

# Handbook

EXCELLENCE  
*in*



DECATUR HERITAGE

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

2011-2012

EXCELLENCE  
in  
**DECATUR HERITAGE**  
  
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

3802 Spring Avenue, SW  
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Decatur, Alabama 35601-0659  
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Finance Office .....	256-432-2691
Guidance Office .....	256-260-3312
After School Care.....	256-260-3315
Kitchen .....	256-260-3314
Gym .....	256-351-4277
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**Office Hours: 7:30am - 3:30pm**  
**Monday through Friday**

**Scott Mayo, Headmaster**



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# 2011-2012 CALENDAR

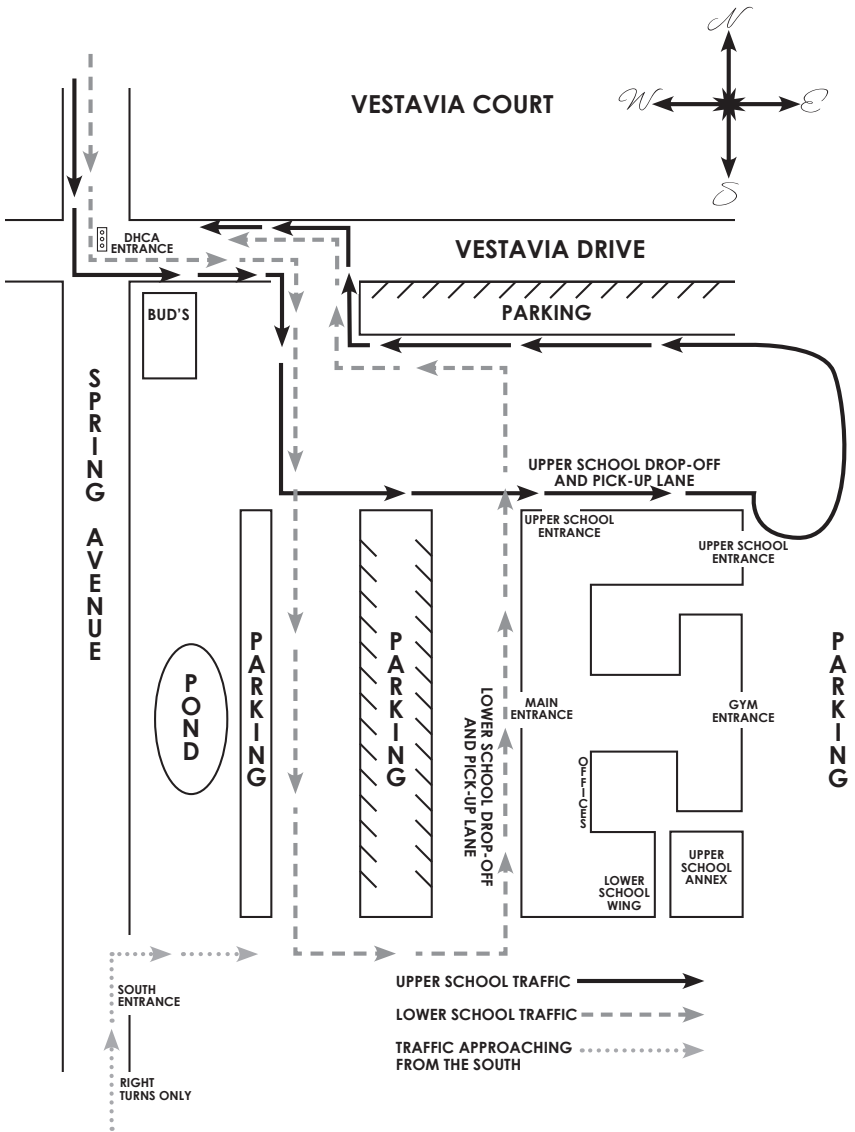
## Decatur Heritage Christian Academy

(This calendar is abbreviated and subject to change.)

August 11	First Day of School
September 5	Holiday – Labor Day
September 19	Progress Reports Issued
October 14	End of 1st Quarter
October 17	Fall Holiday
October 18	2nd Quarter Begins
October 24	Report Cards Issued
November 11	Veterans’ Day Holiday
November 21	Progress Reports Issued
November 23-25	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 14-16	Upper School Exams
December 16	End of 2nd Quarter - Classes Dismiss for Holidays
January 3	3rd Quarter Begins – Classes Resume
January 6	Report Cards Issued
January 16	MLK Holiday
February 2-3	Teacher Inservice – Student Holidays
February 6	Progress Reports Issued
February 20	Presidents’ Day Holiday
March 9	End of 3rd Quarter
March 12-16	Spring Holidays
March 19	4th Quarter Begins
March 23	Report Cards Issued
March 26-30	Stanford Achievement Testing
April 6	Good Friday Holiday
April 23	Progress Reports Issued
May 9-11	Senior Exams
May 11	Final Day for Seniors
May 21	Senior Graduation
May 23-25	Upper School Exams
May 25	End of 4th Quarter – Classes Dismiss for the Summer

# Campus Traffic Flow

## Campus Speed Limit 5mph



For guidelines concerning arrivals, dismissals, and parking, please see Articles 4.2 and 4.6 on pages 18-20

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Mission, Vision, and Values

**Mission** – The mission of Decatur Heritage Christian Academy is to assist families by providing their children with an education that is excellent and which instills Biblical principles to guide their lives.

**Vision** – As Decatur Heritage Christian Academy fulfills its mission, it will stand as a lighthouse to those seeking a Christ-centered place of excellence in academics, activities, and athletics – a place from which students can then launch into adult life equipped with the character and skills to navigate successfully.

**Values** – As Decatur Heritage Christian Academy endeavors to fulfill its mission and realize its vision, our ministry shall be characterized by a four-fold commitment:

1. **A Commitment to Spiritual and Scholastic Excellence.** With the Scripture as the basis of our teaching, we endeavor to motivate our students to excel spiritually and scholastically. In striving for this ideal, we are determined to utilize innovative technologies and to be highly selective in the curricular materials we choose.
2. **A Commitment to Christ-Centered Education.** Believing that Jesus is Lord of all life, we will communicate His love and His character to every student. We will be sensitive to His lordship and leading and dedicated to His call in our lives as educators.
3. **A Commitment to Integrity.** We believe that Christians must live honestly and responsibly and that we must emphasize this priority to our students.
4. **A Commitment to Relationships.** We are committed to building the strongest possible relationships with our school families, the churches to which they belong, and the community in which we all live. As leaders we recognize the need to be responsive to needs and to foster genuinely interactive communication.

## **1.2 Statement of Faith**

### **The Godhead**

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – these three being identical in essence, equal in power and glory and possessing precisely the same attributes and perfection.

### **The Holy Scriptures**

We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the verbally inspired Word of God, written by men under God's control, inerrant and infallible in the original manuscripts, and the final authority in faith and life.

### **The Condition of Man**

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God in innocence and without sin, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, became spiritually dead and alienated from God, and now man in and of himself is incapable of remedying his lost and depraved condition.

### **The Person and Work of Christ**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of a virgin, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. This redemption He accomplished by voluntarily giving Himself as a sinless substitutionary sacrifice on the cross, thereby satisfying God's righteous judgments against sin. After substantiating the accomplishment of that redemption by His bodily resurrection from the grave, He ascended to the right hand of His Father where he intercedes on behalf of those who trust Him.

### **The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Divine Person who convicts the world of sin, that He alone brings new life to those who are spiritually dead, and that He baptizes (or places) all believers into the one true Church, which is the Body of Christ, that He indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption, bestows spiritual gifts upon them and fills those who are yielded to Him.

## Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God's grace, freely bestowed upon all who put their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ at Calvary, apart from human meritorious work. All who so trust the Savior are forgiven of their sins and born into the family of God by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.

