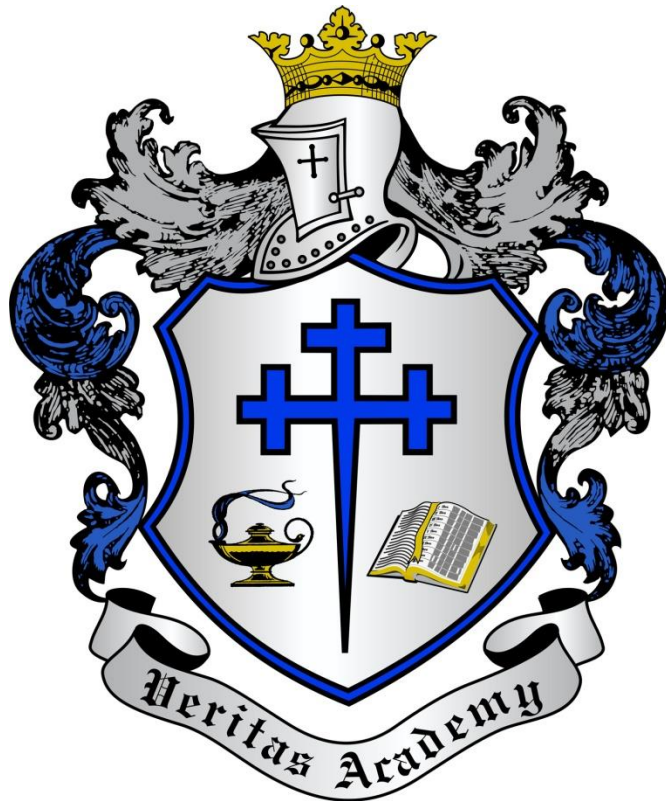


# VERITAS ACADEMY



## EMPLOYMENT HANDBOOK

2019 - 2020

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## **ABOUT VERITAS**

### **Mission**

The mission of Veritas Academy is to minister to families by partnering with Christian parents to provide for their children a classical education founded upon a biblical worldview so that these children may commence a lifelong pursuit of knowledge, wisdom and understanding in their purposeful and passionate service of Jesus Christ, for the glory of God.

Veritas Academy has adopted a university-model approach that integrates professional classroom instruction with parent mentored study and character development to achieve a college-preparatory level of academic excellence.

### **Philosophy**

Veritas Academy is a classical, Christian, University-Model School. The methodology of the Trivium is followed by seeking to identify appropriate analogies of grammar, logic, and rhetoric in all subjects and to teach all subjects in a manner consistent with the appropriate stage of development of the child. We understand all knowledge as complete only when seen and understood in relation to the eternal glory and purposes of God. Veritas Academy recognizes that God has ordained parents as the primary influencers in the lives of their children and that He has entrusted parents with the responsibility to educate their children. As such, Veritas Academy operates as a support system to and extension of the family in a true partnership.

### **Statement of Faith**

We believe...

- ◆ There is one sovereign God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ◆ There is one way of salvation: faith in Jesus Christ, the son of God, who lived as a man, died for the sins of all men, and was resurrected so that all who believe in their hearts and confess Jesus as Lord will be saved.
- ◆ There is one book of truth: the Bible, God's written revelation to man, authoritative, reliable, infallible, and without need of another document to complete its message.
- ◆ There is one body: the church, whom God calls its many parts to act together in unison.

Additionally, as a community seeking to submit to one another out of a love for Christ, we also believe the truths listed in Veritas Academy's Statements on Faith, Life, and Conduct listed on the school website ([www.veritasacademy.net/mission-and-values/believe.cfm](http://www.veritasacademy.net/mission-and-values/believe.cfm))

### **Non-denominational Policy**

Veritas Academy does not promote or endorse any particular denomination. It is our desire to maintain this position for the purpose of unity and fairness to each student, avoiding any dissension that may be caused by denominational distinctions.

### **Purpose and Objectives of Veritas Academy**

All employees shall agree to uphold the purposes and objectives of Veritas Academy as stated in the Parent/Student Handbook, the Offer Letter, the Statements on Faith, Life & Conduct, and this document. Employees shall read the Parent/Student Handbook, in its entirety, so as to understand the purposes and objectives of Veritas Academy that they are agreeing with. The Parent/Student Handbook is available online, and changes each year will be discussed during the August in-service days.

Should a teacher find he or she is no longer in harmony with the stated purposes and objectives in the documents outlined in the above paragraph, it is his or her duty to notify the Head of School and submit a resignation.

## **Organizational Structure**

### ***Governance***

Veritas Academy is a non-profit organization formed under the laws of the State of Texas. The Veritas Academy School Board consists of appointed members. The list of members are available on the school website.

### ***Administration***

The Head of School is appointed by the School Board to be the chief administrator of the school. The Head of School is responsible to oversee all of the programming and operations of the school and to ensure that those activities are in accordance with the School's Mission and the Board's policies. The Head of School proposes and manages the School's annual budget and coordinates with key Board committees to raise money and to promote the mission of the School in the community. The Head of School is also responsible for the hiring, development, and evaluation of School Level Heads and other School Administrators.

The Grammar School Head, School of Logic Head, and School of Rhetoric Head report directly to the Head of School. Each School Level Head oversees their Department Heads and collaboratively oversee the programs and operations of the School along with School Directors. Additionally, the Grammar School Head, School of Logic Head, and School of Rhetoric Head are responsible for hiring, developing, and evaluating all faculty.

### **At-Will Employment**

Veritas Academy's employment policy is "at-will." Under the "at-will" policy, neither the employee nor the school is committed to continuing the employment relationship for any specific term. Rather, the employment relationship will continue at will. Either side may terminate the relationship at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice. Also, Veritas Academy retains the right to demote, transfer, change job duties, and change compensation at any time.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity & Discrimination Policy**

Veritas Academy is an equal opportunity employer and makes employment decisions on the basis of merit, qualifications, potential, and competency. Veritas Academy strives to hire the best available persons in every job. School policy prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, age, physical or mental disability, or medical condition, (except where physical or mental fitness is a valid occupational qualification). This commitment applies to all persons involved in the operations of Veritas Academy and prohibits unlawful discrimination by any employee of the school, including Administrators and co-workers.

Additionally, Veritas Academy shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational, admission, financial aid or employment policies, or any other programs administered by the school.

If any employee believes he/she has been subjected to any form of unlawful discrimination, a written complaint should be provided to the Head of School as soon as possible. All complaints should be specific and should include the names of the individuals involved and the names of any witnesses.

Veritas Academy will immediately undertake an effective, thorough, and objective investigation and attempt to resolve the situation.

If the Head of School determines that unlawful discrimination has occurred, effective remedial action will be taken, commensurate with the severity of the offense. Appropriate action will also be taken to deter any future discrimination. Whatever action is taken will be made known to the employee, and Veritas Academy will take appropriate action to remedy any loss to the employee as a result of the discrimination.

Veritas Academy will not retaliate against the employee for filing a complaint and will not willingly permit retaliation by the Administrators or other employees.

## **EMPLOYEE PAY AND BENEFITS**

### **EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENTS**

All employment agreements shall be for a one-year term unless otherwise specified by the Head of School and set forth in the offer letter.

Administrators and administrative staff will be employed within a fiscal year running from July 1 to June 30.

Teachers will be employed for the amount of time needed to conduct all class days, any days needed for in-service and for conclusion of the school year, and required evening events. Additional hours and days may be assigned to Department Heads, Team Leaders and other employees working in additional roles.

Substitute teachers will be employed from the first day of the school year until the conclusion of the school year.

Employee Agreements will be renewed annually unless the Head of School recommends non-renewal.

### **PERSONNEL SALARIES AND WAGES**

The salaries and hourly wages of all personnel, individually or by schedule, shall be set annually by the School Board with the recommendation of the Head of School.

Paychecks are issued on the 15th and the last working day of each month, or as determined by the Controller. Paychecks will be direct deposited only.

### **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

#### **Benefit Eligibility**

Only employees who work a minimum of thirty (30) hours per week will be considered full-time employees. Only full-time employees are eligible for the medical benefits described in this handbook. Veritas Academy retains the sole discretion to determine issues of eligibility or interpretation of the terms and provision of all company benefit programs. Part time employees working less than thirty (30) hours per week are not eligible for benefits.

#### **Health Insurance**

Veritas Academy offers group medical insurance to all full-time employees. If the eligible employee elects not to participate in the medical plan, no compensation will be offered in place of the medical insurance. Veritas Academy reserves the right to modify the medical insurance benefits for employees according to budgetary conditions. The HR Manager will notify employees of any changes in benefits offered during our annual open enrollment period.



### **Worker's Compensation Insurance**

Veritas Academy participates in a mandatory worker's compensation insurance program. All injuries due to the employee's work must be reported to the HR Manager within one day of the injury or illness. A written report of the injury or illness must be submitted to the insurance company by Veritas Academy within 120 hours of the incident. Veritas Academy desires a safe work environment for its staff and students and encourages all staff to avoid unsafe activities and to report any unsafe working conditions to the office immediately.

Employees who voluntarily attend Veritas Academy activities during non-work time and are not required to perform job-related tasks will not be covered by Worker's Compensation insurance if during the activity they sustain an injury or contract an illness.

The law requires that Veritas Academy notify the workers' compensation insurance company of any concerns of false or fraudulent claims. Any person who makes or causes to be made any knowingly false or fraudulent material, statement or material misrepresentation for the purpose of obtaining or denying workers' compensation benefits or payments is guilty of a felony. A violation of this law is punishable by imprisonment for one to five (1-5) years or by a fine not to exceed \$50,000 or double the value of the fraud, whichever is greater or both. Additional civil penalties may also be assessed. Acceptance of employment with a different employer that requires the performance of activities that the employee has stated that he/she cannot perform because of the injury for which he/she is receiving temporary disability benefits could constitute fraud and could result in criminal prosecution. If convicted, the employee could lose rights to workers' compensation benefits and face imprisonment for up to five (5) years and a fine of up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) or double the amount of the fraud, whichever is greater.

