dress.
- d) I commit to attend all school-sponsored retreats, field trips, or other activities deemed necessary by the School.
- e) I will honor Christ's name in all I do and say. (Colossians 3:17)
- f) I will work to my greatest potential using my God-given talents and abilities.
- g) I will avoid profanity, bullying, lying, and gossip. (Proverbs 6:16)
- h) I will not use tobacco, alcohol, or drugs not prescribed by a doctor for my use.
- i) I will not engage in any inappropriate public displays of physical affection.
- j) I will develop discretion in all my listening, reading and viewing habits (Internet, music, books, movies and television, etc.). (Philippians 4:8)
- k) I will endeavor to memorize scripture as assigned by the school. (Psalm 119:11)

## 3. Church Membership

The School seeks to aid guardians in the spiritual growth of their children, but recognizes that the School is not solely responsible for the child's development. While church membership is not required, it is encouraged that students worship our Lord regularly with their guardians at a Christian church of their choice.

## B. Application Procedures

Continued enrollment for families currently enrolled in the School is part of Evergreen Enrollment. This means that your family will be continually enrolled once re-enrolled until an online form is submitted to officially

**The School reserves the right to admit or to dismiss students based on its own criteria of spiritual commitment, academic performance, and personal qualifications, including a willingness to cooperate with the School Administration and to abide by its policies and regulations.**

**IMPORTANT: There are no guarantees of placement, express or implied, by Renton Preparatory Christian School.**

withdraw. Enrollment for new families will begin in January for the upcoming school year. From there on, enrollment will be available to new families on an ongoing online enrollment for the start of the next school year.

### **The enrollment procedures for new students are as follows:**

1. Apply online. <https://www.rentonprep.org/admissions/application-form/>
2. A personal family interview is required for new applicants. An interview appointment may be scheduled upon receipt of the new student application form. (Guardian(s) and student applicants must be present). Approved candidate lists may be initiated when applicable. Family interviews must be completed before a student is considered for admission or for placement on an approved candidate list.
3. If approved for admission, guardians must follow the enrollment process as detailed by the admission letter. Copies of the student's latest report card and standardized test scores may be requested. (Both parents or legal guardians must sign all forms, if applicable.) Incomplete forms will not be accepted.
4. Enrollment Fees must be paid at the time of completing the online enrollment process.
5. New Kindergarten-Prep and Kindergarten applicants may be required to submit a copy of their birth certificate. Official school records will be requested from the last school attended.
6. Student applicants may be required to take aptitude, achievement, and/or diagnostic test before admission to classes.
7. Students will not be allowed to attend school until a current IMMUNIZATION CERTIFICATE is submitted online as part of the enrollment contract or to the School Office (as required by Washington State law). <https://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Schools/Immunization/VaccineRequirements>
8. Evergreen Enrollment online is accepted in an ongoing database. Review Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) online for more details. <https://rentonprep.org/evergreen/>
9. To be eligible to enter Kindergarten-Prep students must be 4 years of age on or before September 1 of that school year. Students must be completely toilet trained and no longer wearing diapers or pull-ups.
10. To be eligible to enter Kindergarten, students must be 5 years of age on or before September 1 of that school year or have proven the capability for success as an early entry student. Students must be completely toilet trained and no longer wearing diapers or pull-ups.

## **III. WITHDRAWALS/TRANSFERS**

- For students withdrawing from Evergreen Enrollment Contract in the School, a withdrawal must be submitted online thirty days prior to the withdrawal date. Please review the enrollment contract regarding tuition payments due upon withdrawal.
- Transcripts must be requested online: <https://www.rentonprep.org/transcript-request/>
- Requests for the transfer of transcripts or records are processed only when the family's financial account is current.
- An exit interview with a school administrator may be required to complete the withdrawal process.
- Our school faculty have been directed not to complete evaluations or recommendation letters for students transferring to other schools. A letter of reference may be submitted acknowledging the student's previous attendance at the School. The request can be made online.

# IV. FINANCIAL POLICY

## A. Tuition

- Payments may only be submitted electronically through the TuitionEP (TEP) account. Payments made with personal checks, money orders, or cash will be assessed a \$50.00 handling fee for each transaction.
- Payments must be made no later than the due date by the 11:59 p.m. deadline.
- If the full payment due is NOT received before 11:59 p.m. on the fifteenth (15<sup>th</sup>) day of the month, a \$100.00 late penalty may be assessed.
- Any and every bank charge associated with any NSF payments will incur a \$50.00 fee.
- Student(s) may not be permitted to attend school beginning the NEXT school day if the account ever becomes past due and dismissal may result if payment arrangements acceptable to the School have not been made prior to the due date.
- There is no grace period granted for any delinquent payment.
- Admittance to school may be permitted after any late payment has been made, with all fees paid in full.
- Any delinquent account may be submitted for collection assistance and the Student(s) may not be allowed to return to school unless and until the delinquent account has been satisfied.
- Any fees incurred for collection of delinquent accounts, including attorney fees, shall be borne by the financially responsible parent/guardian.
- There is no reduction in tuition for holidays, vacations, illnesses or absences. Returning families must be current in all financial accounts prior to continued enrollment.

**WITHDRAWAL:** Please review the withdrawal policy as stated in your financial agreement policy.

**No Pro-Rated Return of Payments:** In the event my Student(s) does not actually attend school or begins and is voluntarily withdrawn or dismissed, suspended, disenrolled, or expelled from the School, I understand and agree that I will not receive pro-rated reimbursement for any payments received by the School.

### **ROLE OF AN EXCEPTION TO TUITION REFUND POLICY**

The School reserves the right to grant an exception under this policy on a case-by-case basis for any reason and an exception granted to one individual applies only to that individual and does not apply to any other individual, parent or guardian whose child/ward attends the School.

**All payments made on an account will be applied to the oldest outstanding invoice in the following order:**

1. NSF or Late Payment Fees
2. Before/After School Care
3. Tuition/Fees

**Families of students who do not return school property by the end of the school year, or when a student withdraws from the school if sooner, will be assessed a penalty of the actual new replacement cost of the item plus a \$35.00 reordering fee.**

## B. School Finances Used for Church Purposes

The School is an integral part and a ministry of Amazing Grace Lutheran Church. The Church has the right to use church funds for school expenses or purposes. Additionally, the School herein reserves the right to use the school finances in any way or manner we deem necessary, including using school funds for church expenses or purposes. Further, any designations of funds are merely suggestions and are not binding on the School.

## C. Controlling Policy

The financial policy as set forth in this *RPCS Handbook for Families and Students* is the controlling policy of Renton Preparatory Christian School.

### **ROLE OF AN EXCEPTION**

We reserve the right to grant an exception to this financial policy on a case-by-case basis and an exception granted to one individual applies only to that individual and does not apply to any other individual, parent or guardian whose child/ward attends the School.

# V. IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

The School is required by the State of Washington to maintain proper immunization records. The School must have the online form completed demonstrating all Washington State Immunization Status is current by the first day of school or the student will not be permitted to attend classes. The online form submission serves as an electronic signature.

# VI. CHANGE OF CHILD CUSTODY

If a student has a change in custody or guardianship, a new Enrollment and Financial Agreement must be completed and signed by the new custodial parent or guardian within thirty calendar days of the date the change becomes effective. Additionally, a copy of the Parenting Plan must be submitted to the School Office. Enrollment will not be continued until such agreement is completed and on file in the School Office.

### **ROLE OF AN EXCEPTION**

The School reserves the right to grant an exception under this policy on a case-by-case basis for any reason and an exception granted to one individual applies only to that individual and does not apply to any other individual, parent or guardian whose child/ward attends the School.

# VII. ACADEMICS AND ENRICHMENT

## A. Curriculum

Renton Preparatory Christian Schools are committed to its students' academic and spiritual needs. In the pursuit of academic excellence and to facilitate the stated philosophy and goals of the School, the School provides superior quality curriculum materials, online subscription databases, and dynamic adaptive online curriculum. To maintain a consistent course of study across grades and aligned with Common Core State Standards, we use the Core Knowledge sequence, and align course of study to the International Society for Technology in Education Standards for Students and Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework. Our certified Christian educators undergo ongoing professional development in technology, current subscription databases offered, and STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics), and Microsoft Certified Educator training.

## B. Integrated Curriculum

Classes are enriched by such specialized coursework as choir, music, dance, art, drama, public speaking, computer science, physical education, and field trips. *Physical Education: Every student is required to participate in P.E. classes unless exempted for medical reasons.*

## C. Bible Classes

At the School, we believe that the basis of all teaching is God and His Word. Our desire is that each student would proclaim Jesus Christ as his/her personal Lord and Savior through the power of the Holy Spirit. We seek to nurture and train our students toward the goal of growth in godliness of character and action, and to encourage a deepening faith and personal relationship with our Lord. The study of God's Word is a vital element in the life of a Christian; therefore, Bible Study is a required course at the School without exception.

## D. Chapel

Chapel is a special time set aside each week for worship, praise, and sharing God's message. Special guests, pastors, and speakers may be invited to share and to teach. Individual classes may also participate by presenting programs to share with the rest of the School. Chapel attendance is mandatory for all students; guardians and families are also invited to attend.

## E. Field Trips

The School sees field trips as an essential component of experiential learning. Experiences outside of the classroom help to establish and form connections to core content in a meaningful way. Many field trips provide a way to meet specific Core Knowledge content in the arts, literature, music, history, and science sub-categories. Although field trips are considered essential to the educational process, they are considered a privilege. For the safety of students, only students who demonstrate an ability to be trusted and responsible in school will be allowed to attend.

School Administrators and teachers reserve the right to make the decision that a student cannot attend a field trip based on behavior and/or attitudes. Guardians will be informed of this decision prior to the field trip. For students not attending a field trip, including guardians will need to make other arrangements on that day. For all-school field trips, guardians must provide their own childcare for any child, including siblings, not attending.

Parents/guardians recognize that there are risks involved in any field trip or off-campus activity. Participation is expected but if a guardian determines their student will not participate in field trips to which they object, students will remain at home for that day. The School does not provide an accommodation for the care of student(s) whose guardians have opted out of the activity. If a Student will not be accompanying his/her class to an event, guardians have the sole responsibility for their child at that time.

In consideration for the participating Student's ability to take part in the field trips and the related transportation, Parents/Guardians agree to release, waive and forever discharge the School from any liability and hold harmless and indemnify the School, its officers, directors, trustees, employees, instructors, coaches and agents, including any students' parents/guardians assisting in or providing transportation for the field trips (collectively, the "Indemnified Parties") for any injury to the Student arising out of or resulting from the Student's participation in the field trips, including the Student's traveling to and returning from any and all field trips, but only to the extent that such injury is not caused by the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the Indemnified Party, and for any damages and costs, including attorney's fees and cost of litigation which may be incurred by any Indemnified Party in defense of a claim or claims brought against them by the Student or any other person or entity. This Release of Liability shall be legally binding upon the Student, the Students' parents or guardians, heirs, personal representatives, and assigns. Parents/Guardians further agree not to sue the Indemnified Parties for injury or losses sustained by the Student, even if such injury or loss arose from the negligence of school personnel. However, this release would not apply to acts of gross negligence or intentional acts.