## 1.3 Implications of the Philosophy

### of Mission

The philosophy of mission espoused by Decatur Heritage Christian Academy may be summarized by four points outlined in the mission statement:

1. A community school
2. Assisting families
3. Providing academic excellence
4. A thoroughly Christian school

Students are taught the importance of being vital, contributing members of the community. DHCA seeks to establish a strong partnership with parents to maximize the educational influences of the home, church, and school. We promote high academic standards within the potential of the individual as uniquely created by God, and we desire to help the student realize his or her full academic potential. Education can most effectively be accomplished in an environment which recognizes that all truth is God's truth. The fear of the Lord is the foundation of all wisdom and knowledge. In the curricula, there is an emphasis on the unity of all truth and on the development of an eternal perspective for life. Students develop a Christian worldview by integrating life and studies with the Bible.

## 1.4 Academy Verses

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” Philippians 4:8 NIV (Grades K5-6.)

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11 NIV (Grades 7-12.)

## 1.5 Academy Colors and Mascot

The colors of silver, purple, and white were chosen as school colors by the student body. Silver represents maturity; purple symbolizes royalty; and white signifies purity.

The name “Eagles” was chosen because of this creature’s beauty, grace, and abilities. It is also the symbol of our country. The Biblical reference in Isaiah 40:31 is a constant reminder of these qualities: “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as an eagle, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”

## 1.6 Academy Divisions

- Kindergarten Programs: Age 5
- Lower School: Grades 1 – 6
- Upper School: Grades 7 - 12

## 1.7 Organizational Structure

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy is a ministry of the Alabama Alliance for Christian Education. This alliance is comprised of area churches that believe a Christian education should be available to the youth of our community. The Headmaster oversees the day-to-day operation of the school and reports to a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees that is entrusted with the mission of the school.

## 1.8 Web Site

Visit our website located on the internet at [www.dhca.org](http://www.dhca.org).

## 1.9 Notice of Non-Discriminatory Policy

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its policies.

## 1.10 Exception to Policies

An exception in a policy for one is not meant as an exception for another student. Decatur Heritage Christian Academy reserves the right to make exceptions to any policy as may be deemed necessary.

## 1.11 Effective Date

The policies in this handbook are effective for the entire current school year.

# 2.0 Admissions

## 2.1 Admission Policies

Selection of students is based upon achievement as demonstrated in a standardized assessment program, grades, the spiritual background of the family, interview(s) with the Site Principal, and the completion of the registration and enrollment process.

**Decatur Heritage Christian Academy will not admit students following suspension, expulsion, or dismissal from another school, public or private.**

The academic and social adjustment of new students will be reviewed after their first six to nine weeks and recommendations will be made at that time. Beginning kindergarten is a new adventure for parents and children alike. Because this is your child's first experience with school and our first experience with your child, we reserve the privilege to transfer students to another classroom as necessary to balance personalities and academic abilities. This "shuffle," which would occur within the first two weeks of school, would be implemented **only** if it were deemed to be the best, most positive solution to ensuring that balance. **All students are admitted on a probationary basis the first semester.**

Parents must read and sign the parent agreement. Students in grades 7-12 must read and sign the agreement as well.

## 2.2 Enrollment Procedure

Parents may call or visit the school office to obtain information about the school and/or further enrollment procedures.

1. Submit completed application form, a copy of the student's report card, a copy of test scores and

transcripts from the previous school, a copy of the birth certificate, a copy of the social security card, the original immunization record, and the required registration fee. **Please note: Potential students must go through the entire enrollment procedure before being accepted; space availability in a classroom does not guarantee admission. The registration fee will be refunded if the school does not accept the student.**

2. Once the above mentioned items have been received, the school will continue the enrollment process by scheduling and notifying parents of a testing date.
3. Following testing, an interview with the Site Principal will be scheduled with the parents.
4. Acceptance will be based upon the spiritual background of the family; the physiological, academic, social, and emotional well being of the student(s); and space availability.
5. Parents will be notified by a phone call and a letter as to the status of enrollment of their child(ren). Information regarding enrollment and the waiting pool is confidential.

## 2.3 Re-Enrollment

A re-enrollment application for the next school year will be provided to current students in the early spring. This early re-enrollment period gives priority to current families before enrollment is opened to the public.

**Decatur Heritage Christian Academy reserves the right to refuse re-enrollment to students or students of families who have demonstrated misconduct on or off school campus or disharmony regarding the purpose, standards, policies, regulations, or rules of the school.**

## 2.4 Enrollment of New Students

New students will be allowed to register for enrollment in DHCA after the priority re-registration for currently enrolled families. A registration package may be secured from the office.

## 2.5 Student Placement

**Requests made by parents for specific teachers will not be accepted unless special circumstances exist to warrant such a request.** Circumstances validating a teacher request must be detailed in a letter and submitted to the Site Principal for consideration.

Students will be randomly placed in a classroom by the administration in accordance with the following criteria:

- The importance of balancing the number of boys and girls;
- The importance of balancing the various academic abilities of students;
- The importance of balancing the different personalities and behaviors of students; and
- The importance of balancing the number of students per classroom at any given grade level.
- The Site Principal will give final approval of all class rosters.

## 2.6 Withdrawals

A student wishing to withdraw from school should report to the office on the morning of his/her last day of school. The parent must complete a withdrawal form. All books and athletic equipment must be returned in good condition and the student's financial account must be current.

**Tuition will be charged for the balance of the quarter regardless of the date of withdrawal.** Fees are not refundable. The school will hold report cards and/or transcripts until all fines, fees, and tuition are paid.

## 2.7 Disciplinary Dismissal from School

A student may be dismissed from school at any time he/she is found out of harmony with the rules and policies of the school. Decisions in these matters are the full responsibility of the administration and further reviews or appeals cannot be considered for at least six months. (See Section 10.9.)

## 2.8 Grievance Procedure

Matthew 18:15-16 gives us a clear model of how we should handle complaints, conflicts, or disagreements. “If a brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

It is our intention to be a support to the home and church. However, in any organization, there are always going to be disagreements and misunderstandings. If a conflict arises, the following procedure must be followed:

1. All questions, problems, or complaints must be brought directly to the teacher or staff member first before anyone else is involved.
2. If the situation is not resolved at this level through direct contact, it should then be brought to the applicable Site Principal.
3. If it is still not solved at this level, it should then be presented to the Headmaster for his consideration.
4. Finally, but only when all of the above three steps have been taken in order and without satisfactory resolution, the problem may be presented in writing to the Executive Committee of the Board.

# 3.0 Finances

## 3.1 Tuition

Tuition is due on an annual basis. That annual amount may be paid annually, semi-annually, or by the month by automatic bank draft from either a checking or savings account. In the event of an admission after the start of school, the tuition due will be prorated in increments of eighths of the annual amount. Payments are processed on the 5th or 20th of each month until the total balance due has been paid in full. If you miss a payment, you will be assessed a missed payment fee for each payment attempt.

Late notices shall be mailed by the Director of Finance between the 11th and 15th of each month. This notice is basically a cordial reminder.

A second late notice shall be mailed, via certified mail,

on or about the 25th of the month in which the default occurred. This notice shall remind the account holder of school policy that the subject child(ren) will be dismissed if the account is not brought current by the close of business of the 7th day of the next month, subject to the Headmaster's discretion until the next Board meeting as state below.

Board policy will not allow accounts to be delinquent more than one month in arrears. Therefore, accounts which are one month in arrears must be paid current by the 7th of the month (i.e., the delinquent month and the current month paid) or the student(s) may not be allowed to return on the 8th. Waiver of this policy will be granted only after a Board hearing. Under extreme or unusual circumstances at the discretion of the Headmaster, this specific policy may be temporarily waived and notification made to the Board of Trustees at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

All accounts must be current before grades or transcripts will be released. Re-enrollment will not be allowed until all balances are current. As per Section 2.6, in the event of any early withdraw, tuition will be charged for the balance of the quarter regardless of the date of the withdrawal. Questions concerning tuition and other financial details should be referred to the finance office.