### **State Unemployment Insurance**

All workers are covered by unemployment insurance. Veritas Academy pays the cost of unemployment insurance to provide an employee with weekly income when out of work through no fault of the employee. Claims may be filed with the State Unemployment Office.

### **Social Security (FICA)**

Veritas Academy will pay the employee's social security account an amount equal to the FICA deducted from employee paychecks.

### **Professional Development**

Veritas Academy provides professional development opportunities each year for classroom teachers. Teachers are encouraged to stay current with academic trends and best practices in education through reading of periodicals and assigned reading throughout the academic year, as well as local workshops and conferences.

All teachers are encouraged and expected to attend workshops and conferences as suggested by their School Head (Grammar, SL or SR). These can include SCL, UMSI, ACCL, College Board, AP conferences, TAPPS conferences, classes at universities, etc. Session fees, travel costs and lodging will be paid by Veritas Academy, when preapproved by the School Head (Grammar, SL or SR). Professional development days provided at Veritas Academy are paid days.

The Head of School may at his/her discretion, allow teachers and staff members to take time during the normal work schedule to attend educational conferences or to visit academic institutions if it is determined to be professionally valuable. The Head of School may require written reports to be submitted as a part of the school's professional development program.

### **Tuition Remission**

The Tuition Remission Plan is designed to reward faculty and staff for both the number of years they have been at Veritas and the level of responsibilities held at the school. In order to qualify for this Tuition

Remission Plan, faculty and staff must have worked at Veritas for two (2) consecutive and complete school years. Additionally, they must earn a salary or stipend of at least \$2,301 to qualify. As an example, a teacher who has been with Veritas for just two years and teaches a single, year-long elective class will receive a 4% discount on his/her children's tuition. As tenure and responsibilities increase, so too does the tuition remission discount.

This benefit cannot exceed 35% of the faculty or staff members' salary.

This discount is applied to your total tuition, excluding any fees and books. Please be aware, however, that all terms and conditions associated with the tuition remission program are subject to change in order to comply with tax regulations to keep this benefit tax-free. Additionally, this plan is subject to change as responsibilities change throughout the year or as the school's financial position and performance necessitates.

## **Leaves of Absence**

### ***Paid Time Off – Full-time Staff (30 or more hours per week)***

Unless otherwise stated in your offer letter, full-time employees are eligible for two weeks (80 hours) of paid time off ("PTO") each fiscal year (July 1 – June 30), earned and accrued ratably over the course of your employment during a fiscal year. PTO shall be used for any absence from work on days other than Veritas-recognized holidays. Such absences include, but are not limited to, those caused by illness, non-school related appointments, vacations, etc.

When taking a full day off, hourly full-time employees must submit a time off request equal to the number of hours they are regularly scheduled to work that day of the week. For example, if an hourly employee is regularly scheduled to work nine (9) hours on Mondays and would like to take a Monday off, their time off request should be for nine (9) hours.

Please schedule with your supervisor all PTO as far in advance as possible. Though you will begin ratably accruing PTO benefits from your start date, no more than two vacation days (16 hours) may be taken during your first ninety (90) days of employment unless the Head of School elects to grant a supervisor-approved request for such in an unforeseen and unavoidable circumstance. Up to eighty (80) hours (or 40 hours for employees eligible for one week of PTO each fiscal year) of accumulated but unused PTO can carry over into a subsequent fiscal year. If at all possible, please avoid taking PTO on days in which classes are being taught on the Veritas campus and during peak seasons for your specific department. (See your supervisor for guidance on peak seasons for your department.) Furthermore, in the event that your employment is terminated within six months of your start date, no accrued but unpaid PTO benefits shall be paid. For a termination occurring after six months of your start date, all accrued and unpaid PTO benefits shall be paid to you upon your execution of a release absolving Veritas of any liability and forfeiting all claims for injuries, causes, and/or issues known or then unknown.

### ***Holidays***

A calendar of Veritas observed office holidays is published near the beginning of each fiscal year. Employees who are employed full-time at Veritas (at least 30 scheduled work hours per week) for ninety (90) days are eligible to receive the benefit of paid office holidays. Office staff who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week will be paid for office holidays that fall on days they are normally scheduled to work in the office. Full-time hourly office staff employees will be paid for the number of hours they are regularly scheduled to work on the day of the week the office holiday falls.

Employees who regularly work fewer than 30 hours per week are not eligible to be paid for holidays. This schedule, including the number of holidays, is subject to change each year.

### ***Personal Leave - Faculty***

Requests for leaves of absence must be made in writing by completing the Substitute area in (FACTS)

(FACTS) RenWeb and emailing the details of your absence (date, times, school related, etc) to your School Head. Your School Head must be notified no later than one week before your absence for expected absences and within one week of your return for unexpected absences. Teachers may not take personal days when they conflict with school events that require faculty attendance such as Veritas Vision Night, teacher conferences, special programs, etc.

The cost of a substitute will be deducted from the next paycheck. The current cost of a substitute is \$15 per contact hour and \$25 per contact hour for a long term substitute. A long term substitute is designated for any leave that extends more than six consecutive school days.

### ***Jury Duty***

Veritas Academy encourages employees to fulfill their obligation to the community when called to serve on a jury. If an employee receives notice of jury duty, the employee should immediately report it to their immediate supervisor to allow for scheduling adjustments.

Full time salaried employees summoned to jury duty shall be granted a leave of absence while fulfilling the jury duty assignment. The leave shall be with pay up to a maximum of one (1) week. Longer jury duty assignments will be unpaid after the first week.

Hourly employees summoned to jury duty will receive up to one (1) week of pay for the hours they are regularly scheduled to work while fulfilling the jury duty assignment. If an employee is dismissed early from jury duty service, he or she is expected to report back to work during the regularly scheduled hours of work. If a jury service time report is available, it must be presented to the HR Manager for verification of time served on jury duty.

Teachers summoned to jury duty will receive full pay while absent for jury duty service up to a maximum of one (1) calendar week. Pay will be deducted for the cost of a substitute after the first week.

### ***Family Medical Leave Act Summary***

Under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), eligible employees may take up to 12 work weeks of unpaid leave during a 12 month period. Paid Time Off may be used concurrently with FMLA leave.

Veritas will measure the 12 month period as a rolling 12 month period measured backward from the date an employee last used FMLA leave.

To be eligible for FMLA, an employee must have worked for Veritas for at least 12 months and at least 1,250 hours during the 12 month period immediately preceding the date of the commencement of leave.

To qualify as FMLA leave, leave must be taken 1) for the birth of a child and to care for the child 2) for the placement of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child 3) to care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition 4) because of the serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's position. FMLA leave will take effect for an employee who is unable to work for any of the above reasons for more than six (6) consecutive calendar days.

A serious health condition is a condition that requires inpatient care or continuing treatment by a licensed healthcare provider.

The right to take leave under FMLA applies equally to male and female employees. Both fathers and mothers can take leave for the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care. A husband and

wife who are eligible for FMLA and are both employed by Veritas are limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of leave during a 12 month period if leave is taken for the birth of an employee's child and to care for the child after birth, the placement of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child, or to care for the employee's parent with a serious health condition.

#### Military Family Leave

Employees eligible for FMLA with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent in the National Guard or Reserves or of a regular component of the Armed Forces who has been notified of an impending call to active duty or who is already on active duty may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies include a short-term deployment notice, military events and activities, childcare and school activities, financial and legal arrangements, counseling, rest and recuperation, and post-deployment activities.

An eligible employee may take up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12 month period to care for a covered service member. A covered service member is a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, or is on the temporary disability retired list because of a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces which has made him or her unfit to perform his or her duties.

#### Instructional Employees

An instructional employee who begins leave close to the end of a term may be required by the Head of School to continue taking leave until the end of the term for a variety of reasons which fall within the legal guidelines of the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Family and Medical Leave is treated as a long-term substitute arrangement for up to six weeks. After six weeks, the leave will be unpaid.

#### Certification of an Employee's Serious Health Condition

In order to take FMLA leave, an employee must submit a certification from the employee's health care provider or the health care provider of the family member for which they are providing care under FMLA. This certification must be provided to Human Resources before leave begins if the leave is foreseeable. If this is not possible, the certification should be provided within 15 days of leave beginning unless an employee is unable despite the employee's good faith efforts.

#### Intermittent FMLA Leave

An employee may take FMLA leave intermittently (taking leave in blocks of time) or may use the leave to reduce the workweek/workday under certain circumstances.

#### Employee Benefits During FMLA Leave

While an employee is on FMLA leave, the employee's health benefits coverage will continue during the leave period at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee had been continuously employed. In some cases, if the employee chooses not to return to work after the expiration of the leave, the employee will be required to reimburse Veritas Academy for the amount it paid for the employee's health insurance premiums during the period of unpaid leave unless the employee does not return due to a continued serious health condition or circumstances beyond the employee's control.

While on paid leave, Veritas will continue to deduct the employee's portion of the premium for health benefits from his or her paycheck. While on unpaid leave, payment for the employee's portion of the premium must be made by the employee to Veritas by the last day of each month. If the payment is more than 30 days late, the employee's health coverage may be dropped for the duration of the employee's leave.

### Job Reinstatement

An employee who takes FMLA leave will be restored to the same or equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay and terms and conditions of employment upon the submission of a medical certification that they are able to return to work. However, an employee has no greater right to reinstatement than if the employee had been continuously employed rather than on leave. If an employee's position is impacted by a decision or event unrelated to the employee's leave, the employee will be affected in the same way he or she would have been affected if not on leave. Veritas may choose to exempt some key employees from this requirement. If an employee returning from FMLA leave is unable to perform the essential functions of the job because of a physical or mental condition, the Americans with Disabilities Act may govern Veritas Academy's obligations to that employee, if requested, upon a written guarantee of reinstatement of the same or comparable position upon conclusion of the leave, to the extent required by law.