Students represent themselves, their class and the school when they attend field trips. It is expected that behavior will be excellent and reflect positively on the School's reputation. All of the School's behavioral expectations apply to field trips and off-campus activities.

## **F. Readiness Work Policies**

### **Philosophy**

Readiness Work encompasses learning activities that prepare students to demonstrate mastery of required outcomes. These required outcomes could include, but are not limited to, class discussions, projects, tests, and life-long skills. Readiness Work will be done both in and outside of class.

Readiness Work promotes sound, independent work habits and develops responsibility.

Readiness Work provides guardians with a window to the classroom, helping tie the school to home.

Readiness Work should be developmentally appropriate and of reasonable length.

All students should record Readiness Work according to individual teacher policies. Methods for recording Readiness Work may include but is not limited to paper and pencil or electronic systems including OneNote,

Schoology, Discovery Education, Sumdog, Aleks, Edmentum, Duolingo and Khan Academy and/or email.

It is the responsibility of the student to do all necessary Readiness Work on time, including assignments missed due to absence. Late Work and Incomplete work is unacceptable.

## Guidelines for Time Devoted to Readiness Work

Students vary widely in their work speed, attentiveness, and use of classroom time. One student might be able to complete all of his or her assignments at school, while another student may need to spend considerably more time working at home to stay caught up. If you have a concern about the amount of time that your student is spending on Readiness Work, work with your student's teacher to identify the reason and find a solution.

Teachers may assign Readiness Work on a regular basis Monday through Thursday. We will generally try to avoid assigning work to be completed over the weekend, but some special projects may be assigned during the year that will occupy weekend time.

Reading practice does improve reading skills and so we encourage families to read together every evening.

## Family Role

The family plays the key role in setting positive expectations and attitudes toward Readiness Work. We ask all guardians to be aware of their child's assigned Readiness Work every day. It will help keep you in touch with what your child is doing and models responsibility.

Families should put into place an after-school routine that matches the needs of their household and school related assignments. Some factors to consider are location, lighting, noise, and distractions. (Keeping distracting electronic devices off limits during study time is very important.) It is helpful to adhere to a regularly scheduled time and place (worked out with the child). We recommend that when students are working on digital devices for readiness work that parents/guardians actively monitor students to keep them on the assigned task.

*Readiness Work is the student's job*, not the parent's. Guardians need to become great questioners rather than doers when it comes time for Readiness Work. If the guardians do the Readiness Work, the student is not ready for the next class day.

Occasionally, we will design special projects that require family participation. However, we will be very clear and tell you when it is okay for the guardian(s) to actively help the student complete the work. Otherwise, help your student to learn through questioning and supervision.

Above all, make learning a priority. There is great power in consistent actions and consistent expectations.

## Definition of Late Work or Incomplete Work

### Incomplete work

Incomplete work is work that is unfinished or missing key components or content of criteria set by the teacher. It remains incomplete until changes have been made to meet the minimum requirements. Students are



encouraged to resubmit or redo incomplete assignments.

**Late work is any assignment or project that is turned in after the date and time set by the teacher.**

### **Consequences of Late Work**

Late Work will affect a student's overall competency. All work still needs to be submitted, work submitted late may receive a maximum competency of Developing.

### **ROLE OF AN EXCEPTION**

The Schools reserves the right to grant an exception to this academic policy on a case-by-case basis and an exception granted to one individual applies only to that individual and does not apply to any other individual, parent or guardian whose child/ward attends the School.

## **Absences and Assignments**

Students who are absent because of excused absences will receive the same number of days to complete their missed work as the number of days they were absent (i.e. a student that was absent three days will have three days to catch up before the work would be considered late).

Students that go on vacation or are absent for reasons other than illness during the school year will receive the work they missed when they return from the vacation or absence rather than in advance.

Grades 4 – 10 must turn in work assigned the day before a planned absence by the due date.

## **G. Snow Day or Weather Delay Policy**

In the event school is cancelled due to snow, weather, or other issues, students will be assigned regular daily school work electronically. Students are expected to carefully read and follow their teacher's instructions and submit their completed work according to the timeline and directions stated by the teacher. By assigning work during snow days, this allows the school to maintain the scheduled school calendar without change and avoid the necessity to add additional school make-up days. Furthermore, this allows the school to meet the required Washington State documented academic hours. All assigned work is intended to be completed by the student with minimal help or guidance from adults.

## **H. Competency Standards**

### **Introduction**

RPCS employs an extensive, interdisciplinary, project based, Core Knowledge curriculum, Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards for students and uses a variety of assessment techniques to monitor students' progress. The ongoing assessment process leads to two semester evaluations that consist of teacher evaluations and may include student self-assessments.

Each semester evaluation will report a Competency for content areas. At the end of the year, the Competency for Semester 1 will be combined with the Competency for Semester 2 for each course, resulting in the final Competency that will be reported on the transcript. For some Secondary courses, a Competency will be assigned for only one Semester.

Descriptions of the Exemplary (E), Mastery (M), Proficient (P), Developing (D), Unsatisfactory (U), and Insufficient (I) Competencies are as follows. Please note that all students are expected to maintain a Competency of Proficient (P) by the end of each semester. Exemplary cannot be achieved through adding "Extra Credit" to an already completed, submitted and evaluated assignment.

We know that students demonstrate their knowledge in more than one way. One diagnostic system we utilize to help support student progress is called Edmentum. It provides us with content assessment in Math, English Language Arts and Reading. Students take this diagnostic multiple times each year for us to measure and monitor progress. This type of information also helps us to provide individualized learning and tiered intervention strategies.

## **RENTON PREP COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT**

Competency assessments measure growth and show consistent and accurate proficiency on specific standards and learning objectives. When a student demonstrates proficiency, they have done everything required to accurately and completely show learning through a task.

### **Proficient (P):**

A Proficient Competency may include a student:

- Demonstrating and/or documenting the competent acquisition of concepts/skill meeting all requirements
- Participating in class discussions, group meetings, projects, etc. through communicating relevant content knowledge
- Accepting constructive critique and attempts to apply changes to content knowledge
- Completing and submitting all academic work on time, meeting all set expectations
- Producing mostly accurate self-evaluation, critique, and/or reflection
- Managing time and resources to meet expectations for learning experiences
- Contributing and/or facilitating class discussions, group meetings, projects, etc.
- Accepting constructive critique and trying to apply changes to content knowledge
- Respectfully cooperating and communicating with others
- Accepting responsibility for actions while showing self-control
- Preparing for class daily and following directions

The goal is to move toward mastery, where students can communicate, collaborate, self-regulate, and create without the assistance of external adult prodding or checking in. They bring in additional resources and perform above the requirements necessary to become proficient.

### **Mastery (M):**

A Mastery Competency has met all Proficient criteria and may include a student:

- Participating in class discussions, group meetings, projects, etc. through clearly and consistently communicating relevant content knowledge
- Connecting and transferring subject matter to other subject areas and/or making life applications
- Producing an accurate self-evaluation, critique, and/or reflection
- Accurately applying and documenting concepts/skills, meeting all requirements through communication, collaboration, with evidence of critical thinking and creative application
- Demonstrating the ability to effectively teach, tutor, and/or mentor others
- Accepting constructive critique and applying changes to content knowledge

When students go above and beyond mastery, consistently bringing in novel approaches, outside resources, creative solutions, and combine domains in meaningful ways, communicating their learning in a clear way to specific audiences outside the classroom, they have attained more than mastery-their work is exemplary.

### Exemplary (E):

An Exemplary Competency has met Mastery criteria and may include a student:

- Innovatively and creatively applying, demonstrating and documenting concepts/skills beyond the requirements
- Consistently and accurately connecting and transferring subject matter to other subject areas and/or making life applications
- Pro-actively setting goals for preparation and completion of academic content
- Initiating teaching, tutoring, or mentoring others in content knowledge
- Requesting constructive critique and applying changes to content knowledge
- Developing, applying, and synthesizing individual talents to enhance learning experiences of self and others
- Completing and submitting all academic work on time, exceeding set expectations
- Producing an accurate self-evaluation, critique, and/or reflection
- Innovatively applying and documenting concepts/skills beyond the requirements through communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking
- Effectively and efficiently managing time and resources to maximize learning experiences
- Contributing, initiating, and/or facilitating class discussions, group meetings, projects, etc.
- Demonstrating willingness to effectively benefit, teach, tutor, or mentor others
- Requesting constructive critique and applying changes to content knowledge

Competencies are measured against standards through intentionally designed assessments or projects, which may include Summative, Formative, Non-Traditional, and/or Standardized assessments. They include Experiential Learning, Blended Learning, STEAM, and/or Technology.

Renton Prep competency-based assessments aim to move beyond an individual skill or content component of learning to demonstrate proficiency within a given context, specific audience, authentic problem or challenge to solve, and with a broader scope than just the classroom. Collaborative and interdisciplinary components, creativity, working within constraints, and authentic settings. The focus of a competency-based assessment is that a learner should master all aspects of a skill or concept prior to moving to the next level of challenge or difficulty.

## Developing (D)

A Developing Competency is when students have not met all Proficient criteria and may include:

- Progressing toward demonstrating and/or documenting competent acquisition of concepts/skills
- Meeting some set expectations, but attempting all
- Having limited participation in class discussions, group meetings, projects, etc. with inconsistent or inaccurate demonstration of content knowledge
- Communicating concepts and ideas when prompted.
- Expressing ideas that are at times irrelevant or unclear
- Working on managing time and resources to meet expectations for learning experiences
- Providing limited contribution to class discussions, group meetings, projects, etc.
- Attempting respectful cooperation and communication with others
- Working on accepting responsibility for actions, and working on showing self-control
- Providing limited preparation for class
- Improving on following directions

## Unsatisfactory (U):

An Unsatisfactory Competency is reserved for a student who fails to exhibit evidence to meet criteria set forth by the teachers and may include:

- Shows minimal demonstration or documentation of competent acquisition of concepts/skills
- Work is inconsistently submitted
- Set expectations are rarely attempted or met
- Participation in class discussions, group meetings, projects, etc., is minimal and expresses irrelevant and/or inaccurate content knowledge
- Work is rarely and inconsistently completed or submitted on time
- Set expectations are rarely attempted or met
- Participation in class discussions, group meetings, projects, etc. is minimal and expresses irrelevant and/or inaccurate content knowledge

## Insufficient (I):

An Insufficient Competency is reserved for a student who fails to exhibit evidence to meet criteria set forth by the teachers and may include:

- Missing assignments, projects or artifacts or not enough evidence of learning has been submitted
- Disruptive participation, inattentiveness, taking away from other learners
- Inappropriate use of school or personal property (computers, art supplies, ruler, etc.)