## **3.2 Part-Time Enrollment**

Provided space exists in a given grade/classroom, Decatur Heritage Christian Academy will enroll home-schooled students. These students must meet all of the admission requirements and successfully negotiate the same admission steps as any other prospective student. The fee and tuition schedule will be determined by the course(s) in which the students are enrolled.

## **3.3 Fees**

The registration fee is due with the application for enrollment. A screening/testing fee will be charged for new students if testing is deemed necessary.

### 3.4 Textbooks

The school provides necessary annual textbooks and workbooks for classroom instruction. All books are to be returned to the teacher at the end of the school year in good condition. Students are required to pay for unnecessary damage to or loss of textbooks.

### 3.5 Planners

All students in grades 1-7 will be provided a planner at the beginning of each school year. Students are expected to use the planners to organize their daily activities making note of upcoming events, homework assignments and special projects. The intent of the planner is to teach organizational skills enabling students to be efficient, organized, and punctual.

### 3.6 Refunds

The registration fee is not refundable if the student decides not to attend Decatur Heritage Christian Academy.

Full refund of registration fee is made if a student is registered for the upcoming year, but the school decides, for whatever reason, not to accept the student for the following year.

Tuition is refundable to families before the beginning of school. **After the first day of school, parents are required to complete payment through the balance of the current quarter.**

Report cards and/or transcripts will be held by the school until all fines, fees, and tuition are paid. Questions concerning tuition, fees, and other financial details should be referred to the finance office.

### 3.7 Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy offers a yearly tuition assistance program for families in need of supplemental aid with tuition payments. Monies for the TAP account come from the annual school budget and the generosity of individuals, churches, and foundations that periodically provide funds. This assistance is limited with the final award being administered by a committee of the Board

of Trustees. For the sake of confidentiality, initial application is made through an outside screening service. Please contact the finance office if you desire more information and/or a TAP application form.

## 4.0 Operating Schedules

### 4.1 Office Hours

Administrative office hours are 7:30am until 3:30pm Monday through Friday one week prior to the first day of school and one week after the last day of school. The finance office will be open Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 3:30pm during the school year. During the summer, the offices will be open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:00am to 2:00pm.

### 4.2 School Hours, Parking, and Car Pool Guidelines

8:00am to 12:00 noon for Half-Day Kindergarten

8:00am to 3:00pm for Grades Full Day K-6

7:45am to 2:45pm for Grades 7-12

#### **Arrival of Upper School Students:**

Between 7:00am and 7:15am: Report to the cafeteria.

After 7:45am: Check in at the Upper School office to receive a pass to class.

#### **Arrival of Lower School Students:**

Between 7:00am and 7:55am: Report to the cafeteria.

#### **Parking**

Those wishing to walk their child into the building should park in a designated parking space. Please do not park and leave your vehicle in the car pool line. This is against fire code regulations and also causes delays in the arrival and dismissal procedures.

#### **Morning Car Pool Guidelines (Grades K5-6)**

The car pool guidelines and traffic patterns are designed to provide order, supervision, and maximum safety for the students.

- Observe the traffic flow patterns. (See page 7.)
- Keep the parking lot entrances/exits open.
- Students should be dropped off in the car pool lines.
- Students should exit a car on the building side only.
- Cars in line should move to the far end of the sidewalk.

#### **Afternoon Car Pool Guidelines (Grades K5-6)**

- Each kindergarten and Lower School family has been assigned a number printed on a yellow card.
- Keep this card each year while your students are in Lower School school.
- Display the card on the rearview mirror until you exit the car pool line.
- Those picking up children for more than one family will need to display car pool numbers for each family.
- If you do not have a number to display, it will be necessary for you to go the office and sign out your child.
- Students may be picked up in front of the Lower School building. Parents should enter the campus and follow the traffic flow illustrated on Page 7.
- Please do not block the parking lot entrances or leave cars in the line unattended.
- When the duty teacher advances the cars, please pull down to the end of the sidewalk.
- Students will remain in the building until their car pool number is called.

## **4.3 Extended Care Services**

Extended care services may only be obtained for students who attend on a regular basis and pay a monthly fee for such services.

Extended care is available from 12:00pm for K5 students and 3:20pm for grade 1-8 students until 5:30pm. K5 students not picked up by 12:15pm and 1st through 8th grade students not picked up by 3:20pm will be sent to extended care. Parents will be charged an hourly fee with payment required at the time of pick up.

Students staying in extended care during designated school holidays will be charged the current daily rate. Please contact the finance office 432-2691 for details.

## 4.4 Early Dismissals

Parents are asked to keep early dismissals at a minimum in order to ensure a quality teaching environment.

Generally, early dismissals are reserved for doctor, dental, and other essential appointments which could not be scheduled otherwise. Upon leaving campus or returning to campus after an appointment, students/parents must sign the check-in/check out form in the office. **To be dismissed, the student must be accompanied by the parent or have a written excuse. Approval of early dismissal will be at the discretion of the Site Principal. Consistent early dismissals may result in a mandatory meeting with the Site Principal.**

## 4.5 Inclement Weather Policy

In case of inclement weather, Decatur Heritage Christian Academy will **generally** follow the action taken by the Decatur City School System regarding the late opening or closing of school. If questionable, call the school office 351-4275 and the voice mail announcement will advise of closing or delay. Television stations WHNT 19, WAAY 31 and WAFF 48 will be notified of any changes in DHCA school closings or delays. A school-wide email will also be sent.

## 4.6 Automobiles on Campus

Anyone driving on campus should exercise extreme caution while maintaining a **maximum speed limit of 5 mph**. Reckless driving will rescind driving privileges. Students will be required to park in the gym area and the outer perimeter spots of the parking lot.

## 4.7 Cafeteria

Breakfast will be offered from 7:30 am to 7:45 am. Students may bring a lunch or order from the cafeteria. Menu items for both meals may include offerings from local restaurants. Menus, selection of meals, and payment will be one week in advance. Milk, juice, snacks, and ice cream may be purchased either daily or in advance. Vending machines are available in the cafeteria.

Students will not be allowed to charge food or drink purchases. If a student does not have a lunch, the cafeteria will provide a sandwich and carton of milk.

## 4.8 Telephone

Students who need to use the telephone in case of emergencies must secure a pass from his/her teacher to come to the office to place the call. Students must not use phones in the classrooms under any circumstances.

## 4.9 Electronic Devices

Cassette tape players, MP3 players, iPods, compact disc players, video games, video cameras, or games are not allowed at school during the school day. If these are brought to school, they will be collected and returned to the parent(s) at the Site Principal's discretion. Cell phones are to remain in the students' cars or lockers in the off setting. Use of cell phones during school hours without permission will lead to confiscation of the phone.

# 5.0 Illness

## 5.1 When a Student Becomes Sick

A student who becomes ill during the school day will be sent to the health room. Parents will be contacted and asked to make arrangements for an early dismissal.

Parents should keep students at home when they are sick. **Students should be symptom and fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.** (See Section 7.0.)

## 5.2 AIDS Policy

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy, like most schools in the country, is concerned about the spread of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) and the impact it could have on our school community. We, therefore, have developed the following policy to deal with students or employees who have positively acquired the disease and to educate our students about the disease itself.

### Education

It is in the best interest of our student body, parent body, faculty, and trustees to be educated fully on an on-going

basis about the transmission, symptoms, prevention, and treatment of the AIDS virus.

### **Advisory Panel**

The Headmaster will appoint an AIDS Review Panel which will be composed of a board member, an administrator, a teacher, and a physician with expertise in the area of AIDS. This panel will review each case on an individual basis to determine whether the infected student/employee should remain a member of the school community. The recommendations of the AIDS Review Panel are advisory only. The decision of the Headmaster on any health condition within the scope of this policy shall be final.