### Maternity Leave

Maternity leave under this policy is a paid leave associated with the birth of an employee's own child. Maternity leave is not charged against an employee's other Paid Time Off (if applicable). The amount of paid leave is compensated at the following levels:

#### 10 Month Employees (Faculty)

Week 1: \$15 per contact hour deducted  
Week 2-6: \$25 per contact hour deducted  
After Week 6: Unpaid leave

#### Year-Round Employees (Administration and Staff)

Weeks 1-4: 100% pay given  
Weeks 5-9: 60% of pay given  
After Week 9: Unpaid leave

Benefits will continue to be provided and paid time off will continue to accrue during the maternity leave period (if applicable).

After the period of paid maternity leave has been exhausted, subsequent leave will be covered under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for eligible employees which will run concurrently with the paid leave.

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT**

The following are requirements for Veritas Academy employees:

- ◆ Must be eligible to work in the United States
- ◆ Must complete a W-4 and I-9 form
- ◆ Must have completed an employment application including the Department of Justice and FBI criminal record clearance
- ◆ Must provide copy of education degree/transcript as appropriate for the job
- ◆ Must be available for and complete training as specified by the job description
- ◆ Must assure that they are in physical condition appropriate to perform the job for which they apply (in accordance with the requirements listed in the job description)

- ◆ Insurability - All employees must remain insurable under Veritas Academy's liability insurance policy. If the insurance company declares any employee uninsurable, the employee will immediately be considered ineligible for further employment and will be considered to have voluntarily terminated his or her employment as of the date of notification by the insurance company of un-insurability.
- ◆ Drug and Alcohol Testing – Veritas Academy reserves the right to require drug and/or alcohol testing of any applicant or employee at any time.
- ◆ All full time staff members who are in positions of primary responsibility for student safety are required to hold current CPR/First Aid certification. Employees required to be certified are following: teachers, coaches, recess and lunchroom personnel, administration and office staff who provide medical attention. Veritas Academy will provide CPR/First Aid training before the beginning of each school year for all required staff members and coaches.

### **Moral Code of Conduct**

The evangelistic and discipleship nature of Veritas Academy requires that all employees manifest by precept and example the highest Christian virtue and personal decorum, serving as role models (I Timothy 4:12) both in and out of school to pupils, and as examples to parents and fellow staff members in judgment, respect, and Christian living.

### **Required Personal Qualities**

The employee shall:

- ◆ Have received Jesus Christ as his/her personal Savior.
- ◆ Believe that the Bible is God's Word and standard for faith and daily living.
- ◆ Be in whole-hearted agreement with Veritas Academy's Statements on Faith, Life & Conduct.
- ◆ Be a Christian role model in attitude, speech, and actions toward others. (Luke 6:40) This includes being committed to God's biblical standards for sexual conduct.
- ◆ Be a Christian who is, and will remain during the period of employment, an active member of a Christ-centered church, growing in his/her Christian relationship with God, and actively practicing and exhibiting Christian principles of the Christian faith; seek to role-model in speech, actions, and attitude a consistent daily walk with Jesus Christ; set an example of the importance of spiritual discipline; and encourage students in the importance of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and growing in their faith.

### ***Additional Personal Qualities***

The employee shall:

- ◆ Recognize the role of parents as primarily responsible before God for their children's education and be prepared to assist them in that task.
- ◆ Demonstrate the character qualities of enthusiasm, courtesy, flexibility, integrity, gratitude, kindness, self-control, perseverance, and punctuality.
- ◆ Meet everyday stress with emotional stability, objectivity, and optimism.
- ◆ Maintain a personal appearance that is a Christian role model of cleanliness, modesty, good taste, and agreement with school policy.
- ◆ Use acceptable English in written and oral communication. Speak with clear articulation.
- ◆ Respectfully submit and be loyal to constituted authority.

- ◆ Refuse to use or circulate confidential information inappropriately.

To that end, all employees of Veritas Academy are expected to regularly devote time to prayer and study of the Bible and to consistently attend a local, Christian church. As educators, administrators and servants to the body of Christ, our lives should serve as models to the students and families of this school as outlined in the Statements on Faith, Life, and Conduct on our school website. Further, we uphold and pursue the aspirational qualities of the Veritas Valiant, the school's *de facto* portrait of a graduate that we hold out to our students, and we adhere to the imperative of its preamble that we must diligently control and positively direct our attitudes, efforts, and tongues. We do this not only as a model to our students but also to preserve a constructive, peaceful environment and to nurture healthy relationships with colleagues and others. To that end, you are expected to maintain and display kindness and respect for others in your service to students and families, your support to colleagues, and your submission to authorities in the school. In this humility required of a servant-leader, you are given the authority to lead students and/or others in this community; and as such, you will refrain from words or actions that disparage or malign others, diminish the school's reputation, or undermine the effectiveness of its employees or the authority of its leaders. This extends to your words in written or electronic communications, including social media posts. Interpersonal conflict is a normal part of the human condition, and at Veritas you are expected to handle such conflict according to the principles of Matthew 18, meaning directly, discreetly, and humbly approaching those who have caused offense before you involve others. (And the only "others" to be involved are direct, and eventually indirect, supervisors—and/or the school's HR Manager—if you are unsuccessful in reconciling with the party(ies) causing the offense.)

### ***Criminal Activity/Arrests***

Involvement in criminal activity, whether on or off Veritas Academy property, during employment may result in disciplinary action including suspension or termination of employment. Disciplinary action depends upon a review of all factors involved, including whether or not the employee's action was work-related and the nature of the act. Any disciplinary action is not dependent upon the disposition of any case in court. Any disciplinary action taken will be based on information reasonably available. This information may come from witnesses, police, or any other source as long as management has reason to view the source as credible.

### **PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE**

Employees of Veritas Academy are expected to be punctual and regular in attendance. Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled, on time and prepared to start work.

Employees also are expected to remain at work for their entire work schedule, except for meal periods or when required to leave on authorized school business. Late arrival, early departure, or other absences from scheduled hours are disruptive and must be avoided. If employees are unable to report for work on any particular day, they must call their supervisor, giving as much advance notice as possible. In all cases of absence or tardiness, employees must provide their supervisor with an honest reason or explanation. Employees also must inform their supervisor of the expected duration of any absence. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, employees must call in prior to the start of a scheduled workday if unable to report to work.

Excessive absenteeism or tardiness, excused or not, will not be permitted. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness can result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

In addition, if an employee fails to report for work without any notification, and the absence continues for a period of three (3) consecutive days of scheduled work, Veritas Academy will consider that the employee has abandoned employment and has voluntarily resigned.

## **Hours of Work**

### ***Normal Work Hours - Teachers***

Teachers are to arrive to campus thirty minutes prior to the start of class, or earlier if necessary to meet the objectives of the day. They are expected to remain on campus after class until the job requirements are met.

### ***Normal Work Hours – Staff and Administrators***

Staff and administrators are to be present on campus during the office hours designated on the Office Hours, Holidays & Required Events sheet distributed annually, unless otherwise approved by their direct supervisor.

### ***Overtime***

Overtime will be paid to hourly employees in accordance with applicable state and federal law. To work overtime, employees must obtain advanced permission from their supervisor.

### ***Rest Periods***

Ten (10) minute breaks are to be taken by classified employees as per the following schedule:

- ◆ Up to 3.5 hours of work - no break
- ◆ More than 3.5 up to 6 hours of work - one break
- ◆ More than 6 up to 10 hours of work - two breaks

Teachers must be responsible for their students at all times unless other staff members are scheduled to relieve them or during student breaks and lunch periods when other staff members are scheduled to provide supervision.

### ***Time Sheet***

For those employees that enter work hours on a time sheet, it must be recognized that in order to provide an orderly system of recording hours of work and to ensure that employees are paid correctly for their services, hours must be accurately recorded on the time sheet. Time sheets may be accessed on the Employee Resources webpage and must be turned in to the appropriate personnel within the designated time.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Standards of Conduct**

Veritas Academy expects employees to observe a standard of conduct that will maintain an orderly, positive and productive workplace. Such standards of conduct will benefit and protect both Veritas Academy and all employees. Not only should their conduct bring glory and honor to the Lord at school, but also at home and wherever else they may go. At no time should an employee engage in any activity that might become a stumbling block to students, parents, or others of the Christian community. (Luke 6:40; I Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7-8)

Behavior that violates this standard of conduct will subject employees to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

The disciplinary action used to maintain the standards of conduct will be determined in light of the facts and circumstances of each individual case. Each incident will be considered in light of a variety of factors, including:



- ◆ The seriousness of the incident and the circumstances
- ◆ The employee's past conduct
- ◆ The nature of any previous incidents
- ◆ The general practice as it relates to the incident

Although not all inclusive, the following list represents kinds of behavior that will be considered improper and unacceptable on or off campus, and may subject employees to the above-mentioned discipline:

### ***Unlawful or Inappropriate Actions***

- ◆ Stealing private or school property.
- ◆ Willful destruction or defacement of private or school property.
- ◆ Possession, sale, use, or being under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol. If an employee must use a prescription drug that may impact their ability to safely perform their work during working hours, written authorization from a doctor must be given to their School Head.
- ◆ Smoking on campus.
- ◆ Using obscene, abusive or threatening language to any student, school employees or members of the public.
- ◆ Carrying or bringing a weapon or concealed weapon to work (without written permission from the School Board).
- ◆ Disorderly conduct such as inappropriate practical jokes, horseplay, etc.
- ◆ Making defamatory or false statements detrimental to the school's operation or good standing in the community.
- ◆ Violation of confidentiality.