## I. Supplies

Each student is expected to come to school prepared for the day's activities. The School Office will email a supply list for required items prior to the first day of school. The students are expected to bring the necessary items

on the first day of school and to replenish supplies if necessary throughout the school year.

## J. Concerts & Programs

The School presents concerts and programs each year, generally at Christmas and in the spring. Our annual dance program takes place at Renton IKEA Performing Arts Center. These concerts are used to showcase the talents of our students. Friends and families are invited to these events. We also host school-wide STEAM Fairs in the spring. Teachers work individually with the students in each class to complete age appropriate demonstrations or projects. Throughout the school year there will be other school-wide events. You will receive communication about these as they approach during the year.

# VIII. PARENT POLICIES

## A. Media and Likeness

The guardian grants permission to the Schools to use photographs and likeness of the student for school-related publicity purposes, academic, scholarly, and professional development presentations. This agreement is part of the electronic enrollment contract.

## B. Emergency Closures

The goal of the School is to establish a safe and consistent teaching environment for both students and employees. During winter weather, schools may need to close because of safety concerns. In cases of inclement weather conditions, the School will usually follow the local public-school closure/delay announcements. We will also make effort to notify the major local television stations, update our website, and provide messages on our office phone at 206-723-5526.

### **As presented above in the Readiness Work Policy for Snow Day procedures:**

In the event school is cancelled due to snow, weather, or other issues, students will be assigned regular daily schoolwork via e-mail. Students are expected to carefully read and follow their teacher's instructions and turn in their completed work according to the timeline and directions stated by the teacher. By assigning work during snow days, this allows the school to maintain the scheduled school calendar without change and avoid the necessity to add additional school make-up days. Furthermore, this allows the school to meet the required Washington State documented academic hours. All assigned work is intended to be completed by the student with minimal help or guidance from adults.

## C. Notification of Information Changes

Guardians are required to notify the School Office immediately in case of changes in family/student information including new addresses, phone numbers, mobile phone numbers (including student mobile numbers), work phone numbers, email addresses, carpools, emergency contacts, custody, and pertinent student medical information, such as allergies, etc.

## D. Communications

1. **RENWEB:** RenWeb is used for email communication from the school and staff as well as to maintain family and student data/contact information. RenWeb maintains family accounting information.
2. **OTUS:** This is where you will want to go as your primary place for readiness work and classroom content. Guardians and students will have access and will be able to see readiness work, scores, and resources posted by the teacher and students. OTUS should be checked daily by students, and on a consistent basis by teachers.
3. **WEBSITE:** The School website is updated regularly and contains important information such as calendars, announcements, and other news. The website also shares some of the projects and accomplishments taking place at the Schools. [www.rentonprep.org](http://www.rentonprep.org)
4. **INSTAGRAM:** Follow us on Instagram and see photos and videos to get a glimpse inside the classrooms and read new stories. [www.instagram.com/rentonprep](http://www.instagram.com/rentonprep)
5. **TWITTER:** Follow us on Twitter. Our school re-tweets individual class or educator accounts. Check with your child's teacher to see if their class or teacher has an individual account to follow. [www.twitter.com/rentonprep](http://www.twitter.com/rentonprep) and [www.twitter.com/mrzphd](http://www.twitter.com/mrzphd)
6. **FACEBOOK:** Like our school's Facebook page and see photos and videos of classroom happenings. Helpful resources and activities going on in the Seattle area will also be shared here. Reminders for upcoming events may also be posted. <https://www.facebook.com/rentonprep>
7. **NEWSLETTERS:** The school may publish and email periodic newsletters with important information pertinent to the school. Families should diligently review information in the notes to stay up-to-date in areas of school events and policies. **CLASSROOM TEACHERS** may also send regular newsletters via email to students' families to update them on classroom news, upcoming projects and assignments, and current learning topics and objectives.
8. Emergency Information Line: 206-723-5526

## E. Lost and Found

Lost and Found items are kept for only short periods of time in the School Office due to a lack of storage space. Items labeled with names are returned to students. Guardians are encouraged to label all their students' items to avoid loss. Unmarked items are regularly displayed, and any unclaimed items are periodically donated to a local charity. The School is not responsible for lost or misplaced items and is not liable if any unclaimed items are given to a charity of our choice.

## F. Campus Visitors and Permission for Video/Audio Recording

1. **GUARDIANS:** For safety, we have a closed campus. Please contact the school administration for further details.

2. **OTHER VISITORS:** The School does not allow visits by students not attending our school, and the School reserves the right to refuse to allow anyone on campus for whatever reason before, during, and after school hours.

**All visitors, including guardians, are required to check-in with the school Administrator or Principal and may be required to be accompanied by a staff member. Upon entering any part of the RPCS campus, all visitors, guardians, and students give permission to being video and audio recorded at all times while on the campus.**

Any exceptions granted under this policy are done on a case-by-case basis and any exception given to an individual is limited to and only applies to that individual.

## G. Lunches

All students are required to bring lunches and snacks that can be eaten within the 20- minute lunch period. There is no microwave accessibility. Therefore, all food should be able to be opened and eaten without heating or refrigeration. Students who arrive at school without lunch will be provided basic nutrition. Guardians will be billed \$10.00 per meal, invoiced with the next tuition payment for lunches not received in the office 30 minutes to the beginning of the lunch time. Utensils will not be provided. If a child forgets to bring a lunch, a lunch can be dropped off at the school office. At no time should class be interrupted to deliver a lunch. For security purposes, the lunchroom is opened to students and staff only. Please no food deliveries.

## H. Illness/Medications

1. **ILLNESS:** If a student becomes ill at school, he or she will be sent to the School Office, and the guardian will be called. The guardian should pick up the child within an hour of the call. Should the guardian find this difficult, arrangements should be made, prior to the need, for a relative, friend, or neighbor to be able to pick up the child. Any student with a communicable disease or a temperature of 100 degrees or higher must not be brought to school until they are healed, or the fever has been absent for 24 hours or more. Students will need to have a note signed by a doctor confirming the student can safely return to school. *Any exceptions granted under this policy are done on a case-by-case basis and any exception given to an individual is limited to and only applies to that individual.*
2. **ASTHMA PUMPS:** If a student has asthma, guardians should provide an asthma pump labeled with the child's first and last name as well as a current prescription label to the child's teacher on the first day of school and retrieve it back on the last day of school as well as provide new pumps if medication expires or is changed. The teacher will notify the student of where the pump is in the classroom.
3. **ALLERGIES:** If a student has any allergies, the guardians must notify the child's teacher and the administration by filling out an allergy form by the first day of school. Educators are not allowed to administer allergy medication through injection or other means. Arrangements need to be the responsibility of the family for dosage and administration. For allergy related emergencies please refer to the acute emergency procedure.

4. **MEDICATIONS:** Ideally, all medication should be given at home. The School recognizes that some students may have special needs that require medicine to be administered during school hours. If this should occur, the guardian should contact the school office. All medications must be in the original container and be the responsibility of the student and family.

### **Emergency:**

In case of an acute emergency, first aid will be administered as necessary. Emergency personnel and services will be consulted as indicated by the nature of the emergency. Guardians will be notified. If deemed necessary, 911 will be called and child will be transported to VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER HOSPITAL in Renton (or another facility at the discretion of emergency personnel) for treatment, unless another hospital has been requested.

*The Emergency Release Section is part of the enrollment contract, which must be signed by parents/guardians for all students enrolled at the School.*

## **I. Carpool Guidelines**

Carpooling is a way in which guardians can help and support each other. The School is in no way involved or responsible for your carpool situation. The following are general guidelines to assist you in this area:

1. Please inform the School Office of all names and telephone numbers of those who are authorized to pick up your child from school. When carpools are arranged, or changed, a signed authorization or email notifying the School of the change must be submitted without delay.
2. Please notify your child(ren) and their teacher if another parent or adult other than a legal guardian/parent is picking up your child(ren) on a regular basis or on an abnormal day with special arrangements.
3. It is very important that you always communicate any change in plans directly with the other guardians with whom you are carpooling. Much confusion and many unfortunate situations have arisen due to messages sent through students.
4. When you are picking up student(s) after school, do not leave the school grounds without being certain that all of the student(s) for whom you are responsible are accounted for. The only way you can be certain that you do not need to take a student home is to communicate directly with the guardian, teacher, or School Office.
5. Please give as much advance notice as possible to the other families in your carpool when you are unable to drive on your regularly scheduled day, or if your student will not be attending school.
6. Whenever you change home or work telephone numbers, please notify the School Office as well as your carpool families as soon as possible so that they can reach you with any change in plans.

## **J. Notice Regarding Rights of Guardians**

Renton Preparatory Christian School will allow (1) the release of a student, (2) information about the student (as deemed appropriate by the School, in its sole discretion), and (3) access to School educational records for the student to either of the student's parents or legal guardians unless the School receives sufficient evidence (in its sole discretion) that a court order, legally binding legal document (for example, a document relating to



divorce, separation or custody), or law or regulation specifically revokes those rights. Either of the student's parents or legal guardians is authorized to make decisions on behalf of the student, unless the School receives sufficient evidence (in its sole discretion) to the contrary, whether in the form of a court order, legally binding legal document (for example, a document relating to divorce, separation or custody), or law or regulation specifically revoking the authority of the parent or guardian. In the event of conflicting instructions from the parents or legal guardians (when both are apparently authorized to make decisions on behalf of the student), the School may elect to take any action it deems appropriate, in its sole discretion, including taking no action.

# IX. STUDENT POLICIES

## A. Expectations and Responsibilities

The School is a private Christian institution that seek to provide a positive Christ- centered atmosphere in which students are nurtured to maturity and challenged both academically and spiritually. It is therefore important to determine acceptable guidelines for the behavior and lifestyle of its students, and those students must understand and support the purpose and programs of the School. Enrollment is considered probationary for all students.

**The School reserves the right to dismiss students at any time for any reason it deems necessary based on parental and/or student behavior.**

1. Each student must display a sincere desire to attend the School and agree honestly and wholeheartedly to apply themselves according to 2 Timothy 2:15: "Study to show yourself approved to God, a workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
2. Students must be able to meet the academic requirements of the School, and be willing to submit to the discipline required to perform successfully. (The Schools does not provide programs for severe learning disabilities or emotionally disturbed students.)
3. The behavior of the student while off campus is a clear indicator of his/her lifestyle choices, and is therefore a consideration for admission.

## B. Anti-Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)

### A. Renton Prep Anti-Discrimination Statement

Renton Prep is proud of its diverse educational community. The School admits students of any race, color, and 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, sex, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial assistance programs and athletics or other school administered programs. The School will provide reasonable accommodations that do not pose an undue burden for students with disabilities.