### **Essential Questions**

Each case will be reviewed independently of previous cases by the AIDS Review Panel. If the case involves a student, the student, family physician, parents, and other involved persons will be questioned by the panel. If the case involves an employee, both the employee and the employee's physician will be questioned. The following three questions must be answered: What is the physical condition of the student/employee? Is he/she capable of performing, on a daily basis, the expectations required of an enrolled student/hired employee? Is the student/employee capable of interacting with other school community members in a safe and constructive manner? If the decision allows the student/employee to remain enrolled/employed, the case must be reviewed on a regular basis. No one will be allowed to continue in a position which would expose students or employees to any significant risk of disease.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is always a point of concern in cases involving student, family, and employee-related matters. Confidentiality will be honored as permitted by law.

# 6.0 Parents and Visitors

## 6.1 Parent Visitation Policy

As a Christian institution, Decatur Heritage Christian Academy embraces a philosophy which views the educational process as a partnership with parents. The home, church, and school all work in unison, each supporting the other. We respect the teaching responsibilities parents have in the home, as well as the teaching which is done in our community churches by faithful pastors and church teachers.

Parental support is vital to a successful school and Decatur Heritage Christian Academy welcomes such support. It is understood that parents entrust their children to the school during stated school hours for formal instructions. In order to guard instructional time, all parents of students in grades K5-12 are asked to come to the office, and the office personnel will initiate contact with the student and the teacher. Parents are not allowed in the halls during the instructional day unless special circumstances exist. If special circumstances exist, a visitor's badge will be issued at the office. If a parent would like to eat lunch with his/her child, the parent should report directly to the office. Lunches are to be taken to the cafeteria by the parent. The teacher is the classroom authority and therefore, as much as possible, strives to maintain a classroom atmosphere free of distractions and always conducive to learning. The teacher has a variety of functions to perform each day and, within the restraints of time, must maximize his/her efforts by careful scheduling.

There are appropriate times for parents to be on campus. If parents are providing transportation for a field trip in grades K5-6, they are asked to meet in the main lobby and not in the hallways or classrooms. Parents may observe in the classroom. The Site Principal will schedule the observation with the teacher and then inform the parent of the scheduled date and time.

## 6.2 Student Visitors

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy students may bring visitors to school on the following conditions:

- 1) Permission must be secured from the school

- office one day in advance of the visit.
- 2) The visitor must be brought to the school office to be placed on the visitor's list before visiting classrooms.
  - 3) Each visitor must abide by all the school rules as to conduct and dress.
  - 4) Visitors will not be permitted during special testing times.

## 6.3 Homeroom Mothers

A homeroom mother is a volunteer who (1) works closely with the teacher, assisting in organizing and implementing activities determined by the teacher such as field trips, class parties, and events and (2) facilitates communication between the teacher and the classroom parents. The classroom teacher will complete all forms associated with field trips and parties and return to the Site Principal for processing and approval prior to finalizing. Teachers are asked to read and approve all information sent home to parents by the Homeroom Mother.

Each classroom in grades K5-6 will be represented by a Homeroom Mother chosen by the classroom/homeroom teacher.

Further details and information may be found in the Homeroom Mother's Handbook.

## 6.4 Cooperation with the School

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy believes that a positive and constructive relationship between the school and the parents/guardians is essential to the accomplishment of the school's educational mission. Decatur Heritage Christian Academy accordingly reserves the right to terminate or not renew a student's enrollment if the school reasonably concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make such a positive and constructive relationship impossible or otherwise seriously interferes with the school's accomplishment of its educational purposes.

It is reasonable to expect parents/guardians to agree (1) to cooperate with the administration of DHCA to see that the student attends classes regularly and is on school premises on time each school day, (2) to assist the student to learn and advance in the educational process, (3) to cooperate

in solving school-related problems and (4) to cooperate in aiding the teachers in providing the student with a Christian education.

## 6.5 Decatur Heritage Parent Association

The purpose of Parent Association is to promote and coordinate the involvement of parents in the educational development of their children, and their goal is to provide our teachers with the assistance they need to generate additional revenue for Decatur Heritage to purchase needed items for the school. A slate of officers (called the Leadership Committee) is selected by a nominating committee each year to oversee various projects and fund raisers. All parents and grandparents of students enrolled at DHCA are members of the Parent Association and are encouraged to participate in DHCA Parent Association functions and meetings.

The Parent Association Representative Committee will coordinate the Association functions, one representing K5-6th grades and another representing grades 7-12. The Committees will communicate information and enlist volunteers on behalf of the administration and the Parent Association.

# 7.0 Attendance & Tardies

## 7.1 Absences

Regular attendance is required by law and is necessary for good scholarship. **Regular and punctual attendance at Decatur Heritage Christian Academy is expected and required.** It is the parent's responsibility to request class work and homework assignments. By calling early morning, the teacher has time to prepare the assignments to be picked up at the end of the school day.

**When students return to school from either an absence or checking in or out, they must bring a written excuse from their parents or guardians.** The written excuse from the parent must list the date of absence and the reason for the absence from the list in Section 7.2. This excuse must be received 2 days from the date of return, or the absence is

permanently recorded as unexcused.

Students in grades 7-12 must give the excuse to the Upper School Secretary who will issue the students an Absent From Class form to submit to each of their teachers indicating an excused or an unexcused absence. This form serves as the student's admittance to class. If the student's form is not returned to each teacher within 2 days of the absence, the absence will be considered unexcused and a zero given for that day for each class missed.

In grades 7-12, absences for each class are listed on the student's report card. Students are allowed 10 absences per class each semester, without penalty. (See Section 7.4.) Any student in grades 7-12 who has more than 20 absences during the year places his/her promotion in jeopardy.

## 7.2 Absences-Excused

The following shall constitute valid excuses for temporary non-attendance for a partial or a whole day, provided satisfactory evidence of the excuse is provided to the school office.

1. Illness
2. Death in immediate family
3. Legal duties
4. Medical or dental appointment
5. Court or administrative proceedings
6. Educational opportunity with proper advance notice
7. Inclement weather conditions
8. Pre-approved, extended family trip submitted in advance to the Site Principal (form available in the administrative office)
9. Emergencies or other circumstances which are approved by the Headmaster.

## 7.3 Absences-Unexcused

Any absence from school which is not listed in Section 7.2 is classified as an unexcused absence. Students having an unexcused absence will receive a zero for the day in every class. (See Section 10.6.)

## 7.4 Excessive Absences

Any student in grades 1-6 who accumulates more than 20 absences during the year is subject to being retained the next school year. Partial day absences will be considered as part of this policy.

**Upon exceeding 10 absences (either excused or unexcused) in a class period in a semester, Upper School students and their parents must schedule a conference with the Site Principal to evaluate student progress and discuss possible sanctions including potential loss of credit for the class.**

## 7.5 Absences-School Initiated

Absences which are school-initiated and administratively approved are not counted toward the absences allowed per semester. School scheduled field trips, athletic team early dismissal, fine arts competition, etc., are examples of school-initiated activities.

## 7.6 Check-In/Out

Upper School students arriving after 7:45a.m. and Lower School students arriving after 8:00a.m. must check-in at the office to receive a pass to class. Within two days, they should submit a written excuse from their parent or guardian to the Site Principal who will issue the student a form to submit to the class(es) that they missed. If the excuse is not returned within two days, the absence from class will be unexcused. The same procedure will be followed for all early dismissals. Students will be allowed to be checked out only when their parent or legal guardian comes in and signs them out from the office. Students who drive will be allowed to check themselves out of school provided the office can verify with the parents and/or confirm the reason. Parents must list their student's name on the Pick Up Authorization Card. Students may not leave with other student drivers.

## 7.7 Tardy Defined

Any Upper School student not in his/her designated classroom for each period when the bell rings is considered tardy and will be counted absent from the class if he/she is 30 minutes late to class.

## 7.8 Make-Up Work

A student who is granted an excused absence will be responsible to arrange with his/her teacher(s) to make up missed work. The arrangement for the makeup work must be made the day the student returns to school. A student will be given a reasonable number of days to turn in his work, usually one day for each class missed. Tests or quizzes for students must be made up within a week at the convenience of the teacher. Remember, it is the student's responsibility to see that the work is done before the deadline expires. If a doctor's excuse can be provided, an extension will be considered by the administration.