### ***Work Standards***

- ◆ Disregarding instruction of Administrators or proper authority.
- ◆ Failure to be courteous or polite at all times to other employees, students, parents and members of the public.
- ◆ Failure to observe work schedules.
- ◆ Failure to observe safety rules and regulations.
- ◆ Contributing to unsanitary conditions or poor housekeeping.
- ◆ Inefficiency, lack of productive effort, or other unsatisfactory work performance.
- ◆ Unauthorized use of school time, materials, or equipment for personal activities.
- ◆ Unsuitable or improper attire for the working day, as stated in the employee dress code.
- ◆ Excessive number of absences and tardies.
- ◆ Failure to adhere to the Veritas Academy Moral Code of Conduct as described in the Requirements for Employment.
- ◆ Failure to regularly follow Veritas Academy procedures for teachers.

Anytime a Veritas Academy employee is not performing the given objectives of his/her position satisfactorily, the Head of his School will adhere to the appropriate corrective/termination procedures adopted by the School Board.

Employees have the right to appeal administrative decisions directly to the School Board after all other avenues have been exhausted to reconcile differences according to the Corrective Procedures listed in this manual. The School Board will hear both sides of the dispute before rendering a decision. The School Board's decision will stand without further appeal.

### **Dress Code**

Employees are asked to wear modest articles of clothing suitable to the type of work performed and the environment in which they work. Articles of clothing should be modest, neat, clean, safe, in good taste and provide a professional atmosphere for students, parents and visitors. Interpretation of this provision rests solely with Veritas Academy's administration.

#### ***Female Classroom Teachers, Administrators and Office Staff***

Business Casual: Women may wear a skirt, dress, dress pants, long- or short-sleeved blouse or sweater. Denim pants, T-shirts, sweats, athletic shoes or flip-flops shall not be worn except on designated Spirit or Dress Down Days.

#### ***Male Classroom Teachers, Administrators and Office Staff***

Business Casual: Men should wear a long- or short-sleeve collared dress shirt, slacks, and closed-toe shoes or boots. Neckties are encouraged and a jacket is optional. Denim pants, T-shirts, sweats, athletic shoes or flip-flops shall not be worn except on designated Spirit or Dress Down Days.

#### ***Coaching or P.E. Staff***

Coaching and P.E. staff may wear a black, navy, or gray jogging suit, sweatpants, or appropriate shorts with a Veritas Academy T-shirt or polo shirt and athletic shoes.

#### ***Field Trip Attire***

If students are required to wear the official uniform, then teachers must dress *business casual*. If students are allowed to wear their own clothes, then teachers may dress appropriately *casual*; or if the trip involves physical activity (e.g., hiking, working, etc.), teachers may wear blue jeans or appropriate shorts, a Veritas Academy T-shirt or polo shirt and tennis shoes.

### **Aesthetics**

The Facilities Supervisor/Manager will serve on the aesthetics committee, so all inquiries about what is and is not allowed should be directed to him/her. In order to keep our building clutter-free and aesthetically pleasing, we ask all faculty and staff to abide by the following guidelines for aesthetics.

- ◆ Only furniture that has been approved by the aesthetics committee should be placed inside the building. This includes common areas, classrooms, and offices.
- ◆ Nothing may be hung on the walls unless it receives prior approval by the aesthetics committee or is hung upon an area previously designated for this purpose (e.g., a bulletin board, tack strip, or wooden board with clips).
- ◆ Shelves, desks, tables, and other visible surfaces should be kept clutter free, organized, and clean.

## **Acceptable Use Policy for Information Technology Resources**

*I will set before my eyes no vile thing. The deeds of faithless men I hate; they will not cling to me. –Psalm 101:3 (niv)*

### ***Purpose***

Veritas Academy's information technology resources, including (FACTS) RenWeb, email and Internet access, are provided for educational purposes. Adherence to the following policy is necessary for acceptable and professional use of the school's technological resources:

### ***Policy***

Faculty and staff must:

1. Respect and protect the privacy of others.
  - a. Use only assigned accounts for assigned purposes.
  - b. Not view, use, or copy passwords, data, or networks to which they are not authorized.
  - c. Not seek, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to others
  - d. Not distribute private information about others or themselves through electronic means, including through use of Facebook, Instant Messenger, email, blogs and cell phone texts or videos, or similar methods.
  - e. Not identify students on the Internet by full name, photo or otherwise, without express permission from a parent or guardian.
2. Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources.
  - a. Observe all network security practices, as posted.
  - b. Report security risks or violations to a network administrator.
  - c. Not destroy or damage data, networks, or other resources that do not belong to them, without clear permission of the owner.
  - d. Refrain from installing or using any program, document or data that could damage technological resources (i.e. viruses, etc.)
  - e. Conserve, protect, and share these resources with others in the Veritas community.
3. Respect and protect the intellectual property of others.
  - a. Not infringe copyrights (no making illegal copies of music, games, or movies!).
  - b. Refrain from illegal installation of any copyrighted programs or information on school computers.
  - c. Respect and protect the intellectual property of Veritas Academy by not sharing internal resources such as the Books & Resources List, course syllabi, etc. with anyone outside of the Veritas community.
  - d. Not plagiarize.
4. Respect and practice the principles of community.
  - a. Communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.
  - b. Report threatening or discomfoting materials to a network administrator.
  - c. Not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's code of conduct (such as messages that are pornographic, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass).
  - d. Not intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that is illegal (such as obscenity, stolen materials, or illegal copies of copyrighted works).
  - e. Not use the resources to further other acts that are criminal or violate the school's code of conduct.

- f. Not send spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings.
- g. Not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business on the school network, unless approved by an administrator.
- h. Not use the Veritas brand (logo, crest, etc.) on social media without permission from Veritas Academy's Advancement Department.

### ***Consequences***

Violations will be handled in accordance with Veritas Academy's Employment Handbook, and by the discretion of a supervising administrator. Penalties may include loss of privileges, loss of employment, and/or legal action.

### ***Supervision and Monitoring***

School and network administrators and their authorized employees monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with this policy.

Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks in order to ensure compliance with this policy, to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, and/or to protect property. They may also use this information in disciplinary actions, and will furnish evidence of crime to law enforcement. Employees should understand that they have no expectation of privacy in their use of any information technology resources of the school.

### **Policy Against Harassment**

Veritas Academy is committed to providing a work environment free of unlawful harassment. School policy prohibits harassment because of sex (which includes sexual harassment, gender harassment, and harassment due to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions) and harassment because of race, religious creed, color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, age, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law, ordinance or regulation. **ALL SUCH HARASSMENT IS UNLAWFUL.**

Sexual harassment occurs when any one of the following three factors is met:

- ◆ Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment
- ◆ Submission to sexual activity or a rejection of the request for sexual favor becomes a basis for a decision concerning an individual's employment
- ◆ The conduct unreasonably interferes with the individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment

Unwelcome conduct of this type can include a wide range of verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual or otherwise harassing nature. The types of conduct listed below include, but are not limited to, those that would violate this policy:

- ◆ Unwanted sexual advances or propositions
- ◆ Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors
- ◆ Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances
- ◆ Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, or other gestures which denigrate a person's race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or age

- ◆ Written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or age, and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on the school premises, or circulated in the workplace
- ◆ Epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts, that relate to race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or age; graphic verbal comments about an individual's body; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitation
- ◆ Physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, impeding or blocking movements

If any employee believes that he or she is the victim of any type of harassment that employee should immediately report the incident to the Head of School. If the Head of School is involved in the reported conduct, or if for some reason the employee feels uncomfortable about making a report to that level, the report should be made to the School Board. Veritas Academy will promptly and clearly inform the employee of his or her rights to assistance and how to protect and preserve those rights.

Veritas Academy will fully and effectively investigate any such report and will take whatever corrective action is deemed necessary, including disciplining or discharging any individual who is believed to have violated this prohibition against harassment. The complaining employee will be informed of the action taken. Veritas Academy will also take action to protect the complaining employee and to prevent further harassment or retaliation. Finally, the complainant will be made whole, to the extent possible, for his or her losses.

Veritas Academy does not tolerate harassment on the basis of any of the categories discussed in this policy and will take appropriate disciplinary action whenever such harassment is demonstrated. Any individuals engaging in such conduct contrary to Veritas Academy may be personally liable in any legal action brought against them.

Veritas Academy encourages all employees to report any incidents of harassment forbidden by this policy so that complaints can be quickly and fairly resolved. The Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission investigates and prosecutes complaints of prohibited harassment in employment. If an employee thinks he/she has been harassed or that he/she has been retaliated against for resisting or complaining, a complaint may be filed with the appropriate agency. The nearest office can be found on the EEOC website ([www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)).

### **Workplace Violence Prevention**

Veritas Academy is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe working environment. Given the increasing violence in society in general, Veritas Academy has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, or other threats of (or actual) violence that may occur during business hours or on its premises.

All employees, including Administrators and temporary employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay," or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Firearms, weapons, and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances are prohibited from the premises of Veritas Academy (unless authorized by the School Board).

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, or a member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment,

including harassment that is based on an individual's sex, race, age, or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

All threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to the Head of School. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by students, parents or members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, specific words and actions must be related as clearly as possible.

All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to the Head of School. Employees should be careful not to place themselves in peril. Employees should not try to intercede or investigate if they hear a commotion or disturbance. The school office should be called for help if a threatening situation arises.

Veritas Academy will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, Veritas Academy may suspend employees, either with or without pay, pending the outcome of the investigation. Anyone determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## **Safety**

### ***Safe Practices & Operations Code***

Employee safety is a major concern at Veritas Academy. Veritas Academy feels that a clean, safe, and healthy environment should be provided for all employees. Reasonable precautions are taken to provide employees with a safe place to work. Accident prevention, however, is largely an individual responsibility and employees are expected to do their part to work safely.