### B. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policies

#### 1. Overview

The School is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment in which all members of our community treat each other with civility and respect and that is free from harassment, intimidation and bullying, including cyber-bullying. The School will not tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying that occurs on school grounds or in connection with any school activity or that otherwise interferes with the educational experience of any student as described herein. The School will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community and works to provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to

harassment, intimidation and bullying. In addition, School's employees are regularly trained to identify and respond to such behavior.

Certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, physical appearance, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. With this in mind, the School will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school. However, all students are afforded the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

## **2. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Defined**

- A. "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by the affected student's protected class status, or other distinguishing characteristics, when the intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act:
  - (a) Physically harms a student or damages the student's property; or
  - (b) Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or
  - (c) Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening and/or hostile educational environment; or
  - (d) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

**Please note that nothing in this section requires the affected student to actually possess a characteristic (i.e. protected class status) that is a basis for the harassment, intimidation, or bullying.**

- B. Bullying can include the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, custodian, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim.
- C. Hostile environment refers to a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.
- D. Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (d), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (d), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

### **3. Scope of the Policy**

The School prohibits harassment, intimidation or bullying:

1. On school grounds, which means any building or property that the school owns or uses for educational, athletic, or other purposes;
2. At or in connection with any school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether or not the activity occurs on school grounds;
3. In any vehicle or other form of transportation owned or used by the school; or
4. Through the use of any technology or any electronic device owned, or used by the school.

The School also prohibits conduct that does not meet any of the above criteria, but that nonetheless:

1. Creates a hostile environment at school for the alleged target;
2. Infringes on the rights of the alleged target at school; or
3. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

This policy applies to the entire school community, including educators, school staff, students, guardians and volunteers.

### **4. Student Reports**

Any student who feels he or she has been the subject of harassment, intimidation or bullying should immediately report the matter. The School has a form available on the School's website for reporting any incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying that occurs within the scope of this policy. <https://www.rentonprep.org/harassment-intimidation-and-bullying-reporting-form/> This is the preferred method of reporting such conduct. However, if the conduct occurs in class, the student is encouraged to reach out to their teacher directly.

Any student who elects not to use the on-line form, should report the conduct to his or her campus Director, or to any other staff member or teacher with whom they would feel more comfortable making the report. If a reported incident involves a staff member, the report should be directed to the Administrator. If a reported incident involves the Administrator, the report should be directed to the President of the Amazing Grace Church Council.

Student reports can be made anonymously, although no disciplinary action will be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who observes an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying should complete the on-line form; or alternatively report the conduct to his or her campus Director, or to any other staff member or teacher with whom they would feel more comfortable making the report.

### **5. Guardian Reports**

Any parent or guardian who feels that any student has been the subject of harassment, intimidation or bullying should promptly report the matter. The School has a form available on the School's website for reporting any incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying that occurs within the scope of this policy: <https://www.rentonprep.org/harassment-intimidation-and-bullying-reporting-form/> This is the preferred method of reporting such conduct. However, if the parent/guardian elects not to use the electronic form,

he/she should make the report to the appropriate Director. Such reports may be made anonymously, although the school is prohibited from taking any disciplinary action against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Any parent or guardian who wishes to file a claim/concern or seek assistance outside of the school may do so with our school project manager, Kimberly Ellis from Energyhill.

## **6. Anonymous Reports**

Student and Guardian reports may be filed anonymously. However, disciplinary action cannot be taken solely based on an anonymous report. Anonymous reports will be investigated with the same procedure, timeliness and vigor as other reports and disciplinary action can occur based on the results of the investigation.

## **7. False Reports**

Students who file false reports of harassment, intimidation or bullying will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **8. Responsibility of Teachers and Staff**

Any faculty or staff member of our school community who has witnessed or otherwise become aware of any harassment, bullying or retaliation must, by law, report it to the appropriate Director. In addition, faculty/staff members should fill out the on-line reporting form available on the School's website. If a teacher or staff member witnesses an act of harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation in progress, the teacher or staff member is expected to take reasonable steps to stop the act by communicating directly with the person where behavior is considered unacceptable, offensive, or inappropriate. Employees may NOT make reports under this policy anonymously. The Administrator is available to assist anyone who may need support in reporting such activity.

## **9. Retaliation**

Retaliation or threats of retaliation meant to intimidate or punish the victim of harassment, intimidation or bullying or toward those investigating the incident will not be tolerated. Any student who feels he or she has been the subject of retaliation should immediately report the matter to his or her campus Director, or to any other staff member or teacher with whom they would feel more comfortable making the report.

## **10. Investigation of Bullying and Harassment**

Once reported, any allegation of bullying or harassment will be promptly investigated. The investigation may include in-person interviews, review of available correspondence (written or electronic), review of on campus video surveillance, among other things. Students and their guardians are expected to fully cooperate in any investigation or risk termination of enrollment.

If the Administrator determines that harassment, bullying or retaliation has occurred, he/she will (i) take appropriate disciplinary action; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of the perpetrator; (iii) notify the parents or guardians of the victim, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (iv) assess the victim's need for protection and take appropriate steps as necessary to restore a sense of safety for the victim; and (v) in consultation with a counselor or others as appropriate, refer perpetrators, victims, and appropriate family members of such students for counseling or other appropriate services.

The Administrator may notify the local law enforcement agency, if he/she believes that criminal charges may be pursued against a perpetrator;

If a bullying incident involves a Director, the Administrator or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target. If a bullying incident involves the Administrator, Amazing Grace Church Council, or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

For all reports of bullying or retaliation, the Administrator or designee will keep a file of the report, the investigation, and any steps taken in response to a finding of harassment, bullying or retaliation.

## **11. Discipline and Remediation**

Disciplinary actions for violations of this policy may include, but are not limited to: warnings; counseling; loss of opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, school social events or graduation exercises; in-school suspension; short term suspension; long term suspension or expulsion. The specific consequences should be consistent, reasonable, fair, age appropriate and match the severity of the incident.

The School may, at its discretion, apply stricter standards of behavior in order to prevent inappropriate verbal and physical conduct before a student has been subject to harassment, intimidation or bullying as defined in this policy. For example, the School reserves the right to impose disciplinary measures or other corrective action in a case of a single expression, act or gesture, as well as in a case of inappropriate conduct that may not rise to the level of the definition of bullying contained herein. This may occur if the School determines that the behavior is of sufficient severity to warrant disciplinary measures or other remedial action, or if the repetition of an expression, act, or gesture might result in a violation of this policy.

## **12. Training and Prevention**

The School takes specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, intimidation, and harassment that may interfere with a safe and effective educational environment. Indeed, Renton Prep is committed to support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The curriculum of required guidance classes in each class includes topics that comprehensively address harassment, bullying, intimidation including case studies highlighting the toll on victims, school policies and procedures, state laws, etc. In addition, Renton Prep periodically convenes assemblies, advisory meetings, and other student gatherings to address the topic of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Faculty and staff shall also review annually Renton Prep's Anti-Bullying Plan, the content of which is included the Employee Handbook.

## **13. Additional Notes**

This Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy is posted on the School's website, and the guardian community will receive copies of the policy at the start of each academic year. The School has invited comments from various school constituencies, and will continue to do so, periodically.

The School reserves the right to modify these policies and plans during the year, and it will formally notify guardians prior to the effective date of any changes. The policy will be reviewed, and as needed, updated at least once every two years. In connection with that update, the Administrator or designee will be responsible

for reviewing the policy and the file of reported incidents of bullying or retaliation in at least the preceding two years, and undertaking such other steps as may be appropriate to evaluate the effectiveness of this Plan and the school's compliance with the Plan and any laws or regulations relating thereto.

If required by the state, the School shall annually report bullying incident data to the appropriate state department. The data shall include, but not be limited to: (i) the number of reported allegations of bullying or retaliation; (ii) the number and nature of substantiated incidents of bullying or retaliation; (iii) the number of students disciplined for engaging in bullying or retaliation; and (iv) any other information required by the department. Said incident data shall be reported in the form and manner established by the department, in consultation with the attorney general.

If required by the state, the School will assess the school climate along with the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in the school by administering a student survey at least once every four years beginning with the 2016-2017 school year.

The School reserves the right to grant an exception under this policy on a case-by-case basis for any reason, and an exception granted to one individual applies only to that individual and does not apply to any other individual, parent, or guardian whose child/ward attends the School. We may choose to move directly to suspension or expulsion in the event we determine the behavior or actions warrant such an immediate decision.

## C. Discipline

Discipline, in general, is training in processes – procedures, preparations, and habits that help students develop a successful academic career. To be disciplined is to be corrected in patterns of behavior and actions. It is a three-way communication process between students, guardians, and school personnel. In the Christian environment, it is training in appropriate choices and ethical behavior that leads one to endeavor to become more Christ-like in responses and actions. Matthew 18 provides a model for a process to address conflict resolution and forgiveness.

### **The following guidelines have been established for all students at RPCS:**

#### **1. Growing in Christian character includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

- a) Taking care of one's school community
- b) Respecting all school and church personnel
- c) Being responsible for one's actions
- d) Respecting other's rights, feelings, and property
- e) Walking safely in the building, and staying in supervised areas
- f) Following through with goals and commitments
- g) Attending school regularly; being on time and ready to work with the necessary learning materials
- h) Wearing school uniforms
- i) Knowing and following the rules of RPCS

#### **2. Offenses resulting in discipline include, but are not limited to, the following areas:**

- a) Procedural offenses include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Chewing gum
- 2) Running inside the building
- 3) Tardiness
- 4) Inappropriate dress
- 5) Being out of class without a purpose and/or permission
- 6) Being out of seat without permission
- 7) Talking out of turn
- 8) Eating or drinking outside of the lunchroom (unless specifically authorized)
- 9) Bringing unauthorized electronic items to school
- 10) Misuse of authorized or appropriate digital communication devices especially when it negatively impacts any person

(Discipline procedures include, but are not limited to investigation, communication with families, suspension, disenrollment and possible expulsion.)

b) Attitudinal offenses include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Disruptive conduct
- 2) Misrepresentation/lying
- 3) Disobedience
- 4) Disrespect to faculty/staff member
- 5) Threats, bullying, harassment, intimidation

(Discipline procedures include, but are not limited to investigation, communication with families, suspension, disenrollment and possible expulsion.)

c) Moral offenses include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Fighting
- 2) Inappropriate language/swearing
- 3) Bringing dangerous objects to school, including weapons of anykind
- 4) Vandalism (damaging School, Church, or personal property)
- 5) Use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- 6) Inappropriate physical contact (non-sexual or sexual contact)
- 7) Theft
- 8) Cheating
- 9) Assault, threats, bullying, harassment, intimidation

(Discipline procedures for moral offenses include, but are not limited to investigation, communication with families, suspension, disenrollment, and immediate expulsion.)