## 7.9 Tardy Penalty for Upper School

Each quarter, students will be allowed three morning tardies, regardless of the circumstances. Upon the fourth tardy, the student will be required to arrive at 7:30 a.m. the following day. Upon the fifth tardy (and all subsequent tardies for the quarter), the student will be required to arrive at 7:15 a.m. for the following day, regardless of the circumstances. Habitual tardiness is disruptive to the class as a whole and places the student at an academic disadvantage.

# 8.0 Academics

## 8.1 Lower School Course of Study (Grades K5-6)

Bible	Language Arts	Geography/History
Reading	Spelling	Physical Education
Technology	Writing	Media Center
Mathematics	Art	
Science	Music	

## 8.2 Upper School Course of Study (Grades 7-12)

### Core Subjects:

English	History	Bible
Math	Science	

### Electives and Other Required:

Spanish	Art	Music
Russian	Yearbook	Drama
Technology	Logic	Robotics
Physical Education	Speech	Forensics

## 8.3 Retention (Grades 1-6)

Students receiving an “F” in any 3 academic subjects are automatically retained.

If a student receives an “F” in reading or math, he/she will not be promoted without approved tutoring and testing in the summer. An evaluation of the academic progress of all students will be conducted in early spring. If the teacher in consultation with the Site Principal recommends retention, a conference with the parent will be arranged to discuss the student’s placement for the following year.

## 8.4 Retention (Grades 7-8)

Failure of 3 or more subjects (yearly average) automatically requires retention. Students will be required to be remediated through an approved summer school and/or approved tutoring. Any student receiving below a 70 yearly average in math will not be allowed to advance to the next level without completing school-approved summer school or tutoring.

## 8.5 Retention (Grades 9-12)

Upper School students will receive credit based on their semester average in each subject. Students will receive 1/2 credit each semester in any given subject. (See Section 8.16.)

Any student receiving below a 70 end-of-year average in math will not be allowed to progress to the next level without completing school-approved summer school or tutoring. Seniors with a semester average below a 70 but above a 59 will pass with credit.

## 8.6 Grading Scale for K5

### Academic

E = Excellent  
VG = Very Good  
A = Average  
N = Needs to Improve  
U = Unsatisfactory

### Conduct/Effort

VG = Very Good  
S = Satisfactory  
N = Needs To Improve

## 8.7 Grading Scale for Grades 1-6

### Academic

A = 90-100  
B = 80-89  
C = 70-79  
D = 60-69  
F = 0-59

### Enrichment

O = Outstanding (participation, enthusiasm, talent)  
G = Good (participation, enthusiasm)  
S = Satisfactory (participation)  
U = Unsatisfactory (no participation)

### Growth in Character

O = Outstanding  
S = Satisfactory  
U = Unsatisfactory

## 8.8 Grading Scale for Upper School

### Academic

A+ = 100-99  
A = 98-94  
A- = 93-90  
B+ = 89-87  
B = 86-84  
B- = 83-80  
C+ = 79-77  
C = 76-74  
C- = 73-70  
D+ = 69-67  
D = 66-64  
D- = 63-60  
F = 59 –Below  
I = Incomplete

### Effort/Conduct Codes

#### for Grades 7-12

1. Excellent effort
2. Commendable work
3. Work has improved
4. Needs to improve
5. Assignments incomplete or missing
6. Does not work to potential
7. Needs to pay attention
8. Wastes time in class
9. Excessive talking
10. Disruptive in class

## 8.9 Grade Point Averages

### Regular Courses

A = 4.0

D = 1.0

B = 3.0

F = 0

C = 2.0

## 8.10 Report Cards and Exams

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy issues report cards at the end of each nine-week grading period. Exams will be given to all students in grades 7-12 each semester for each core subject. Semester exams for grades 7-8 will be weighted as a test grade for the quarter in which the exam is administered. For grades 9-12, each nine-week quarter grade is 40% of the students' semester grade and exams are 20% of the semester grade. Seniors who maintain a subject average of 85 or above for those core subjects for both first and second semesters will be allowed to exempt second semester exams in those subjects. Report cards for grades 7-12 may be mailed in a self-addressed stamped envelope if provided by the parent or may be picked up in the Upper School office. Lower School report cards will be issued the last day of school.

## 8.11 Progress Reports

Progress reports are issued at the mid-point of each quarter to keep parents informed of their child's academic progress. This report must be signed by the parent or guardian and returned within three school days.

## 8.12 Curriculum

The faculty, administration, and board work together to select the best available textbooks and supplementary materials for each grade. Both Christian and secular textbooks are considered. These resources are then implemented by the faculty with the desire to present each subject from the standpoint of a Christian worldview. Oftentimes, a secular text, based on content and emphasis, gives the faculty the best opportunity to present a discipline while also pointing out non-Biblical assumptions and philosophies. Certainly, the grade level and spiritual maturity of the student are considerations, as well. For uniformity and memorization, the King James and the New International Versions are used for our Bible courses.

## 8.13 Kindergarten Graduation

A graduation ceremony is held at the end of the school year for those students completing our K5 program.

## 8.14 Upper School Graduation Requirements

A graduation ceremony is held at the end of the school year for those students successfully completing the following requirements and earning 25 credits.

	<u>Credits</u>
<b>English Language Arts</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Four credits to include the equivalent of:	
English 9.....	1
English 10.....	1
English 11.....	1
English 12.....	1
<b>Mathematics</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Four credits to include the equivalent of:	
Algebra I .....	1
Geometry.....	1
Algebra II.....	1
<b>Science</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Four credits to include the equivalent of:	
Biology.....	1
Chemistry.....	1
<b>Social Studies</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Four credits to include the equivalent of:	
World History.....	1
U.S. History .....	2
Government .....	1/2
Economics .....	1/2
<b>Bible</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Physical Education</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Fine Arts</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Computer Applications</b> .....	<b>.5</b>
<b>Foreign Language</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Speech</b> .....	<b>.5</b>
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	<b>25</b>

## **8.15 Honors Recognition**

Students achieving a cumulative 4.0 GPA will graduate Summa Cum Laude. Students achieving a cumulative 3.75 GPA will graduate Magna Cum Laude. Students achieving a cumulative 3.5 GPA will graduate Cum Laude. These honors will be recognized at the commencement ceremony.

## **8.16 Dropping/Adding Classes in Grades 7-12**

Students who choose to drop a course may do so without penalty if request is made by the 10th school day. The procedure for dropping a subject should be initiated by the parent filling out the Drop-Add Form and securing the teacher's permission. Final approval is subject to administrative permission.

## **8.17 Summer School**

Summer remediation for failed courses during the school year must be approved by the administration if the credit is to be transferred to Decatur Heritage Christian Academy.

## **8.18 6th Grade Orientation**

Each spring, 6th grade students will have an opportunity to visit the Upper School for a time of orientation to 7th grade.

## **8.19 Extracurricular Eligibility Requirement**

This requirement pertains to athletics and all other extracurricular activities. Note: Portions of the following are direct quotes from the Bylaws of the Alabama High School Athletic Association (Sections 9 and 10), except in areas where the DHCA standards exceed those of the AHSAA (i.e. adding Bible to the list of courses considered core curriculum).

## Initial Eligibility

SECTION 9. Students entering the 10th, 11th and 12th grades must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least six new Carnegie units (including Bible) with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those six (including Bible) units. The five core curriculum courses must be included in those units passed and averaged. English, mathematics, science, social studies, and Bible are core curriculum courses.

Students entering the 8th and 9th grades must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least five new full Carnegie units (and Bible) with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those five (6 including Bible) units or subjects and must have been promoted to the next grade. Students entering the 7th grade for the first time are eligible. Note: A new unit is one that has not been previously passed.

The eligibility of a student who has attended another school during the preceding year must be established by a transcript from that school before the student is permitted to participate at the new school.