The following guidelines will be observed:

- ◆ All employees shall follow these safe practices, render every possible aid to safe operations, and report all unsafe conditions or practices to the proper authority.
- ◆ Supervisors shall insist on employee observance of all rules, regulations, and order as is necessary to the safe conduct of the work, and shall take such action as is necessary to obtain compliance.
- ◆ Good housekeeping must be practiced at all times.
- ◆ Suitable clothing and footwear will be worn at all times. Personal protection equipment will be worn when and where needed.
- ◆ All employees will participate in periodic safety meetings conducted by their supervisors.
- ◆ Anyone known to be under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs shall not be allowed on the job while in that condition.
- ◆ Horseplay, scuffling, and other acts that tend to have an adverse influence on the safety or well-being of the employees, are prohibited.
- ◆ Work shall be well planned and supervised to prevent injuries in the handling of heavy materials and in working with equipment.
- ◆ No one shall knowingly be permitted or required to work while his/her ability or alertness is so impaired by fatigue, illness, or other causes that might unnecessarily expose him/her or others to injury.

- ◆ Employees should be alert to see that all protective devices are in proper places, and shall report deficiencies promptly to their supervisor.
- ◆ Workers shall not handle or tamper with any electrical equipment, machinery, or air or water lines in a manner not within the scope of their duties.
- ◆ All injuries will be reported promptly, following the instructions under the Workers' Compensation Insurance section of this handbook, to Texas Mutual through the HR Manager so that arrangements can be made for medical or first aid treatment.
- ◆ As Veritas Academy employees are the ministry's most valuable resource, observance of the school safety awareness and safe practices are encouraged while at work and off the job as well.

### ***Exposure Control Plan***

The following Exposure Control Plan (ECP) aims to eliminate or minimize exposure to blood borne pathogens while on the job for Veritas Academy faculty and staff. Veritas will implement, review, and update, if necessary, the ECP annually to include any modified procedures. All faculty and staff members are required to take part in annual training regarding occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens. This training will be offered during fall in-service, and all employees are required to attend this meeting. All Veritas faculty and staff have the potential to be exposed to blood borne pathogens while on the job when rendering aid to students.

Employees should exercise universal precautions and consider all contact with blood and other bodily fluids as potentially infectious. Appropriate personal protective equipment will be made available by Veritas Academy so that it can be easily accessed any time there is likelihood that an employee will be exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials. Each reception area is equipped with and every employee has easy access to first aid kits that contain the following infectious disease exposure control materials:

- ◆ One pair latex single-use gloves
- ◆ Three 4"x4" guaze pads for blood absorption
- ◆ Foil-backed disinfectant towelette
- ◆ CPR mask
- ◆ Two band aids

School Receptionists will be responsible for ensuring that all first aid kits are stocked with these supplies and will restock as needed.

All employees using this personal protective equipment should observe the following precautions:

- ◆ Employees should wear gloves when administering first aid to anyone, without exception, and whenever contact with blood or other potentially infectious material is anticipated.
- ◆ Employees should wear gloves when assisting a student who has soiled his/her clothing.
- ◆ Spills and splashes of blood or other potentially infectious material are cleaned up and the area decontaminated as soon as possible.

- ◆ Employees must wear rubber utility gloves when cleaning up spills and splashes. Utility gloves may be decontaminated for reuse if in usable condition (no cracking, punctures, or other deterioration).
- ◆ After initial cleaning, the soiled area must be decontaminated with disinfectant rated “Anti-TB” or freshly made solution of one part household bleach to ten parts water (2 cups bleach to every gallon of water). The bleach solution should be applied to the entire area and allowed to sit for ten minutes. After ten minutes, the bleach solution is wiped up with paper towels and the area is then washed with detergent and water.
- ◆ All disposable material used to clean the area must be placed in a plastic bag and then into a hard-sided trash receptacle.
- ◆ After rendering aid, employees must remove the gloves properly and wash their hands thoroughly.

Should you be exposed to blood or another bodily fluid (it has come into contact with your broken skin or your eyes, nose, or mouth), contact your School Head and Human Resources.

After you have thoroughly washed the exposed area or flushed your eyes or other mucous membrane, you will have the opportunity to receive the Hepatitis B vaccine and a post-exposure medical evaluation at the school’s expense. This vaccination and evaluation will be conducted by a licensed healthcare professional.

Veritas Academy will:

- ◆ Document how exposure occurred.
- ◆ Identify and document the individual who is the source of the exposure.
- ◆ Obtain consent and make arrangements to have the source individual tested to determine infection of HIV, Hepatitis C, or Hepatitis B (if unknown) and provide these results to the employee’s healthcare provider.
- ◆ Obtain consent from the employee to have their blood tested as soon as possible following the exposure for Hepatitis B or HIV infection.
- ◆ Human Resources will provide all documentation including circumstances surrounding exposure and blood test results from the source individual to the employee’s healthcare provider.
- ◆ Human resources will maintain records of employee training, necessary employee medical records, as well as a record of all exposure incidents
- ◆ The Head of School will report the names of children suspected of having a communicable disease, i.e. diseases listed by the Texas Board of Health, to the local health authority or the Department of Health regional director, whether suspected due to an exposure incident or other means.



## **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

Veritas Academy is concerned about the use of alcohol and controlled substances in or affecting the work environment. Abuse of alcohol and/or controlled substances adversely affects an employee's efficiency, safety and health, and therefore impairs his or her value as an employee.

In addition, it constitutes a potential danger to the welfare of other employees, and exposes Veritas Academy to risks of property loss/damage, or injury to other persons. Veritas Academy employees are expected to be temperate in their use of alcohol in line with the Veritas Academy Moral Code of Conduct.

## **Smoking Policy**

Veritas Academy is a smoke-free environment. Employees of Veritas Academy are expected to be non-smokers.

## **Outside or Non-Curricular Groups or Activities**

The administration is responsible for regulating all matters pertaining to the interaction of the school with outside or non-curricular groups or activities. Any staff member wishing to make use of such a group or activity should first receive the prior approval of an administrator.

## **Non-Curricular Literature Distribution**

In general, Veritas Academy restricts the distribution of literature on campus to that which obviously serves the purpose of building the Kingdom of God or appropriately enhances the general educational purposes of the school. All literature must be approved by the administration prior to distribution. Approved literature will only be distributed at such times or places designated by the administration.

## **Personnel and Medical Records**

It is the employee's responsibility to make sure that the personal data in the personnel file is accurate and up to date. Please report any change in address, phone number, effective dates of required information, etc., to the Human Resource (HR) Manager immediately by email or by updating your information in ADP and (FACTS) RenWeb. All employees of Veritas Academy have a right to inspect their personnel files, as provided by law, on the premises of Veritas Academy at a time mutually convenient to the employee and Veritas Academy. Employees may add their versions of any disputed item to their personnel files.

Veritas Academy relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment, or if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

Personnel files are the property of Veritas Academy and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, only Administrators and office personnel authorized to handle confidential information will have reason to review and access the information. Veritas Academy will restrict disclosure of personnel files to authorized individuals.

Any request for information from personnel files must be directed to the HR Manager. Only the HR Manager or Head of School are authorized to release information about current or former employees. Disclosure of personal information to outside sources will be limited; however, Veritas Academy will cooperate with requests from authorized law enforcement or local, state or federal agencies conducting

investigations. Health/medical records are not included in personnel file. These records are confidential. Veritas Academy will safeguard them from disclosure and will divulge such information only as follows:

- ◆ As allowed by law
- ◆ To the employee's personal physician upon written request or permission of the employee
- ◆ As required for workers' compensation cases

### **Grievance Procedures**

Disagreements and other problems will arise from time to time. All board members, administration, faculty and staff sincerely desire to conduct all affairs in a way pleasing to the Lord, including the way interpersonal tensions and conflicts are handled. In Matthew 18, the Lord Jesus established the basic principles by which Christians should resolve differences. Veritas Academy asks that all school employees and families:

- ◆ Resolve the conflict at the lowest possible level by involving only those individuals who must be involved.
- ◆ Respect the appropriate succession of authority and responsibility should it be necessary to pursue the grievance beyond the most immediate level.
- ◆ Seek to resolve the grievance for the purpose of reconciliation with fellow believers.
- ◆ Do all in such a manner that the reputation of the body of Christ (as manifested through the school) will not be dishonored.

If a member of our school community feels that he has been unable to satisfactorily resolve a grievance through the usual school channels, he is expected, in keeping with the commands given in I Corinthians 6:1, to seek reconciliation through a Christian board of conciliation rather than through the civil courts. To that end, all school personnel, whether employed, contracted, or volunteer shall be required to sign the following agreement:

The parties to this agreement are Christians and believe that the Bible commands them to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian community in conformity with the Biblical injunctions of I Corinthians 6:1-8, Matthew 5:23-24, and Matthew 18:15-20. Therefore, the parties agree that any claim or dispute arising out of, or related to, this agreement or to any aspect of the school relationship, including any claim or statutory claims, shall be settled by Biblically-based mediation.

If resolution of the dispute and reconciliation do not result from such efforts, the matter shall then be submitted to a panel of three arbitrators for binding arbitration. The selection of the arbitrators and the arbitration process shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of Christian Conciliation of the Institute for Christian Conciliation as printed in the [Christian Conciliation Handbook](#).

The parties agree that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of the school relationship or this agreement and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit against one another in any civil court for such disputes, except to enforce a legally binding arbitration decision.

Each party, regardless of the outcome of the matter, agrees to bear the cost of his/her/its own arbitrator and one-half of the fees and costs of the neutral arbitrator and any other arbitration expenses.

### **Whistleblower Policy**

Any employee that brings to the administration, or board, information about perceived wrongdoing in the school or by the school's business practices will be protected against adverse job discrimination by making such a report.