### **3. Lunchroom rules, including but not limited to:**

- a) No talking
- b) Enter the lunchroom in a single line, quietly and orderly
- c) Walk, do not run
- d) Remain seated until excused
- e) Use good table manners
- f) Leave your individual eating area neat and clean (clean up after yourself)
- g) Touch and handle your own food only, without sharing (due to food allergies)



- h) No food throwing, etc.
- i) Do not leave the lunchroom without adult permission
- j) Take all personal belongings daily from the lunchroom when you are finished

**4. Playground rules, including but not limited to:**

- a) Remain in the designated play areas until permission is given to go elsewhere
- b) Return all equipment to designated area
- c) Go down the slides one at a time, climbing up or on top of slides is prohibited for safety
- d) The following are strictly forbidden:
  - 1) Throwing rocks, sticks, woodchips, or bark
  - 2) Piggyback games
  - 3) Keep-away
  - 4) Fighting
  - 5) Dangerous use of playground equipment such as tying others up with jump ropes
  - 6) Inappropriate language or play
- e) When crossing playground equipment, students need to be supervised by a teacher or adult.

**5. Consequences of inappropriate behavior will depend upon the severity, age of student, and repetition of behavior. Staff members who have knowledge of students behaving inappropriately will speak with the student, explain the seriousness of the behavior, and take action that includes, but is not limited to:**

- Behavior Notification (report of student violation to teacher or administrator)
- A course of action may proceed as follows, but is not limited to: Teacher/student conference; Teacher/guardian conference; Guardian/administrator/student conference; Probation; Suspension; Disenrollment; Expulsion.
- HIB Form: Harassment, intimidation, and bullying report form online can be found at: <https://www.rentonprep.org/harassment-intimidation-and-bullying-reporting-form/>  
Educators, Administration, guardians, and students may use this form to report severe and harmful behaviors. The documentation in this form may be provided to legal counsel and used for investigation.

\*Expulsion: Students who are expelled from the School are subject to the normal withdrawal procedures, including, but not limited to, payment of the remaining tuition amount assessed under the Financial Policy section of this handbook.

**6. It is expected that this plan will contribute toward a safe, happy, positive school environment where students respect one another, are able to learn, and where Christ is glorified. Guardians and students are required to read and discuss this policy and to comply with all rules and regulations as established by the School.**

**7. In the event that the School determines, at its sole discretion, that there does not exist a constructive and positive working relationship between the School and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the Student; or for such other reasons as the school may determine to be in the interest of the health, safety or orderly learning environment of the student, other students, faculty or staff, the School may accelerate the aforementioned discipline procedures or forgo them altogether and dis-enroll the Student.**

## **ROLE OF AN EXCEPTION TO DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The School reserves the right to grant an exception under this policy on a case-by-case basis for any reason, and an exception granted to one individual applies only to that individual and does not apply to any other individual, parent, or guardian whose child/ward attends the School. We may choose to move directly to suspension or expulsion in the event we determine the behavior or actions warrant such an immediate decision.

## **D. Search and Seizure Policies**

1. Enrollment in the School constitutes consent by the guardian to allow the child and his or her personal belongings to be searched and seized, including any and all digital and electronic devices.
2. The School expressly reserves the right to search, including but not limited to: persons, automobiles, backpacks, purses, pockets, lockers, desks, electronic devices, etc.
3. The School expressly reserves the right, and the guardians and students grant the School the right, to examine the electronic content contained in a cellular phone, laptop computer, or other device confiscated at school.

## **ROLE OF AN EXCEPTION TO SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY**

The School reserves the right to grant an exception under this policy on a case-by-case basis for any reason and an exception granted to one individual applies only to that individual and does not apply to any other individual, parent, or guardian whose child/ward attends the School.

## **E. Telephone Usage**

Students are permitted to use the school telephone in the classroom, with permission, in cases of emergency only. All long distance calls must be made collect. Students are not allowed to use any telephone, including but not limited to, cellular, digital, or any other telephones without authorization. Cell phones may be used before and after school and/or during times permitted by the teacher. They may not be used during class at any time, including social media, text messaging, games, photos, music, or any other use, unless permitted by the teacher. Any device used on campus can be reviewed for content.

## **F. Bicycles**

Students are NOT allowed to ride their bikes to school without permission.

## **G. Birthdays and Special Parties**

Families wishing to celebrate a student's birthday on campus must include all students in that classroom. The teacher, prior to the celebration, must approve plans. No presents or balloons are to be handed out in the classroom. No pizzas, cakes, cupcakes, or candy is permitted – only juice, fresh fruit and vegetables, or another approved healthy snack. If invitations are being passed out to an off-campus birthday party, all students in the class must be included; otherwise, invitations must be sent from off school grounds.

## H. School Bus and Vehicle Rules

The following are rules relating to students riding in school buses and other vehicles include, but are not limited to:

1. Students being transported are considered under the authority of the vehicle's driver.
2. Students may not sit in the driver's seat, operate controls, or be in the driver's area.
3. Fighting, wrestling, or boisterous activity is prohibited in the vehicle.
4. Students shall use the emergency door only in case of emergency.
5. Students shall not bring animals, firearms, weapons, or other potentially hazardous materials on the vehicle.
6. Students shall remain seated while the vehicle is in motion.
7. When necessary to cross the road, students shall cross in front of the vehicle or as instructed by the driver.
8. The driver may assign students seats.
9. Students shall not open or close windows without the permission of the driver.
10. Students shall not extend their hands, arms or heads through the windows.
11. Students shall remain silent on the bus to allow the driver to remain focused and keep all participants safe.
12. Students shall keep the vehicles clean, and must refrain from eating in the vehicles, or otherwise damaging them.
13. Students shall be courteous to the driver, to fellow students, and to passers-by.
14. When riding a Seattle Metro City Bus, students should sit in area designated by the classroom teacher and always know where their teacher is located in order to stay with the class.
15. Students shall load appropriate bus fare to their Orca card prior to the day of use.

## I. Weapons Policy

The School has zero tolerance for weapons. A weapon is any object that is designed or used for inflicting bodily harm or physical damage. The term "weapon" includes, without limitation, the following items: any loaded or unloaded firearm; any knife; any defensive weapon; any martial arts device; and any tool or instrument which school administrative staff could reasonably conclude as being capable of inflicting bodily harm, or which by virtue of its shape or design gives the appearance of any of the aforementioned.

It is a violation of this policy for any individual to possess, carry, transmit or use any weapon, firearm or explosive device, or any replica thereof; to commit an assault or battery with the use of any weapon, firearm or explosive device while on school grounds or on any school outing. Potential consequences for violation of this policy include, without limitation:

- Weapon confiscation
- Parent/guardian notification
- A thorough investigation
- Referral to local law enforcement
- Expulsion

Voluntary Disclosure: If a student brings a weapon to school unintentionally, and brings the weapon to an administrator when the student discovers it, the administrator will determine if the incident is in violation of

the intent of the Weapons Policy.

## **J. Drug, Alcohol & Tobacco Policy**

In order to protect the safety of students, staff and the public, and to provide a healthy educational environment, the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco are prohibited on school property and on school outings. The School community members shall not use, possess, sell, buy or distribute drugs, including alcohol, controlled substances or related paraphernalia on school grounds or on school outings.

Potential consequences for violations of this policy, or for behavior that creates a reasonable suspicion of a violation, include, without limitation:

- Substance or paraphernalia confiscation
- Parent/guardian notification
- A thorough investigation
- Referral to local law enforcement
- Expulsion

## **K. Child Abuse & Neglect**

By law and pursuant to the School's Mandatory Reporting Policy, any school official or employee is required to report knowledge or reasonable suspicion of abuse, neglect, or exploitation to Child Protective Services (CPS) or other appropriate authorities, including instances of physical injury (including bruising), sexual abuse or crime, cruel/inhumane treatment, or persistent neglect. Conversations between students and School staff, teachers and administrators are not privileged. The statute protects such individuals from liability for making such reports to CPS. Reports must be made within 48 hours following knowledge or reasonable suspicion of child abuse. The Executive Director must be notified first before a school official or employee calls CPS or other authorities.

## **L. Employment of School Staff by School Families**

School staff must not engage in independently arranged employment (paid in money or in kind) for current school families. Because the school may be held liable for situations which occur in the course of an employment arrangement, work such as babysitting or tutoring for current families is not permitted. Faculty or staff members who accept these types of employment with School families may have their contracts with the school terminated.

# **X. DRESS AND GROOMING GUIDELINES**

## **A. General Guidelines**

Emphasis should be placed on the fact that the School is a Christian institution, and the clothes that students wear should reflect a Christ-like attitude. Any type of appearance that attracts undue attention to the wearer,

and thus causes a disturbance in the School, is in bad taste and not acceptable. A high standard of courtesy and etiquette is to be maintained.

The School represents a multitude of Christian denominations, families and cultures that have a variety of perspectives regarding dress. It is the School's desire to reflect and present a neat and modest image of our students to the community. While some attire may be acceptable for Christians to wear in other environments, it may not be appropriate for School.

Everywhere in life people are given dress standards when they choose to be a part of an organization. From sports teams, McDonalds, to the armed services, to post office employees, to the Supreme Court of the United States, people are required to conform to styles of attire if they choose to be a part of the institution. It is not considered unusual or cruel to have standards of dress to present a specific image.

Our dress and uniform guidelines are not an attempt to judge one's spirituality or impose ultra-conservative values on families. Everyone should be recognized for his/her effort, abilities and spirit. Acceptability of dress should not determine the acceptability of the student. The goal is to reflect what we feel are commonly accepted Christian values and to encourage Christian young people to be concerned with the Biblical principle of *modesty*. The School assumes guardians will honor this intention and will assume the responsibility for guiding their student(s) in this area.

Students are expected to honor the Lord in their daily attire. While some students may not agree with all guidelines and expectations, it should be recognized that they choose to attend the School and will therefore respect the authority of the School in its attempt to administer a fair and consistent dress standard.

## B. The School Uniform Information: Kindergarten Prep To 10<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Landsend.com is the Only Official School Uniform Supplier.**

### Where to Purchase Uniform Items

#### 1. LandsEnd.com Online Uniform Shop (Primary Source for uniform items)

Visit and login to the custom shopping experience for Renton Prep Christian School to make all purchases.

- a) For all students, all uniform items *except* outerwear, socks, and shoes MUST be purchased through our LandsEnd.com online uniform shop.
- b) Lands' End carries sizes ranging from small children through adult sizes.
- c) Uniform tops:
  - 1) All uniform shirts and tops will be purchased through our Lands' End uniform shop.
  - 2) Uniform polo shirts are available in black, cobalt blue, deep purple, evergreen, red, & orange.
  - 3) Hooded sweatshirts are not considered outerwear and are not considered part of the dress code.
  - 4) All uniform tops, including polos and outerwear must have the appropriate school logo embroidered on them.
- d) Uniform bottoms:

- 1) Uniform bottoms are to be purchased through LandsEnd.com
- 2) Color Options: All School bottoms are of the gray color.
- 3) For husky and tall fits, uniform bottoms can be purchased directly from a Lands' End store, provided the items are from our approved items list. (See LANDS' END APPROVED ITEMS section for listing.)