For eligibility purposes, extra work, make-up work, review, etc., may not be counted, only one unit in physical education per year may be counted, and a maximum of two units or subjects may be earned in any organized summer school which is approved by the State Department of Education. If a unit or subject is repeated in summer school, the higher numerical grade for that unit or subject may be used to compute the composite grade average. Accredited correspondence courses may be accepted by a school system but must be completed and the grade received before the school year starts.

SECTION 10. A student that transfers from an out-of-state school must have been eligible academically at that school in order to be declared eligible at an AHSAA member school for the remainder of the school year.

## Continued Eligibility

Students with less than a 70 (C-) average in their five core subjects for a nine-weeks grading period or students with an

F (59) in a core subject will be placed on academic probation for the following nine weeks. Students with two consecutive quarters of probation may not be eligible for continued enrollment and/or reenrollment. Students on probationary status will become ineligible for extracurricular activities on the date of the issuance of the quarterly report cards. Eligibility may be restored for the balance of the quarter given a satisfactory mid-quarter progress report showing a core average of at least 70 with no grade of F.

#### Daily Eligibility

Students must be in attendance for at least 50% of the assigned periods on the day of extracurricular competition or practice in order to participate in those activities.

## 8.20 Homework

Homework is an integral part of the school program. Each teacher is at liberty to give homework to aid students in their studies. In deference to various church-related activities, the school will assign minimal to no homework on Wednesday nights. Students are expected to complete homework assignments on time.

Homework is given for several purposes. First, homework is assigned for drill. Most students require solid drilling to master material essential to their educational process. Secondly, homework is assigned for practice. Following classroom explanation, illustration, and drilling on new work, homework is given so the material will be mastered. Thirdly, homework may be assigned for special projects such as book reports, compositions, special research assignments, and projects.

## 8.21 Technology Labs

Students in grades K-6 are scheduled into the Lower School technology lab on a weekly basis. Students may use the computers at times other than the scheduled periods provided a teacher supervises them. Teachers may reserve the computer lab after hours.

## 8.22 Media Center

Books are checked out for a two-week period. A 5¢ per day fine will be levied on all overdue books. Any student who loses a book will be charged the price of replacing the book plus a \$1.00 processing fee.

## 8.23 Lower School Enrichment

The Lower School offers enrichment classes in technology, media center, art, music and physical education. These classes complement the strong academic program and allow students an opportunity to develop their special gifts. Students receive grades in the enrichment classes reflecting their participation, enthusiasm, and talent.

## 8.24 Special Activities

All programs, socials, outings, parties, skits, and other activities are to be approved by the administration.

## 8.25 Class Trips and/or Athletic Trips

Teachers plan field trips which, for the most part, are of an educational nature related to the curriculum. The teacher should complete the field trip form and receive approval from the Site Principal before any arrangements are made. The homeroom mother may assist with permission slips and arrangements after the field trip form has been approved and cleared with the school calendar. All communication with parents should be read and approved by the teacher. Students who do not come to school to go on a class trip will be counted absent for the day. **In grades 7-12 athletic team members are not permitted to drive other team members to or from athletic events off campus. No student is permitted to drive other students on field trips.**

# 9.0 Dress Code

## 9.1 Rationale

Providing a quality Christian education for the youth of our community is a cooperative effort involving the home,

church, and school. The home-school relationship is forged as parents and teachers work together.

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy's mission statement clearly defines two very important facts:

1. We are a community school assisting families.
2. We strive to provide an education which is academically excellent and Christ-centered.

Presenting a Christian lifestyle must take appropriate emphasis in the area of dress. The dress code is one of the first rules of the school to which a new student must respond. Just as students would dress one way for a picnic and another way for church, there is an appropriate way to dress for school. The enforcement of the school dress code should, therefore, be shared by the home and not solely the responsibility of the school. A proper understanding and appreciation of the school dress code is essential to the home-school relationship, and, therefore, expectations must be the same.

## 9.2 Personal Appearance

One's dress and appearance have been a personal and important issue assuming a certain amount of independence in the choice of clothing. The following assumptions govern our thinking:

1. Your appearance reflects your values. In many ways, you become what you look like. Naturally, we do not want your appearance to conflict with the values associated with our school.
2. Your appearance affects your behavior and that of your peers. If your appearance is excessive or draws attention to itself in some way, then you are a distraction to the tasks at hand, which are education and maturity.
3. Your appearance sets the tone in our environment. Since clothing influences mentality, and appearances affect group living, our standards of dress aid in shaping the overall climate of the place in which we operate.

## 9.3 Guidelines

**Grades K-5:** Modest, age-appropriate clothing should be worn by students in grades K5-5th grade.

**Grades 6-12:** The key idea is that students should be neatly groomed and clothing should be in good taste and modest.

- Tight fitting, worn-out or sloppy clothing is not permitted.
- Exposed midriffs are not allowed.
- Shorts and pants must be hemmed; no “cut-offs” or frayed edges are allowed.
- Shorts and skirts must be within 2” of the knee for all students in Grades 6-12.
- Jogging suits, wind suits, and overalls are permitted provided they are loose fitting.
- Blouses and shirts must not be low cut or revealing with no see through or sheer tops. Sleeveless shirts must have wide (3”-4”) straps.
- Clothing may not contain any offensive or inappropriate wording or images.
- No body piercing for boys and girls with the exception of pierced ears for girls.
- Hats are not to be worn at school except when special permission is granted.
- Extremes in hairstyles are to be avoided.
- Boys are to wear shirts that are tucked in. Allowable exceptions are sweaters and sweatshirts.

**Violation of Dress Code:**

Students in the Lower School (K5-6) will be warned for the first offense and, in extreme cases, the parent will be called to bring a change of clothes. Subsequent violations will result in disciplinary referrals to the Site Principal. Students in grades 7-12 will be given a disciplinary referral to the Site Principal.

If the violation is considered immodest, the student will be required to change before returning to class. (See Section 10.6.)

## 9.4 Chapel Dress Code

Students in all grades may wear their normal school clothes on chapel day.

## 9.5 Competition Guidelines

Students representing Decatur Heritage Christian Academy and participating in fine arts presentations, club trips, or athletic events may be required to follow a specific dress code as deemed appropriate for the occasion. The required dress guidelines will be announced in advance by the sponsors or coaches. Apparel should be appropriate to the activity and to the age of the student.

**Physical Education Uniforms:** Students in grades 7-12 will be required to wear a school-approved physical education uniform for all physical education classes. Failure to dress in the appropriate uniform will result in a lower grade.

**Special Occasions:** Some occasions require young men to wear shirts and ties and young ladies to wear nice dresses.

# 10.0 Discipline

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy reserves the right to suspend or expel a student for misconduct which occurs on or off school campus and without regard for whether the form of misconduct is identified specifically herein and without regard for whether it is specified as improper off campus.

While Decatur Heritage Christian Academy has no control or supervision over off-campus student activities, which are not school-sponsored, misconduct during such activities may come to the attention of school authorities and may result in the administration of discipline including suspension or expulsion.

## 10.1 Philosophy of Discipline

The Bible clearly indicates that parents are responsible for the discipline (that is, training or instruction) of their children. Ephesians 6:4 stresses that it is within the home that parents are able to “bring them up in the nurture (discipline) and admonition of the Lord.” Proverbs echoes with many encouraging words for parents to “Train up their children in the way they should go...” The Christian school exists to assist parents in their God-given responsibilities. Therefore, Decatur Heritage Christian Academy seeks not to assume a task, which God gives to parents but only to serve as the parents’ appointed and authorized representatives in the child training process in a limited way.

In formulating a philosophy of education and discipline, Decatur Heritage Christian Academy has attempted to align itself as closely as possible with the Bible's instructions to parents. If parents have chosen to follow a different course in directing and disciplining their children, then parents and students should realize that Decatur Heritage Christian Academy may not be the choice in education that suits their needs.