### **EMPLOYEE EVALUATIONS**

To be effective in achieving the highest degree of efficiency and quality, evaluations will be performed regularly. The Head of Grammar School, Head of School of Logic, and Head of School Rhetoric shall work with department heads in conducting regular classroom observations along with a Professional Growth Plan (PGP) each school year, which consists of a formal meeting in the fall and again in the spring with classroom observations conducted by the Head of School (Grammar, SL or SR), Academic Deans and Department Heads throughout the year. (See Professional Growth Plan Form in supplemental information.) The teacher will receive a copy of the Professional Growth Plan and the original will be kept by the Head of Grammar, Head of School of Logic or Head of School of Rhetoric and filed in the personnel file before the end of the school year.

Teachers are evaluated with the following:

- ◆ Understands classical education and implements it in the classroom
- ◆ Teaching reflects a true respect and appreciation for – and understanding of – the parent's role in each student's education
- ◆ Communication skills are effective and practiced consistently in giving/receiving information; neither defensive nor overly assertive.
- ◆ Lesson plans and assessments are thoughtful, organized, and communicated in a clear, concise and consistent manner.
- ◆ Demonstrates mastery of – and dedication to staying current in – subject area; pursues opportunities for professional growth and development
- ◆ Punctual and dependable in both meetings and deadlines
- ◆ Purposely and passionately pursues having a positive impact on students both in and out of the classroom
- ◆ Manages classroom in a way that maximizes learning and promotes character development, including dignified and respectful discipline.
- ◆ Promotes and maintains a dynamic, joyful classroom environment, fostering a love of learning and cultivating an interest in – or passion for! – the subject.
- ◆ Course instruction flows out of a Biblical Worldview
- ◆ A team player who brings unity and seeks ways to encourage others; does not engage in gossip or talk that undermines others.
- ◆ Demonstrates a teachable spirit, responding to correction with humility and action.
- ◆ Conveys and models to students a zest for life and enjoyment of the “great conversation,” continually broadening experiences and reading good books.

- ◆ Exhibits initiative: proactively identifies issues/opportunities, develops constructive solutions and enacts/executes them.
- ◆ Maintains an organized and professional work environment
- ◆ Exemplifies effective teaching strategies that lead to student mastery, develop students' abilities to think and instill in students the desire and skills necessary to become lifelong learners.

Immediate Supervisors shall conduct a work evaluation for every non-instructional staff member annually. The employee will receive a copy and the original written evaluation will be kept in the personnel file.

The School Board shall annually assess the performance of the Head of School.

The Head of School will annually assess the Head of Grammar School, Head of SL and Head of SR.

The School Heads (Grammar, SL or SR) will annually assess the Academic Deans and Department Heads.

### **Corrective Procedures**

When an employee is not satisfactorily performing the given duties of his or her position, the Head of School will adhere to procedures outlined by the School Board. The four-stage process includes at each stage: documentation of concerns, job evaluations, corrective conferences with the employee and finally, as the situation warrants, termination of employment.

An employee has the option after his or her termination interview, to appeal the Head of School's decision directly to the Chairman of the Board who will separately hear the employee's and the Head of School's positions, rendering the final decision.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF SECTION**

### **Beginning of School Year**

- ◆ Teachers will receive an Offer Letter from the Human Resources (HR) Manager listing classes and salary. Please let the HR Manager know if it contains any errors. The salary listed is contingent upon all of the courses offered meeting the minimum enrollment requirements. Should a course not meet the minimum enrollment requirement, Veritas Academy will not be able to offer this course and the teachers salary will change.
- ◆ Teachers should complete payroll forms (e.g., W-4, I-9, direct deposit, etc.) provided by the HR Manager.
- ◆ Check-out teacher guides and all teaching materials to be used for the class.
- ◆ Prepare new class information, course syllabus, and lesson plans for first two weeks of class.
- ◆ Attend required teacher training prior to the start of the school year.
- ◆ Prepare for Paideia, grade level launches, and Mini-School Night. Decorate/prepare classroom before the first day of school, abiding by the policies listed under the Aesthetics section of this handbook.
- ◆ Set up class records on (FACTS) RenWeb.
- ◆ Mark attendance each class period into (FACTS) RenWeb.

## **End of School Year**

- ◆ Turn in class records for the year to the Head of School (Grammar, SL or SR). If you teach next year, it will be returned to you.
- ◆ Turn in teacher guides and other teacher materials if not teaching the same class next year. If you are teaching the same class, you may keep the materials to work on during the summer. Please designate this on the End of Year Checklist and turn in to the Academic Assistant.
- ◆ Account for all class sets of textbooks and secure them in your cabinet.
- ◆ Remove all personal items from the classroom.
- ◆ Throw away any student projects not taken home by the students.
- ◆ Be sure classroom resources are put away neatly in the classroom cabinets.
- ◆ Remove teaching posters, etc. and return to workroom. Organize and place in resource area.
- ◆ Complete the End of Year Checklist and return it to the Academic Assistant.

## **Parental Involvement**

The primary educator in the life of a child is their parent. The tendency in Christian schools is for the school to take on more and more of this role. Veritas Academy teachers should actively seek to ensure that the parent remains the primary educator in the life of their child. We are in the support role. As such, a teacher should find meaningful ways to enhance the parents' ability to impact their child. A Veritas teacher's ultimate goal should not be to have an amazing impact on children, rather, it should be to foster an environment where parents can have this impact. This is accomplished by helping parents understand their role in each class and pursuing consistent communication with them throughout the semester.

## **Communication with the Parent**

Effective, consistent communication between the teacher and parent is vital. This communication begins with the Parent/Student Orientation and course syllabus and continues throughout the semester in the form of home assignments, class letters, emails and personal contacts.

Teachers should include sufficient information in the (FACTS) RenWeb lesson plans so that the parents can "teach" what is required at home. Be specific about your expectations and objectives for the assignment.

Due dates for long-term assignments should be listed in the Course Syllabus handed out at the start of each semester. Students will be given a minimum of one-week notice for any test or major assignment.

## **Course Syllabus and Introduction Letter**

Syllabi will be completed and updated yearly for each course through collaboration between the classroom teacher, the department head, and the Academic Dean. Updated syllabi should be submitted to your Department Head by July 15<sup>th</sup> each year.

This information will be presented to the student and parent at the beginning of each year. It is the first written opportunity to explain your expectations for the student (and parent) and will serve as a guide for the student and parent throughout the semester; therefore, it should be clear, concise, and thorough.

Prepare an introduction letter and/or class syllabus (making sure to follow the formatting provided for you by the department head) that includes:

- ◆ Course description from the Veritas Academy catalog. Please include the text of the description in your syllabus. Do not simply refer the reader to the catalog.
- ◆ Parent role taken from the catalog. Again, please include the text of the parent role in the syllabus.
- ◆ Course objectives.
- ◆ Class procedures and expectations.
- ◆ Policies about grading, classroom behavior, etc.
- ◆ Course overview and calendar (if available).
- ◆ Description of major projects/papers and due date (if available).
- ◆ Special advice for parent.
- ◆ Teacher contact info.

### **Communication When There is a Problem**

Please follow these guidelines to ensure effective communication of problems:

- ◆ Parents should always talk to the teacher first. Parents who attempt to talk to someone else in the office or another teacher should always be referred back to the teacher first.
- ◆ If the parent and teacher are unable to resolve a situation, the parent should be referred to the Department Head. The teacher should contact the Department Head to provide background information.
- ◆ If the problem cannot be resolved, the parent may speak with the Head of School (Grammar, SL or SR).

### **Parent Problems**

The partnership between the teacher and parent is effective when there is clear communication and a desire to make it work. Satan works harder to destroy this part of our academic program than any other. The teacher must take the lead in building effective relationships with each parent, even those who are more difficult to work with.

When encountering difficulties, please put into practice the following actions:

- ◆ *Try to think like a parent.* How much time will the assignment take? Is it reasonable? Is it an effective use of the student's time at home? Did I give enough instructions for the parent to do an effective teaching job at home? Am I making it easy for my parent to feel confident and helpful in the satellite classroom?
- ◆ *Respect the parent.* Veritas Academy teachers establish the pacing and content of the course without prior input from parents. However, recognize the value of what the parent contributes at home. Encourage the parents through class letters, phone calls, etc. Ask them for feedback to help improve your teaching and communication.
- ◆ *Be a good listener.* Most of the time, problems or concerns occur because there is a breakdown in communication. The parent is fearful of doing something wrong, and therefore, becomes insecure and critical of you if he or she cannot understand your expectations. Taking time to listen is a valuable gift and will help defuse any situation.

- ◆ *Make adjustments to your pacing or content only if it benefits the entire class.* The parent is a wonderful source of feedback on pacing and content, and you may want to make some adjustments if needed. However, some parents will want you to make changes that have more to do with the individual child’s abilities or study habits rather than the appropriate pacing and content in the course.
- ◆ *Always offer help.* You may not make adjustments to your pacing or content when there is a parent concern; however, you can always offer advice or encouragement that will help the parent or student cope more effectively with the assignments in the class. For example, be sure the student is working at a specific time in a structured environment at home. Offer teaching strategies to help improve the student’s weaknesses. Or, offer enrichment ideas for students who need more of a challenge.

## **Standards for Conduct in Faculty-Student Relationship**

### ***Statement of Philosophy***

Veritas Academy is committed to fostering an environment that promotes academic success and spiritual growth. In order to achieve this, we are dedicated to maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect, fairness and trust and a community that is free of behaviors which can undermine the very mission of our school. Although students bear a significant responsibility in creating and maintaining this atmosphere, the teacher and the coach bear an even greater responsibility because of the nature of their role which is not only instructional and evaluative but also one of modeling the behaviors we wish to see develop in our students.

Veritas Academy is committed to wise use of internet and communication technology, enabling students and teachers to avail themselves of the numerous benefits that come by way of these advancements. At the same time, Veritas Academy remains equally committed to setting limits and promoting self controlled use of these tools, allowing time for the development of skills and habits that can only be gained in a technology-free environment.