## **2. Shoes, Socks, Tights and Hair**

- a) Shoes must be completely black and non-scuff with no colored logos or laces.
- b) No boots are to be worn inside the classroom.
- c) Socks must be white, grey, or black.
- d) Tights must be black, white, or grey for all students.
- e) Hairstyles and accessories should not be a distraction in class. Hair must remain its natural color. Earrings for girls must be studs and worn only in the ear. Dangle earrings are not allowed for the safety of the student. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.
- f) No visible tattoos.
- g) Headbands, barrettes, or large hair-ties in the colors of black, brown, white, red, blue, forest green, or purple can be worn.
- h) No bandannas, hats, or headbands with attachments can be worn.

## **3. Themed Dress Days**

- a) Themed dress days are listed on the school website.
- b) Students choosing not to wear clothing that fits within the guidelines for the themed dress day must wear their school uniforms.
- c) For student's safety shoes must be close-toed, secured around the heel for themed dress days as well.
- d) No logos, pictures, or words unless they fit within the theme.

## **C. Events, Field Trips, and School Programs**

The School intends to display attitudes of respect and modesty when traveling off the school grounds. Except when specifically instructed otherwise, the usual uniform dress code will be enforced for all participants of the School, during special events including, but not limited to, field trips, school programs, and other events. We may require all boys and girls to wear a specific color shirt to help us better recognize our students in crowds. All student spectators or audience members must adhere to the standard dress guidelines outlined above. This includes all events, concerts, plays, or other school events.

## **D. Enforcement**

All dress standard infractions may be referred to the administrator. Students found to be wearing or displaying improper dress/hair may be subject to disciplinary action, as set forth in Section IX, B (Student Policies – Discipline) of this handbook, and may be sent home. In case of questions about appropriateness, it shall be left to the discretion of the administration. The decision of the administration will be final. When the infraction has been cleared or corrected, the student may be sent back to class with notification to the teacher of action taken. Consequences of dress code violations may include specific, individually assigned dress standards for designated periods of time as well as the loss of Theme Dress Days.

# XI. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for success as a student. Absence and tardiness interrupts the process of learning for all students. Therefore, to maximize the learning experience, we discourage unnecessary absences and vacations on school days. To be excused, an absence must be due to an unavoidable emergency or illness. In some cases, other reasons may be accepted if previous arrangements are made.

The School is a "closed campus," meaning that students may not leave the school grounds at any time without prior permission and must check out with their teacher. Students must be signed out of the office by a parent/guardian or otherwise appointed member of pick up if leaving the school grounds prior to dismissal.

## A. Absences

### 1. Absence Procedures

- a) If a student is ill or prevented from attending school by some other emergency, guardians should email their student's teacher to notify them of their absence.
- b) If a student has a planned absence (see below), guardians should notify the student's teacher at least 3 days before the absence. These may be excused or unexcused (see lists below).
- c) A student being picked up before the end of the school day will be released to a Parent or Guardian when the Parent or Guardian comes directly to get the student from the student's teacher.

### 2. Excused Absences

Excused Absences include:

- Student Sickness/Illness (Temperature of 100°F or higher): School may require guardians to send a written notice from a doctor or physician.
- Student Injury: School may require guardians to send a written notice from a doctor or physician.
- Death in the family
- Planned Absences: Doctor's appointments with student absent for only the necessary appointment and travel time to and from school.
- Special one-day, academically-related events

### 3. Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Sickness in the family (i.e. sibling of student sick)
- Appointments for someone other than the student
- Family vacations
- Absences caused by the student or guardian oversleeping
- Transportation problems
- Student needed for babysitting
- Not attending while on a waitlist for another school assignment

- Student or guardian conflicts with school staff
- Finishing homework
- Excursions - such as attending the fair, sports events, movies, etc.
- A guardian's request to "excuse my child's absence" without a stated reason or with a reason that does not meet the criteria for excused absences will result in the child's absence remaining unexcused
- Any absence, whether planned or unplanned, will remain unexcused when the guardian does not provide either an emailed or written excuse within 2 days after the date of the absence

#### **4. Absence Consequences**

- It is the student's responsibility to make up missed work. The student is responsible to get all required assignments that can be completed outside of class from the teacher and turn them in by the assigned deadline.
- Excused and unexcused absences can impact a student's Achievement Levels for Content and Participation.

#### **5. Excessive Absences or Unreported Absences**

- On the day a student is absent from school without pre-arrangement or notification, staff will attempt to telephone or email each absent student's parent/guardian. If unable to reach a guardian, emergency contacts may be phoned.
- After 5 consecutive or non-consecutive excused absences or 2 unexcused absences, administration will contact the guardians.
- A student may receive an Achievement Level of Unsatisfactory (U) or Insufficient (I) in a course in which he/she has exceeded 10 absences, excused or unexcused. This includes absences for medical appointments and illnesses.
- A guardian may petition for credit if the guardian believes extenuating circumstances merit review of the student's record. The petition process begins by a guardian calling the office to schedule a review.
- Chronic absence may result in dismissal.

#### **6. Role of Exception**

The School reserves the right to grant an exception under this policy on a case-by-case basis for any reason and an exception granted to one individual applies only to that individual and does not apply to any other individual, parent or guardian whose child/ward attends the School.

## **B. Tardies**

### **1. Tardy Policy**

- A student arriving on campus or entering their classroom after the designated start time is considered tardy.
- If there is a planned tardy (i.e. doctor's appointment), guardians should email their student's teacher to notify them of the tardy.

### **2. Unexcused Tardies**

Examples include but are not limited to:



- any family member/household member oversleeping
- student or other family/household member causing delay
- turning around to attain Readiness Work or school supplies from home
- completing Readiness Work or assignments
- traffic
- loitering outside the classroom

### 3. Tardy Consequences

- For each unexcused tardy, students will check in with their classroom teacher including date and time of their arrival. The teacher will notify the guardians of the student's tardy.
- For the 3<sup>rd</sup> unexcused tardy, Administration will be notified of student's unexcused tardies and will contact his or her guardians.

### 4. Role of Exception

The School reserves the right to grant an exception under this policy on a case-by-case basis for any reason. An exception granted to one individual applies only to that individual and does not apply to any other individual, parent or guardian whose child/ward attends the School.

## C. Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

### Drop-off and Dismissal at RPCS Campus

All students will be dropped off and picked up in the Mill Ave. S. parking lot.

Please do not drop off your child any earlier than 15 minutes before classes begin. Supervision of students will not begin before that time. Supervision of students prior to 15 minutes before classes begin and arriving no earlier than 7 a.m. is provided for an additional charge.

See Extended Care policies (Section XII). Teacher supervision will conclude 10 minutes after school is dismissed. Any student remaining past that time will be taken to Extended Care and charged accordingly.

1. Students who arrive at school after the start of class are tardy.
2. We discourage early dismissals from school, yet it is sometimes necessary to obtain doctor or dental appointments during school time. If so, we request that a written or electronic excuse be sent to the teacher that morning. In this way, the teacher can plan for the child's absence. Guardians finding it necessary to have a student picked up before the end of the school day will have their student released to them when the Parent or Guardian comes directly to get the student from the office. Students must be signed out of the office by a parent/guardian or otherwise appointed member of pick up if leaving the school grounds prior to dismissal.

## XII. EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM AND USE OF PLAYGROUND AFTER SCHOOL DISMISSAL

The goal of the Extended Care Program is to provide a safe environment for students during the hours before and after school while guardians are at work. This program may not be available at all times and is dependent upon adequate enrollment to pay associated costs. Where offered, it is open to any student attending the School in the mornings and afternoons for Kindergarten-Prep through 10th grade. The Extended Care program is a drop-in-as-needed program. No special enrollment is necessary for enrolled students. This program is operated on a minute-to-minute fee basis at the rate of 10 cents per minute. It is billed at the end of the preceding month and must be paid by the 15<sup>th</sup> before 5:00 p.m. each month (same time tuition is due) or a \$100.00 late payment fee may be assessed. Students may not attend the extended care program unless all fees and/or late fees, if any, are paid when due.

## A. Enrollment and Admissions

The School Extended Care program is open to any student attending the School. The usual times offered are 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. and from 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. ALL LATE PICK-UPS (students picked up after 6:00 p.m. will be charged an additional \$100.00 fee for any fraction of the first half hour and \$50.00 for any fraction of a half hour thereafter. Renton Prep students using before and after school care will sign in on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

### **DROP-IN STUDENTS**

The Extended Care program is available on a drop-in basis (RPCS students only). Because we are concerned for the safety of our students, any teacher or staff member may send students who are not picked up within 10 minutes after the close of the school day to the Extended Care Program. Guardians will be charged for this service.

## B. Extended Care Activities

Morning activities include a quiet time of reading books, playing quiet games, and occasional gym time or art activities. Afternoon activities include a snack time (provided by the student), a short quiet period, playtime outside or in the gym (when available), study and Readiness Work time, games, art activities, and cleanup time. Videos are used on a restricted basis, and will only include age appropriately rated movies.

### **Notes Regarding afternoon extended care and playground use after school:**

#### **1. Families staying or using playground after school ends:**

Guardians are responsible for watching their children while they're at the public park once they have picked them up and they are not in extended care. Guardians are responsible for making sure their children are safe and follow the rules of the playground. Guardians need to be aware of playground rules which apply at all times.

#### **2. Personal devices in extended care:**

Students may bring their computers to extended care for readiness work and project use, students must have a laptop carrying case to transport their computer, all School policies apply in extended care. Computers may only be used to complete work related to school goals. All other personal digital devices must be kept put away in extended care unless the extended care teacher gives permission.

### 3. Children with no Readiness Work in extended care:

We suggest that guardians, who have their children in extended care after school for more than 1 hour, provide their children with other materials that they can work with while waiting. While a student may not have readiness work, this time is a great opportunity to work on skills and make additional progress.

### 4. Supplies:

We are requesting that for children who stay longer than 1 hour at least 3-4 times per week that they have a supply of pencils, crayon & markers for extended care. This is especially applicable to Kindergarten Prep and Kindergarten students. All students need to have a supply of pencils and paper as well when staying in extended care.

### 5. Goals:

Our overall goal for extended care supported by the extended care teachers is for the children to have a productive, fun & safe time while waiting for their guardians. We appreciate guardian partnership in this and making this time a great time to reinforce classroom learning and skills.

## C. Snacks

There are no snacks provided in the morning or after school; however, your child may bring a snack if they were not able to eat a good breakfast before leaving home. Snacking is allowed on an individual basis in the morning -- especially between 7:00am and 8:00am. You must also provide an after-school snack for your child(ren).

## D. Procedures

All students attending the School Extended Care MUST be signed in and out by adults authorized to transport the child. These adults must be listed on the student's registration form. **Please make sure you scan your child in or out using the barcode recording system so that we may best protect your child and comply with licensing regulations.**

Please let your child know if you want them to go to Extended Care in the afternoon. They are to go directly to Extended Care immediately when the scheduled pick-up time has passed, at which time the teacher will sign them in. Please come to the Extended Care room to pick up your child when you arrive in the afternoon. Every student MUST be signed out by an adult authorized to be with your child before leaving the room. If students leave Extended Care without being signed out, the guardian will be charged for the entire afternoon.