Discipline may be correctly viewed as both a process and a product. God expects parents or other authorities to discipline children so as to produce a child who consistently becomes more self-disciplined, requiring less supervision as he matures. Then, as a self-disciplined adult, the process begins again as that adult, qualified by his self-discipline, assumes the role of training the next generation. God's ultimate purpose in charging parents with this task is to prepare children to enter into and to mature within His spiritual family, and to respond to Him with respect and obedience on the basis of their former training by their parents.

God-given responsibilities in the discipline process exist not only for parents and teachers; they exist likewise for students. During school hours and at other school related and school supervised functions, students are to respond to school faculty and supervisory staff members with the same obedience, respectfulness and spirit that should be present under Biblical standards as they respond to their parents or guardians. Any failure to maintain a Biblical attitude of respect and obedience toward school authority, which manifests itself in improper behavior or violated standards, will result in disciplinary action appropriate for the violation. Decatur Heritage Christian Academy expects parents to support the administering of such disciplinary action by at least encouraging obedience and respect to the action of the school.

Only while operating within the above philosophy of discipline can the educational process reach its maximum potential.

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy is committed to the philosophy and principles of Christian education. Student conduct which works against school philosophy will not be condoned. The guidelines listed in this discipline section are based on Christian principles, appropriate standards of conduct, and common sense. Guidelines provide boundaries for security and freedom. We trust that our students will

respond with positive attitudes and conduct.

All students are subject to any other applicable guidelines listed in the student conduct or discipline section of this handbook.

The school has the right to search automobiles, backpacks, purses, pockets, lockers, desks, and persons upon suspicion of illegal or unauthorized materials. Such searches may be conducted with or without the student's or the parents' permission, since registration of the child constitutes parental consent to such searches.

## 10.2 Classroom Conduct

To ensure unity and consistency, teachers and students are expected to adhere to the following classroom ideals at all times.

### Be Responsible:

**To Be Prompt** – You should be in your assigned seat and have your textbook opened and all assignments ready to be turned in when the bell rings.

**To Be Prepared** – You should come completely prepared for class with all materials (e.g. books, class notebooks, pens, pencils, paper, assignments, papers to be signed, etc.). Turn in all work neatly and on time.

**To Have Permission** – You should remain quiet in your seat and speak only when recognized by the teacher. Do not leave your seat for any reason without permission. Do not speak out or talk at all without permission. Raise your hand and sit quietly waiting to be recognized.

### Be Respectful:

**To Others** – You should display respect through your attitudes and actions to all faculty, staff, guests, and other students and should not disturb or distract others in any way. There should be no public display of affection, no horseplay, mischief, or irresponsible behavior. Keep your hands and feet to yourself. Realize horseplay, mischief, and irresponsible behaviors are not part of a quality learning environment. The student should realize that these types of behavior are not part of a quality learning environment.

**To Authority** – You should give your full attention to the teacher; avoid daydreaming, putting your head down on the desk, and wasting class time. This includes not bringing other materials to class which could distract you (e.g. toys,

games, magazines, newspapers, homework due in other classes). Administrators, teachers, parents, and special guests should be responded to with yes, ma'am; no, ma'am; or yes, sir; no, sir. This further promotes a respectful environment in our school.

**To Property** – You should respect the property of Decatur Heritage Christian Academy and not misuse or deface it (e.g. sitting on desks, drawing on desks, books, furniture, or walls). Likewise, refrain from eating, drinking, chewing gum and personal grooming while in the classroom. You should also respect the property of others by not touching their property without specific permission.

## 10.3 Discipline in a School Setting

### Self-Discipline

Any discussion of discipline must begin with self-discipline. As you mature, you need to become less dependent on rules to govern your behavior and more dependent on your own ability to do what is right. Our process, then, is based upon your personal integrity and your willingness to practice self-control. We trust that you will grow in your ability to confront yourself regarding your own behavior and that you will need school discipline less and less.

### School Discipline

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy cannot effectively solve all behavior problems. Therefore, the home must contribute and assist the school in solving some behavior problems. One of the purposes of Decatur Heritage Christian Academy is to be an extension of the Christian home in providing a complementary standard of discipline to the standard of discipline in the home. Our teachers in their ministry of teaching will love, care, and correct students, hopefully as the parents do in the home.

The authority figures need to apply school discipline when a student exercises poor judgment, is uncooperative, or is disruptive in some way. The teacher is the authority in the classroom and is charged to maintain the control and discipline necessary to establish a quality learning environment. The administration enthusiastically supports the teacher in this disciplinary role and will become involved whenever it appears that student disruption and lack of cooperation warrant this attention, whether due to willful

disobedience or to behavior related to any type of learning disability.

Teachers are encouraged to be consistent in their disciplinary actions and to keep the discipline in line with the offense, with the goal in mind of helping students move toward more self-discipline. Decatur Heritage believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and parents/guardians is essential to the accomplishment of our stated mission. The school accordingly reserves the right not to renew a student's enrollment if it reasonably concludes that such a positive working relationship is not possible.

## **10.4 Corporal Discipline Policy**

Corporal discipline has a biblical mandate. Proverbs 22:15 clearly states that, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him," and Proverbs 13:24 says, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."

However, corporal discipline is not an option at Decatur Heritage Christian Academy. In our desire to assist our parents in the education and discipline of their children, we recognize that some methods are beyond the school's mandate. If it becomes apparent over time that the only effective method of restraint and discipline for a student is corporal in nature, that student will be dismissed from the school.

## **10.5 Lower School Discipline Procedures**

### **• Minor Infractions**

The Lower School implements assertive discipline procedures. Each teacher of grades K5-6 writes his/her classroom rules and consequences. These rules and consequences are posted in the classroom, taught to the students at the beginning of each semester, and communicated to the parents at the beginning of the school year. Various methods of training and correction are used.

- **Disciplinary Referrals to the Principal**

Repeated violations or violations of a more serious nature may be referred to the principal. The Site Principal reserves the right to implement various disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, warning, timeout, loss of recess, in-school suspension (ISS), and, in severe cases, suspension.

- **Serious Infractions**

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy reserves the right to suspend any student for a serious infraction of school rules. All suspensions will be determined by the administration. Suspensions will generally take place the day following notification to the student and the parents.

Suspensions will be given for a period of 1-5 days. A suspension is considered an absence from class. During a suspension, the student is required to complete the work assigned by his/her teacher(s). All work must be turned in the day the student returns. If all or a portion of the work assigned is missing or incomplete, the student will receive the grade earned and no extra time to complete the work will be allowed. Students are not allowed on school grounds during a suspension. The student accompanied by an adult must meet with the Site Principal the day the student returns and prior to admission back to his/her classroom. The Site Principal will accompany the student to the classroom provided proper procedures have been followed.

The principal has the right to classify offenses and execute discipline.

## 10.6 Upper School Discipline Procedures

- **Minor Infractions**

In the book of Proverbs, the goal is stated as attaining wisdom and discipline; acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young (Proverbs 1:2-4).

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child (Proverbs 22:15a) and the purpose of discipline is to correct and train. Minor offenses are those which stem from the immaturity and ignorance of a child (as opposed to deliberate disobedience

and/or defiance of school rules and personnel). These minor offenses distract from the educational process, but they are not overly disruptive.

**Minor offenses include, but are not limited to:**

1. Disobeying classroom rules
2. Being irresponsible
3. Tardiness
4. Violation of dress code
5. Running or horseplay in the building
6. Not following direct instructions
7. Unauthorized eating in the classroom or hall
8. Inappropriate public displays of affection
9. Littering
10. Any other offense which the Site Principal may reasonably deem to fall within this category

Minor offenses may be treated as major offenses when the behavior is continually repeated after correction has been given.