Taking into account the ease by which misconduct can occur in using the internet and a cell phone, Veritas Academy considers any communication between a teacher and student an activity that the school is responsible to set standards for, to train faculty and students accordingly, and to enforce the standards. Both employees and students are expected to abide by these standards in all their communications, verbal and written, in person or via technology. Employees and enrolled students represent Veritas Academy to the public at large, and misconduct in any sphere, including online communications, is to be taken seriously and can be grounds for dismissal or expulsion.

Veritas Academy expects teachers, coaches and students alike to conduct themselves in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1: 27) Teachers/coaches are responsible to demonstrate the highest standards of ethical, moral and professional behavior and to exercise like judgment while interacting sensibly and courteously with students, parents, staff and the public. In addition, teachers/coaches and students are expected to abide by respectful and wise standards in all forms of communication, reminding one another that “nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight and everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.” (Hebrews 4:13)

Additionally, all Veritas employees and regular volunteers are required to complete sexual abuse awareness training through MinistrySafe every two years.

### ***Guidelines for Teacher(/Coach)-Student Conduct:***

1. A teacher/coach must not engage in an inappropriate relationship with a student under any circumstances. Inappropriate conduct includes the following: any sexual contact; conversations of a sexual or romantic nature; obscene language; suggestive remarks or actions; jokes of a sexual nature; obscene gestures; unwarranted or inappropriate touching; sexual exhibitionism; and deliberate exposure of students to sexual behavior of others, except in the case of prescribed curriculum in which sexual themes are contextual.
2. A teacher/coach is to physically contact a student only in ways that make the student feel comfortable such as shaking hands, a congratulatory pat on the back, or with gently guiding young children or holding their hand for reassurance or encouragement. When students, especially very young children, are hurt or seek comfort, it is appropriate to provide assurance by putting an arm around them. Praying with students is highly encouraged. Refrain from: putting your arms around students when instructing them; repeatedly and unnecessarily touching students; allowing a student to sit on your lap; giving back rubs and massages which is reserved for the parent OR a trainer.
3. When serving as a student's mentor, the teacher/coach is to develop the mentoring relationship with clear professional boundaries that cannot be interpreted as a personal interest in the student. The teacher/coach is to praise and recognize all students when appropriate, and to give attention fairly to all students. Teachers are to be discerning when mentoring individual students and not display favoritism so that other students do not feel excluded or uncared for.
4. A teacher/coach is not to meet alone with a student behind closed doors (see next sentence) or be alone with a student at home or in any location where they are out of view from others. When meeting privately with a student, choose a room that has a door with a window or leave the door open; otherwise, meet in an open area.
5. The teacher/coach may not conduct a series of one-to-one meetings with a student without the knowledge of the principal and without permission from the parent.
6. The teacher/coach is not to single out a particular student or group of students for personal attention and friendship beyond the bound of an appropriate educator/mentor-student relationship.
7. The teacher/coach is not to invite students for social contact off school grounds without the permission or knowledge of the parents.
8. The teacher/coach is not to initiate discussion about their private lives or the intimate detail of the private lives of others. The teacher/coach, and not the student, is in the role of the equipper and supporter.
9. When faced with an injury, the teacher/coach needs to be sensitive in how they manage the situation, especially in dealing with a student of the opposite sex. Whenever possible a parent or teacher should be asked to assist.
10. When waiting for that last student to be picked up after a school activity (such as a sporting event), the teacher/coach should ask another faculty member or parent to remain in order to avoid one teacher/coach from having to remain alone with the last student to be picked up.
11. Teachers and coaches are only to offer rides to students with the expressed consent of the parent and only when two or more students are involved. (For employees who are friends with the family of a student(s) for whom the employee frequently provides transportation, this particular policy may be waived with the express, written consent of the family, along with their execution of a waiver of liability for the school.)
12. Teachers and coaches are not to knowingly engage in online gaming with students.
13. Teacher and coaches are not to be involved in any "chat rooms" with students.



***Guidelines for Teacher(/Coach) to Student Communication:***

1. Digital technology and social networking provide multiple means for educators and other school employees to communicate with students. To that end, electronic and online communication between employees and individual students is to be transparent, accessible to supervisors and parents, and professional in content and tone.
2. As with in-person communications, teachers/coaches should avoid the appearance of impropriety and refrain from any inappropriate electronic communication with students. Factors that may be considered in determining whether an electronic communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. The subject, content, purpose, authorization, timing and frequency of the communication;
  - b. Whether there was an attempt to conceal the communication from supervisors and/or parents;
  - c. Whether the solicitation could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship; and
  - d. Whether the communication was sexually explicit.
3. In other words, any and all communication between teacher/coach and student via written or electronic means including emails, letter, phone call, text messages and social networking sites is to be academic, sport or school related in its content and context; the teacher/coach is not to engage in conversations with students of a personal nature without valid context.
4. If an electronic communication that is not academic or school activity related is deemed necessary, it must also include the parent, or when appropriate, a school administrator.
5. All email communications to the student must be from the teacher's or coach's school email and to the student's school email. If a student emails the teacher from a personal email account, the teacher is not to respond to the email.
6. Any posting on Facebook or other social networking site must be related to school activities. Teachers may, for example, congratulate or encourage a student, but no Facebook posting can be personal in nature in any way.
7. Teachers are required to report content that raises concern for the student's welfare to the administration.
8. Email is the preferred form of communication.
9. Texting is discouraged except when necessary to expedite school plans or inform students of last minute details.
10. Phone calls should be made only when absolutely necessary and reserved for addressing major issues or emergencies. This is to protect the privacy and time of both student and teacher. Keep calls brief and to the point.
11. Refrain from communicating, in any fashion, with students after 9 PM except when involved in a late school related activity, such as a sporting or theatre event.
12. Refrain from communicating on weekends, if at all possible.
13. Teachers are encouraged to set "office hours" each week when students know they will be available to read an email or to take a phone call if it becomes necessary.

***Guidelines for Student to Teacher(/Coach) Communication:***

1. Students are to email teachers from their school email account and to the teacher's school account. Email from another account will not be responded to.
2. For academic related questions, first ask other classmates for guidance.
3. Call a teacher ONLY when it is absolutely necessary and only during designated "office hours" determined by the teacher, and only if the teacher has made this option available.

4. When emailing (or calling) a teacher, take note that the teachers has 24 hours during the weekdays, or until Monday on the weekend, to respond.
5. Do not text a teacher or coach unless it is vital for details regarding a school activity, such as change of a practice location.
6. Students are responsible to understand the internet and cell phone usage policies as set forth by Veritas Academy.

### ***Reporting Offenses***

Understand that students abused by teachers or coaches tend to delay disclosure by reason of deference to an authority figure, embarrassment, guilt and fear. The abused student fears retaliation by the offender; they fear that no one will believe them and that they will be blamed; they fear some sort of punishment. A child's desire to comply with the requests of an adult that the child trusts and by whom he or she wishes to be accepted is another inhibitor of disclosure. The genuine affection a child may have for the teacher, especially one who promotes the "special relationship" and who has spent a great deal of time in the grooming phase, should not be underestimated.

Therefore it is imperative that suspicion of abuse be reported to an administrator immediately:

1. Students are encouraged to disclose abuse to a trusted teacher or administrator and to their parents. Parents are encouraged to report suspected abuse to an administrator.
2. Teachers, coaches and staff are to report suspected abuse confidentially to their direct administrators.
  - a. GS teachers and staff will report directly to the Head of the Grammar School.
  - b. SL teachers and staff will report directly to the Head of the School of Logic.
  - c. SR teachers and staff will report directly to the Head of the School of Rhetoric.
  - d. In the event the administrator is not on campus, teachers and staff will go directly to the Head of School or to the Director of Family Ministries.
3. The administration is to take action immediately by investigating the report thoroughly, then taking action steps in accordance with the school's policies and the local and state law.
4. Upon confirmation of misconduct, the employee may for minor infractions be given oral and/or written warning, a copy of which will be placed in the employee's personnel file; but in cases of more serious misconduct or repeated minor misconduct, the employee shall be reassigned or released from employment as expeditiously as practical. In cases where the employee has broken a law, the proper governing authorities will be contacted.

## **PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

### **Purchasing Procedure**

All purchases must be approved ahead of time by a department head on a Veritas Academy purchase order. Please use a purchase order or a Veritas credit card for purchases if possible and resort to getting reimbursed only when necessary, using the online reimbursement form located on the Employee Resources page of the Veritas website.

### **Copyright Law**

In order to follow the copyright law regarding the use of printed material, music, and other media products, please abide by the following.

A teacher may:

- 1) Make a single copy, for use in scholarly research, in teaching, or in preparation for teaching a class, of the following:
  - a. A chapter from a book<sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

- b. An article from a periodical or newspaper
  - c. A short story, short essay, or short poem, whether or not from a collected work
  - d. A chart graph, diagram, drawing, cartoon, or picture from a book, periodical, or newspaper
- 2) Make multiple copies for classroom use only, and not to exceed one per student in a class, of the following:
- a. A complete poem, if it is less than 250 words and printed on not more than two pages
  - b. An excerpt from a longer poem, if it is less than 250 words
  - c. A complete article, story, or essay, if it is less than 2,500 words
  - d. An excerpt from a prose work, if it is less than 1,000 words or 10 percent of the work,
  - e. whichever is less
  - f. One chart, graph, diagram, drawing, cartoon, or picture per book or periodical

A teacher may not:

- 1) Make multiple copies of work for classroom use if it has already been copied for another class in the same institution
- 2) Make multiple copies of a short poem, article, story, or essay from the same author more than once in a class term
- 3) Make multiple copies from the same collective work or periodical issue more than three times per term

(ASCI, p. 17)

### **Books and Resources**

Teachers should use all books and resources selected for their course because each resource has been carefully selected for a purpose and parents have purchased these resources.