## E. Behavior Management and Discipline

The School Extended Care tries to teach children how to solve conflicts as Jesus has directed in the Bible. *Please refer to Section IX.B. (Student Policies – Discipline) of this handbook.*

## F. Medication

Medication will not be administered during extended care hours.

# XIII. RPCS VIDEO AND AUDIO EQUIPMENT USAGE POLICY

## A. Camera Locations and Details

Cameras are located in each classroom and other designated areas. No cameras are in restrooms. The cameras record visual and auditory actions 24/7. All people entering the RPCS campuses grant permission to be recorded. Individuals who object should not enter the RPCS campus.

## B. Purposes

Renton Prep is committed to the free exchange of ideas and freedom of action that should be found at any Christian school. At the same time, it is committed to safeguarding the safety and security of those who visit, work, or study on its campuses and are involved in its activities. Thus, the use of video cameras on campuses shall be conducted so as to provide for the safety of and on-going assessment of faculty, staff, students and visitors in their personal and professional activities.

**The utilization of installed audio/video equipment shall be to meet one or more of the following objectives:**

1. Enhance public safety and security, while reducing the costs incurred by Renton Prep in the promotion of campus security.
2. Aid in the on-going assessment of instruction and/or facilitate its delivery to remote locations, as well as enable video conferencing among remote sites.
3. Prevent, deter, or halt inappropriate behavior and/or criminal activity, and facilitate criminal investigations and police actions to safeguard faculty, staff, students, and visitors.

## C. Regulations

Regulating camera use, additions, reductions, improvements, and permission to view camera recordings is the responsibility of the Committee on Audio/Video Surveillance (CVS). The CVS shall consist of one representative from the Church Council of Amazing Grace Lutheran Church, one faculty member, and the administrator or principal.

## D. Scope, Principles, and Procedures

The School Policy of Video and Audio Equipment Usage located in the School Office provides more detail on the equipment scope, principles, purposes, regulations, and procedures. It is available for viewing upon request.

Policy: To regulate the use of audio-video equipment that is employed to monitor and record public and restricted areas for the purposes of safety and security on the Renton Prep campus.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all students, families, visitors, personnel, campuses, offices, and other subdivisions of Renton Prep in the use of audio-video recording and surveillance.

### **General Information:**

1. The Committee on Audio-Video Surveillance (CVS) has the primary responsibility for crime prevention, rule enforcement, and other public safety and security matters on our campuses. RPCS works closely with students, staff, and faculty to create a reasonably safe living, learning, and research environment for the campuses. In furtherance of this approach, RPCS is committed to enhancing its public safety efforts through the use of digital audio-video recording and/or surveillance under appropriate circumstances.
2. The purpose of audio-video recording of public areas by RPCS personnel is to deter crime and any unacceptable behavior and to assist us in protecting the safety of students, staff and property of the RPCS community.
3. Audio-Video recording for security and behavior review purposes will be conducted in a professional, and Christian ethical manner. Personnel involved in video recording will be appropriately trained in the responsible use of this technology. Training will be provided by CVS. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action consistent with the rules and regulations of RPCS.
4. Information obtained through any audio-video recording will be used only as provided herein. Information obtained through audio-video recording will only be released when authorized by the Amazing Grace Church Council according to the procedures established in this policy. Unless required by a legal directive all audio-video recordings are for internal administrative use only.
5. Audio-Video recording of public areas for security and behavior purposes will be conducted in a manner consistent with all existing RPCS policies.
6. Audio-Video recording of public areas for security and behavior purposes at RPCS is limited to uses that do not violate the reasonable expectation of privacy and as agreed upon by signed enrollment and work documents giving permission to be so recorded at any and at all times while on our campuses.
7. Images of activities performed by employees, students, families and visitors in the workplace and that are captured/ recorded by RPCS audio-video devices may be used for any disciplinary or other employee work relations purpose as noted in agreements in force between RPCS and its employees, students, families and visitors. The use of audio-video recordings/captured images of the workplace for criminal or inappropriate behavior investigation purposes or as evidence for prosecution of criminal acts discovered in the workplace (i.e.: thefts, assaults, etc.) is granted by anyone entering our RPCS campus.
8. To maintain an informed RPCS student and staff community, we will periodically communicate the purpose and location of audio-video recording equipment and the guidelines for its use.
9. All existing uses of audio-video recording and surveillance are presently in compliance with this policy.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. The CVS (Committee on Audio-Video Surveillance) is the only agency authorized to oversee and coordinate the use of audio-video recording for safety and security purposes at RPCS. All RPCS areas using audio-video recording are responsible for implementing this policy in their respective operations.

CVS has primary responsibility for disseminating the policy and assisting others in implementing the policy and procedures.

2. The Church Council has authorized all audio-video recording for safety and security purposes at RPCS. All new installations will follow CVS's operating principles. All existing audio-video recording systems have been evaluated for compliance with this policy. In determining whether audio-video recording is advisable, the Church Council will consider, among other things, whether other security or safety measures may better address a particular security or safety concern.
3. CVS will monitor new developments in the relevant law and in security industry practices to ensure that audio-video recording at RPCS is consistent with any such developments.
4. The Church Council will review all requests to release recordings. No release of audio-video recordings will occur without authorization by the Church Council. Excluded from this review are those recordings directly related to a criminal investigation or arrest or releases required under a validly issued subpoena or other lawfully issued court order. Any request for release of recordings must be made in writing. Under no circumstances will any copy of audio-video recording be released directly to guardians, students or employees. Any saved copy of audio-video recordings will be maintained in a safe and secure vault and will be destroyed once any investigation is completed to the satisfaction of the Church Council, unless retention is required by any lawfully issued court order. Arbitration and Mediation consultants may request review of recordings but the Church Council is the final and sole determiner as to whether or not such a request is honored or denied. Under no circumstances is an arbitrator or mediator to remove such copy from the campuses. An appropriate staff member designated by the Church Council will be present at any review of audio-video recordings approved for arbitration or mediation services. No recording devices are to be used to re-record the original audio-video recordings.
5. CVS will review this policy annually and recommend revisions if needed.

### **Procedures:**

1. All RPCS personnel involved in the use of audio-video equipment and systems will perform their duties in accordance with this policy.
2. Any camera proposed/installed in any premise or public location on campuses must meet the standard as specified by CVS to ensure that all cameras and alarm devices integrate and are compatible with the RPCS network/IT infrastructure and Digital Audio-Video Recording (DVR) devices.
3. Any campus or other entity with cameras installed in their respective area(s) will be permitted viewer access to recorded images in real-time, only. The ability to provide access to any recorded image or to reproduce any recorded image shall rest solely with the Church Council.
4. Members of CVS or the Church Council are prohibited from disseminating any information acquired from the audio-video equipment, unless it is determined its dissemination would provide answers and/or justification to specific employee, student, family, visitor actions that may be relevant to issues the Church Council has been asked to review.

All information and/or observations made in the collection and use of audio-video equipment are considered confidential and can only be used for official RPCS business and rule enforcement business upon the approval of the Church Council.

5. Recorded events are stored temporarily on a DVR, unless retained as part of an investigation or court proceedings (criminal or civil), or other bona fide use as approved by the Church Council.

6. The DVRs maintained by RPCS are capable of storing images and sounds from networked cameras for a period of up to one (1) month (31 days), depending on the programmed settings and amount of image detail required. DVRs are programmed to automatically record over the oldest image once the hard drive reaches storage capacity.
7. Under no circumstances will copies of recordings be released to any guardian, student, employee or visitor. Guardians may be permitted to review audio-video recordings but only in the presence of an appropriate staff member granted that permission by the Church Council. Review of audio-video recordings by any guardian or student must have the permission of any and all persons that appear or are heard on the audio-video recording. If permission is not granted by all parties, permission to review the recordings will always be denied. Transcripts of specific portions of audio-recordings may be used, provided the identity of the individual(s) speaking cannot be determined through the transcript. Written permission from all the individual(s) must be received prior to the transcript being reviewed.
8. The Church Council has the sole and final determination of who may review recordings and is under no legal obligation to allow anyone to review recordings, unless so directed by a lawful court order.
9. The Church Council may choose to share transcripts of any portion of any audio recording it deems appropriate to fulfill its fiduciary functions and assigned responsibilities.

## **E. Hardware Policy Including Damage and Abuse Policy**

- Surface and other hardware devices owned by the students for use in education are the responsibility of students and families. The School is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen hardware or equipment.
- An immediate fee of \$10.00 will be automatically charged to a student's account for the use of a rented device when they are not prepared and are without their device to use during the school day, or in the case of not having a functioning device needed to complete schoolwork. Rented devices may include, but are not limited to Surface Pen, chargers, Surface or mobile devices for each day the items are rented. We cannot provide replacement batteries.
- If hardware owned by the school and used by students (including but not limited to robotics, 3D Printer, Virtual Reality, HoloLens or mixed reality, gaming equipment, mobile devices, electronics, equipment used for media and content creation, lighting etc.) is damaged, broken or removed from the premises without approval in advance, it is subject to fees, replacement by the parent, student or guardian found at fault for the damage or missing equipment. The fee will be assessed to the student account.
- Willful or malicious damage to school property, employee property, or other students' property attending the school, is the responsibility of the guardian.
- Students who do not have use of a device for any reason (including being taken away during school for inappropriate use or off-task behavior) will be responsible for completing their schoolwork on computers available in their home.
- Students are to bring their device fully charged at the beginning of each school day.
- Students may not install any unauthorized software on the laptop/tablet while on campus including but not limited to games, file sharing software, proxy or other software intended to defeat the School's web filtering. Violation of this policy may result in suspension of laptop/tablet utilization and returned to the user's guardians.

## XIV. FAMILY SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

At Renton Prep (the “School”), students may use social networking/media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, instant messaging, chats, blogs, etc.) as a way to connect with others, share educational resources, create educational content, enhance the classroom experience, and network within and outside of the school community. While social networking is fun and valuable, there are some risks we need to keep in mind when using these tools. In the social media world, the lines are often blurred between what is public or private, personal or professional.

Social media refers to online tools and services that allow any Internet user to create and publish content. Many of these sites use personal profiles where users post information about themselves. Social media allows those with common interests to share content easily, expanding the reach of their ideas and work. Popular social media tools include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, blogs, chats, and instant messaging, to name a few.

Below are guidelines to follow when families are representing the School in social media spaces, regardless of whether these are considered professional or personal spaces.

### **Use good judgment**

Behave in a way that will make you and others proud and reflect well on the school. Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all of the information you have shared on your social network is public information.

### **Be respectful**

Always treat others in a respectful, positive, and considerate manner.