**Disciplinary Means will include but are not limited to:**

1. Verbal correction to students regarding their actions
2. Counseling by teacher
3. Cooling-off or time-out period
4. Conference with teacher, Principal/Headmaster
5. Students may be asked to call a parent in the presence of a teacher
6. Disciplinary Referral\*
7. Behavioral contract with student
8. In-School suspension for repeated or particularly severe minor offenses\*\*

**\*Disciplinary Referrals**

1. The teacher (or administrator) completes a Disciplinary Referral Form.
2. The teacher calls the parent(s) to inform of the offense except for a minor offense. The teacher writes on the referral an explanation of the offense as well as the time, date, and response of the parent(s).
3. The teacher gives the referral to the Site Principal.
4. After the Site Principal assigns the appropriate consequence, a copy will be given to the student as well as a copy will remain on file in the office and a copy given to the teacher.

## **\*\*In-School Suspensions**

Even minor offenses can be a serious problem if they become a pattern of behavior. In those cases, an in-school suspension may be assigned. The student will come to school as normal and then report to the office. The time will be spent working on the classroom assignments for the day. Parents will be required to meet with the Site Principal before the student may return to the classroom.

### **• Serious Infractions**

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy reserves the right to suspend any student for a serious infraction of school rules. All suspensions will be determined by the administration. Suspensions will generally take place the day following notification to the student and parents.

Suspensions will be given for a period of 1-5 days. A suspension is considered an absence from class. During a suspension, the student must do all required work assigned by his/her teachers. The student will receive a zero if, upon return to class, work is not complete. The student will not be allowed on school grounds during suspension. The student may not participate in any extra-curricular activities during suspension. In order to return to school, the student must be accompanied by a parent or guardian and meet with the Site Principal before returning to class. The following lists are not all-inclusive; the Headmaster or Site Principal has the right to classify offenses and to execute discipline.

### **Offenses (Serious)**

1. Repeated minor offenses
2. Repeated detentions
3. Disruptive behavior
4. Gambling
5. Lying or cheating (also covered in Major Infractions)
6. Lying or cheating on any test, assignment, class work or homework, copying another student's work, (class work, homework, assignment), plagiarism, or knowingly allowing someone to copy your work.
7. Skipping class
8. Leaving school without permission
9. Profane or abusive language
10. Disrespectful conduct
11. Defiance to authority
12. Fighting on school property or at school functions

13. Battery upon students
14. Simple assault
15. Threat, harassment, bullying, or intimidation
16. Smoking or possession of tobacco products either on or off campus during the school day or at school functions
17. Stealing, larceny, petty theft
18. Destruction of property/vandalism with malice
19. Any other offense which the Headmaster or Principal may reasonably deem to fall within this category

### • **Major Infractions**

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy reserves the right to expel any student for a major infraction of school rules. All expulsions (permanent dismissal from school) will be administered by the Headmaster. Appeal of an expulsion may be made in writing to the Headmaster within 3 days of the expulsion. Such appeals will be considered by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. Students may not attend classes during request for an appeal. The decision of the Executive Committee is final. Expulsion may occur when any one of the following takes place.

### **Offenses (Major)**

1. Possession, use, supplying, or selling of alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drugs of any kind on or off school property (students may be required to pay for and take a drug test)
2. Repeated violations of discipline that have resulted in suspensions
3. Failure of parents to cooperate with the school in the discipline of their children
4. Assault or battery of a teacher
5. Arson
6. Sexual misconduct including pregnancy or the causing of pregnancy
7. Other serious moral misconduct
8. Lying or cheating (also covered in Serious Infractions)
9. Stealing, larceny, grand theft (petit larceny)
10. Robbery
11. Burglary
12. Criminal mischief

13. Possession, use, or threat of use in a dangerous manner of a weapon of any type which is perceived to be capable of inflicting physical harm whether loaded or unloaded (i.e. knife, firearm, explosive device including a starter gun or pellet gun, etc.) on or off school property
14. Any other offense which the Headmaster may reasonably deem to fall within this category

### **School Property**

Malicious or careless defacing or damaging of school property will require appropriate disciplinary action and the replacement of such property by the student and/or his parents or legal guardian.

### **Reporting Offenses**

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy reserves the right to report serious offenses (those offenses that may constitute violation of criminal laws established by the State of Alabama) to the proper authorities and to press charges against the student if the situation should warrant.

## **10.7 Receiving Information – Confidentiality**

Information received from students and others is acted upon only after an investigation has occurred. When parents are willing, they are encouraged to communicate the information to the parent of the student being accused. When the parents are unwilling to do this, the administration may investigate the credible information and possibly act upon the information given.

1. No information is acted upon without an investigation. Date, place, time, action, witness, and affected parties are usually known before any meeting with students/parents occurs.
2. Parents will be contacted to attend a meeting where information will be presented. Parents may be aware of a problem, or they may not.
3. It is not necessary that the person who has given the information be present or be identified during the investigation or meetings.
4. School policy is written to serve and help people. When disciplinary action is needed, it will be taken.

Although discipline may be firm, it is intended to benefit the student and assist him/her in developing life skills that result in an understanding of the consequences for wrong actions.

5. Persons may provide information in confidential fashion if they desire; however, information provided in such a manner will not provide the sole basis for disciplinary action, until the information provider agrees that, or acts as if, confidentiality is no longer expected.

## 10.8 Probationary Status

The progress of each probationary student or students being considered for probation will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Frequency and severity of actions necessitating disciplinary measures
2. School attendance
3. Academic progress reports and effort
4. General attitude
5. Support and cooperation of parents
6. Progress in Bible class

Students with less than a 70 (C-) average in their five core subjects for a nine-weeks grading period or students with an F (59) in a core subject will be placed on academic probation for the following nine weeks. Students with two consecutive quarters of probation may not be eligible for continued enrollment and/or reenrollment.

Students on probationary status will become ineligible for extracurricular activities on the date of the issuance of the quarterly report cards. Eligibility may be restored for the balance of the quarter given a satisfactory mid-quarter progress report showing a core average of at least 70 with no grade of F in a core subject.

Students who have demonstrated a lack of interest in being at Decatur Heritage through repeated detention, poor school attendance, deficient progress reports, poor attitude, and low grades in Bible class will be interviewed by the administration. A poor attitude may be reflected through a lack of compliance with the dress code, poor response to discipline, disrespect for authority, etc. A poor grade in Bible may be a way the student lets the school know that he/she does not want to be at Decatur Heritage.

A conference with the parents will be scheduled if a

student is or has to be placed on probation for the upcoming school year. The school will seek to work closely with the parents during the student's progress review.

## 10.9 Process for Re-Admission

Any student expelled from school will not automatically be allowed to re-enroll. Decisions in these matters are the full responsibility of the administration, and reviews or appeals cannot be considered for at least six months. Requests for re-admission should be made in writing to the Headmaster. Consideration for re-admission shall be made by the Headmaster and the Re-admission Committee.

### Procedure

1. A request in writing from the parent(s) or guardian(s) seeking re-admission should be given to the Headmaster.
2. Two letters of recommendation should be mailed directly to Decatur Heritage Christian Academy from: (a) the administrator or counselor of the school to which the student attended during the interim and (b) the pastor of the church to which the student is a member.
3. An interview will then be scheduled with the Re-admission Committee, which will be comprised of all members of the administration, a board member, and a teacher. The interview will be initiated with the parents and then be concluded with both the parents and the student.
4. After the interview, the Re-admission Committee will continue to meet, pray, and render a decision on the status of the applicant.
5. If the school decides to readmit the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student will sign a contract with Decatur Heritage Christian Academy with the understanding that he/she will be enrolled under a probationary period.

Decatur Heritage Christian Academy reserves the right to deny admission, re-admission, or continued enrollment to any student whose actions demonstrate that it is not in the school's best interest to allow admission, re-admission, or continued enrollment.

# 11.0 Communications

## 11.1 Community Events

Any information provided to the school regarding community or church events must be approved by the administration before being posted. It is not our practice to distribute materials school-wide; however, the office will post the information either onsite or via email once it is approved.

## 11.2 Party Invitations

Birthday party or any other party invitations or gifts should not be distributed at school.



# Our Mission

The mission of Decatur  
Heritage Christian  
Academy is to assist families  
by providing their children  
with an education that is  
excellent and which instills  
Biblical principles to guide  
their lives.



**Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools**

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