### **Be responsible and ethical**

Share and interact in a way that will enhance your reputation, the reputation of others, and the reputation of the school, rather than damage them.

### **Be confidential**

Do not publish, post, or release information that is considered confidential or private. Online “conversations” are never private. Use caution if asked to share your birth date, address, and cell phone number on any website.

### **Respect private and personal information**

To ensure your safety, be careful about the type and amount of personal information you provide. Avoid talking about personal schedules or situations.

### **Never share or transmit personal information of other students, guardians, faculty, or staff online.**

While taking care when posting to safeguard people’s privacy, be sure – as necessary and appropriate – to give proper credit to sources. In cases of doubt, privacy should be the default.

### **Post images with care**

Respect brand, trademark, copyright information and/or images of the school.



## **Other general guidelines**

Families are responsible for their own behavior when communicating with social media. They will be held accountable for the content of the communications they state/post on social media locations. Students may not disrupt the learning atmosphere, educational programs, school activities and/or the rights of others.

**Inappropriate communications that may cause disruption to the educational program of the school or hurt others include, but are not limited to:** (1) confidential and/or sensitive information about a student; (2) bullying/cyber bullying; (3) defamatory or discriminatory statements or images; (3) proprietary information of the School; (4) infringement of intellectual property; and (5) illegal items and activities.

The School reserves the right to inspect, review, and retain electronic communications sent, displayed, received or stored on the **School's computers, network, files, systems, databases, software and media.**

The School reserves the right to inspect, review, and retain electronic communications sent, displayed, received or stored on the **Student's personal computers, electronic devices, networks, internet, electronic communications systems, and in databases, files, software and media that contain the School's information and data.**

The School reserves the right to inspect, review or retain electronic communications created, sent, displayed, received or stored on another entity's computer or electronic device when bringing and using another entity's computer or electronic device to the School location, event or connect it to the School's network and/or systems and/or that contains the School's programs, or the School's data or information.

The above applies no matter when the use occurs whether brought onto School property, to school events, or connected to the networks, or when using mobile commuting equipment, as well as by other means.

**STUDENTS SHOULD HAVE NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY IN ANYTHING THEY CREATE, STORE, SEND, RECEIVE OR DISPLAY ON OR OVER THE SCHOOL'S SYSTEMS AS DETAILED HEREIN**

# APPENDIX

## STATEMENT OF FAITH EXPLAINED

Significantly, the very first documents included in The Book of Concord are the three ancient ecumenical creeds compiled during the early, formative years of the Christian era – the Apostles' Creed (ca. third century A.D.), the Nicene Creed (fourth century A.D.), and the Athanasian Creed (fifth and sixth centuries A.D.). In addition, the Book of Concord includes Luther's Small Catechism (1529 A.D.) and the Augsburg Confession (1530 A.D.), and five other 16th century statements, including Luther's Large Catechism and the Formula of Concord.

Luther and the other writers of these confessions did not want to be doctrinal innovators. They, together with their contemporary descendants, maintain that we believe and teach nothing more and nothing less than what the Scriptures themselves teach and what Christians through the ages have always believed. We therefore consider ourselves to be catholic (small "c"), which means "universal." At the same time, we have always thought of ourselves as evangelical (in some countries, the Lutheran Church is still today referred to as simply the Evangelical Church), since the evangel --the Gospel, the good news of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world --is at the heart and core of everything we believe and teach. We Lutherans, therefore, can rightly be regarded as evangelical Catholics. Standing firmly in the tradition of the Trinitarian and Christological formulations of the 4th and 5th centuries, we believe that sinners are justified (declared right) with the Creator God by grace alone (*sola gratia*), through faith alone (*sola fide*), on the basis of Scripture alone (*sola scriptura*). These three great "Reformation *solas*" form a handy outline of what Missouri Synod Lutherans believe, teach, and confess.

### Grace Alone

At the heart of what we believe is the conviction that salvation is the free gift of God's grace (undeserved mercy) for Christ's sake alone. In 1530, the Lutherans confessed before Emperor Charles V in Augsburg, Germany, "Since the fall of Adam all men who are born according to the course of nature are conceived and born in sin" (Augsburg Confession II, 1). This "inborn sickness and hereditary sin" makes it utterly impossible for people to earn forgiveness. If salvation were dependent on human initiative, there would be no hope for anyone. "But God forgives our sins," says Luther in his Large Catechism (1592), "altogether freely, out of pure grace" (LC III, 96).

The basis for the grace of God that alone gives hope to sinners is the inseparable junction of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We believe, as Luther put it in his explanation of the second article of the Apostles' Creed, "that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person . . . not with gold or silver, but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death. . . ." (*Luther's Small Catechism with Explanations*, p.14).

We believe that the Scriptures teach that God's grace in Christ Jesus is universal, embracing all people of all times and all places. There is no sin for which Christ has not died. The Formula of Concord (1577) says, "We must by all means cling rigidly and firmly to the fact that as the proclamation of repentance extends over all men (Luke 24:47), so also does the promise of the Gospel that Christ has taken away the sin of the world (John 1:29)" (FC SD XI, 28). Therefore, there need be no question in any sinner's mind whether Christ has died for each and every one of his or her personal sins."

## Faith Alone

After years of struggle over this question, Luther finally discovered that the Scriptures teach that sinners are saved "through faith alone." God's grace is the sole basis of salvation for the sinner only when it is appropriated solely through faith.

The implications of salvation "through faith alone" permeate everything we Lutherans believe and teach. For example, we believe that the conversion of sinners is a gift of God and not the result of any human effort or decision. Lutherans therefore confess in the words of Luther's explanation of the third article of the Apostle's Creed: "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel." (*Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, p. 15).

"Through faith alone" also implies that it is only through the proclamation of the Gospel – in Word and Sacrament – that the Holy Spirit gives the gift of faith. The proclamation of the Gospel Word in public preaching therefore occupies a central position in our Lutheran theology. Missouri Lutheran churches are preaching churches. But we are also sacramental churches, for the sacraments -- Baptism and the Lord's Supper -- are the Gospel made visible.

We believe that Baptism has God's command and promise. Baptism is "the Word of God in water," Luther said (Smalcald Articles, Part III, V, 1). We believe that it is precisely in the baptism of infants, who are included in Christ's Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20), that we can see the full meaning of "through faith alone." We believe that those who deny that God gives faith to infants through Baptism, nevertheless in actuality deny salvation by grace alone (perhaps without intending to do so). God's action in Baptism, apart from any human initiative, creates and bestows the gift of faith through which the Christian lays hold of God's grace. We also believe that the Scriptures teach that the bread and the wine in the Lord's Supper are the true body and blood of Christ. Although we do not presume to understand how this takes place, we confess that in, with and under the earthly elements God gives the true body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Missouri Synod Lutherans therefore seek a balance in public worship between the proclamation of the Gospel in the Word and in sacrament. It is only through these "means of grace" that sinners are brought to faith in Jesus Christ and preserved in it.

Finally, "through faith alone" means that, to use a phrase Luther made famous, Christians are at the same time both sinners and saints (*simul justus et peccator*). Justification is an act, a declaration. It is not a process. Through faith in Christ, and only through faith, sinners are declared to be forgiven and perfectly right with God. This declaration is whole and complete, totally independent of any inherent goodness in us sinners. In short, because of God's act on the cross received through faith, we are, even as sinners, declared to be perfect saints in God's sight. However, this does not mean that forgiven sinners, when judged by God's law, do not continue to be sinners. We are not "perfectionists" in the sense of teaching that following conversion, Christians stop sinning. In contrast, "forgiveness is needed constantly," says Luther. "Because we are encumbered with our flesh, we are never without sin" (Large Catechism II, 54).

Because of our emphasis on justification through faith alone, we, as Lutherans, have sometimes been understood to advocate, or at least to condone, what the German Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer condemned as "cheap grace," that is, taking sin for granted and ignoring concern for a life of holy living. But such notions are a perversion of what we believe. "Love and good works must also follow faith," writes Melancthon, because "God has commanded them and [they are necessary] in order to exercise our faith"

(Apology of the Augsburg Confession IV, 74 and 189). In other words, we believe that good works are necessary – but they are not necessary for salvation. Because we believe that salvation is both "by grace alone" and "through faith alone," Lutherans refuse to give a logically satisfying answer to the age-old question of why some people are saved and others are not. We disagree with those, like Calvin, who teach that since salvation is God's free gift, hell for those who do not believe must be proof that God does not want everyone to be saved. In opposition to this view, we maintain that the Scriptures clearly teach that God desires all "to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4).

Yet we also disagree with those who answer the question "why some and not others" on the basis of something which human beings do or possess, as if the ultimate cause for salvation is our striving or cooperating or "deciding" for Christ. The Scriptures teach that all people by nature are "dead in ...transgressions and sins" (Eph. 2:1), utterly incapable of contributing anything to their conversion or salvation. If sinners, therefore, come to believe in Christ, this is the result of God's power at work in them. If they continue to reject the Gospel, this is their own fault. We do not regard this response as a "cop-out" but simply as faithfulness to what the Scriptures themselves teach about the doctrine of election. This brings us to the final *sola*, "Scripture alone."

## Scripture Alone

Luther's insight that salvation comes by grace alone through faith alone cannot be divorced from "on the basis of Scripture alone." For it was directly as a result of his commitment to Scripture that Luther came to rediscover justification by grace alone through faith alone. Together with his contemporaries, Luther held that the Bible is the Word of God and that it does not mislead or deceive us. Luther stated that Scripture alone is infallible; it "will not lie to you" (Large Catechism V, 76). While maintaining a deep appreciation for the catholic (universal) church, Missouri Synod Lutherans believe that Scripture alone is the final standard of what the Gospel is.

However, we also believe that confidence in the reliability of the Bible is not possible apart from faith in Jesus Christ. Christians believe what the Scriptures teach because they first believe in Jesus Christ. Christ is the object of faith, not the Bible. We believe that the inversion of this order compromises "Scripture alone" and results in rationalistic fundamentalism, as if an accepted demonstration of the Bible's truthfulness and reliability—perhaps a piece of Noah's ark, for example – could provide a foundation for faith in the Gospel. The Bible remains a dark book apart from faith in Christ, for He is its true content. However, when sinners are brought to faith in Him, Christ points them back to the writings of the prophets and apostles as the sole authoritative source for all the church believes, teaches, and confesses.

The key to understanding Scripture properly, we believe, is the careful distinction between the Law and the Gospel. *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel* is C. F. W. Walther's best-known book. The Law tells what God demands of sinners if they are to be saved. The Gospel reveals what God has already done for our salvation. The chief purpose of the Law is to show us our sin and our need for a Savior. The Gospel offers the free gift of God's salvation in Christ. The whole Bible can be divided into these two chief teachings. It is in the proper distinction between Law and Gospel by which the purity of the Gospel is preserved and the three *solas* of *Sola Gratia*, "grace alone," *Sola Fide*, "faith alone," and *Sola Scriptura*, "Scripture alone" are united.