### **Calendar of Events**

The calendar of all Veritas events is maintained on our website. Please refer to this website when planning your own events to avoid overlap. If you desire to add an event to this calendar, please contact the Communications Department.

### **Google Drive**

Google Drive has collections of documents you need to be able to access. If you do not see the SLR docs or GS docs collection, please request access from your academic assistant. Additionally, your course folder will be shared with you. Please keep this folder organized and updated. The best way to do this is to download Google Drive to your mac or pc and always save files to this folder.

### **Emergency Procedures**

All faculty are responsible for reviewing the emergency procedures in the fall and spring of every school year and for participating in our emergency procedure drills. These procedures may be found in the SLR docs file on Google Drive

### **Student Make-up Work**

When a student misses your class, please write them an e-mail to let them know that you missed them and what they can do to make-up what they missed. If you need to get documents to them, you may use the student work pick-up/drop-off file at the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Reception Desk. Please refrain from using your mailbox for this purpose as sensitive documents may end up there.

## **Turnitin.com**

In grades 7-12, students should be expected to turn in all major assignments through turnitin.com. Your department heads should be consulted for training on how to use this resource as a deterrent to plagiarism.

## **Naviance**

Naviance is an online program used by Veritas in college advising. Teachers should make use of this program if they are asked to write and send recommendation letters for students. Contact the college advisor for instructions on how to use Naviance.

## **Communication**

Teachers are expected to read all Veritas communications carefully. Essential information is communicated through the faculty memo and the school memo. All teachers should read these memos every week.

Teachers should check their e-mail at least every few hours on school and school@home days in order to respond promptly to time sensitive matters. If an e-mail is not of the nature requiring immediate attention, teachers should respond within 24-hours. Teachers are not expected, or encouraged, to check their e-mail in the evenings or on weekends.

## **THE CLASSROOM**

### **Decorum**

The Veritas classroom should be a place of learning. Students should be expected to maintain a posture of attentiveness and learning. This includes physical posture as well as maintaining eye contact, keeping free from distractions, and choosing to be passionate about their subjects. Apathy and distracting behavior should not be tolerated.

It is the teacher's responsibility to maintain proper decorum in their classroom. If, at any point, this becomes a struggle for you, please speak with your department head, the Dean of Student Ministries and/or School Head (GS, SL, or SR) as we will be excited at the opportunity to help address the issue.

### **Authority**

Students should be expected to interact with all adults in a manner that reveals their understanding that God has established authority and placed authority over them for their good. The following principles should guide the expectations for students in how they demonstrate respect for all adults on campus:

- ◆ Obedience to authority means obeying immediately, cheerfully, and even when no one is looking.
- ◆ Submission to authority rules out debate, complaining, and talking back. A respectful manner of appealing to authority is appropriate once a child comprehends obedience.
- ◆ A demanding spirit is not a submissive spirit.
- ◆ Adults are approached and spoken to differently than peers. Students should say "Yes, Ma'am" or "Yes, Sir" as opposed to "Yeah."
- ◆ Children may not give directives to adults. They should ask rather than tell an adult what to do.
- ◆ Children should not interrupt the conversation of adults.
- ◆ Rebellion to authority includes non-verbal responses such as eye-rolling or huffing.
- ◆ When an adult speaks, the child should break attention to the activity and listen.

## **Student Conduct on Campus**

Teachers should strive to challenge students spiritually, as well as academically. Teachers should communicate the message that we expect a lot from Veritas Academy students. Correct “un-Christ-like” behavior, taking every opportunity to help students grow in their faith and their relationships with others. Each teacher should read the entire Student/Parent Handbook, especially the sections concerning academic, student conduct, and dress code. Teachers are responsible to help enforce all rules and regulations relating to student conduct on campus.

## **Monitoring the Hallways**

Teachers are expected to stand in the hallways between classes to both monitor students and to offer them a friendly greeting as they enter your class.

## **Dress Code Enforcement**

Teachers should monitor student dress when students are on campus—in class, in the hallways, or in the lunch area—according to guidelines listed in the Student/Parent Handbook. Inconsistent enforcement of this policy results in an unkempt and unprofessional looking school.

## **Accident/Incident Reporting**

It is necessary and critical that accidents and other incidents of a serious nature be reported properly and in a timely manner. When teachers or staff members observe an accident or serious incident, they need to report it immediately to the Administrator.

## **Class Time**

Students will remain in class for the entire class time, Teachers should not let students leave the classroom early. Teachers should not cause students to be tardy to the next class.

## **Tardies**

If a student is tardy, let them know and give them a mark. The teacher’s responsibility ends here. Since you will have already taken attendance and marked the student absent, office personnel will reference the marks database each afternoon and change the absences to tardies.

## **Organization and Deadlines**

Teachers should maintain an organized work environment and meet all deadlines for grading, lesson plans, etc.

Additionally, teachers should assist students in growing their ability to organize themselves. This should include providing instructions for organizing and cleaning out their binder, how to maintain an agenda book to meet deadlines, etc.

## **Classroom Cleanliness**

Teachers should instruct students, at the end of every class, to pack up all of their belongings and throw away any trash near them. If every teacher is faithful to do this, the overall cleanliness of our school will follow.

## **Gum Chewing**

Due to some studies indicating the positive effect of gum chewing on the ability for some students to pay attention, Veritas has decided not to ban the chewing of gum. Individual teachers may elect to have a policy against this for their classroom. If students are not able to chew gum respectfully, Veritas will

make a school-wide ban. Examples of disrespectful gum chewing include any action that involves removing the gum from the mouth, touching the gum with your fingers, making noise with the gum, or not properly disposing of the gum.

### **Use of Videos**

The UMS model requires teachers to be very careful with the way class time is used. The use of videos should be limited to “instruction” and not “enrichment.” Full-length films should never be shown without prior permission of your Department Head.

### **Group Work During Class**

The Veritas instructor should always be actively teaching during class time. If students are working on group work, the teacher should be walking throughout the room to assist groups as necessary. A teacher should refrain from using class time to complete their own work.

### **Classroom Environment**

Veritas teachers should strive to create an atmosphere in the classroom conducive to learning. This includes more than just the management of student behavior. The classroom ambiance, lighting, arrangement of seats, and décor should support the objectives of each day’s lesson. Sometimes this could include moving your class outside or to a different location.

### **Moving Your Class**

If you need to move your class to a new location, please let the office staff know where you will be.

### **Controversial Issues**

Teachers should avoid content that is controversial unless they deem it necessary for a specific and approved teaching objective. If controversial content (such as vile material or theological gray areas) is deemed necessary, the teacher should obtain department head approval and send a note to parents detailing what content will be presented, the objective for presenting this content, and what they should be doing at home to accomplish these objectives.

### **Prayer**

Prayer will be an integral part of the academic program. Teachers are asked to pray for their students and families, to pray together regularly as well as with students in the classroom. Some form of corporate prayer should occur during every classroom session.

### **Visitors in the Classroom**

All visitors and guests must receive prior permission from the administration before being allowed to observe or participate in classroom activity. If such permission is granted, the administration will notify the teacher about the visit. Visitors should not be allowed to interrupt classroom instruction. If teachers wish to invite visitors to class in order to contribute to the course content, they must first complete a Guest Speaker Request form in order to obtain permission from the administration for accountability purposes. All visitors must first check in with a Veritas receptionist for a visitor’s pass.

Parents who wish to observe their child in the classroom setting should be referred to the Department Head for information about and authorization for such observation.

## **Home Assignments During the Holidays**

Teachers should not schedule home assignments during school holidays. Students may choose to work on long-term assignments (e.g., read a book, complete a project, etc.) during holiday time; however, teachers should allow ample time (without the holiday) to complete the assignment.

Students are not expected to work on home assignments on any day that Veritas Academy has a scheduled holiday (i.e., Labor Day or Good Friday).

## **Class Exams/Testing Calendar**

In SLR, exam dates should be listed in the (FACTS) Renweb lesson plans with at least one-week notice. Exams and major papers should also be placed on the testing calendar. No more than two major tests/papers should be due in any grade level on the same day.

To enter a paper, project, or exam on the testing calendar make it an all-day event so that it appears at the top of the calendar. Please use the following code while entering your assignment: Grade Level/Subject/T or P. For example: “9/Sci/T” means that there will be a test in 9<sup>th</sup> grade science.

Study guides, review worksheets, or class notes should clearly delineate for the student (and parent) what will be covered on the exam. This should be noted on the lesson plans as well. Home assignments relating to an exam must be graded and returned prior to the exam over that material.

## **(FACTS) RenWeb**

Veritas Academy makes use of a powerful online school management software program (FACTS – formerly known as RenWeb) that embraces the varied needs of administration, staff, teachers, parents and students. It manages all school information including student, family and staff demographics, course schedules, grades, attendance, medical records and more in one integrated, real-time database. Teachers in third grade and above will enter grades directly into this system and have them instantly averaged. They may share lesson plans, assignments and grades with parents under password protection. Parents can check their child’s progress from any location via the web!

You may also use (FACTS) RenWeb to send emails to the parents and other staff. This online software program is accessible from any computer. Therefore you will be able to enter grades, communicate with parents and display assignments and lesson plans from home.

School of Rhetoric teachers and coaches should provide the College Advisors with rosters of students who are involved in sports and extracurricular activities and a list of honors and awards so that they can be maintained for transcripts and recommendations.

## **Lesson Plans**

Lesson plans should be generated in Microsoft Word or Google Docs and copied and pasted into (FACTS) RenWeb. The word document(s) containing your lesson plans should be saved on the Drive for reference by future teachers. SLR teachers should follow the required SLR Lesson Plans Templates, which are linked and referenced in the Beginning-of-the-Year Checklist.

Lesson plans must be posted by 5:00 PM on Thursday evening. If you need an extension, please request one from your department head. Department heads will check lesson plans by Friday at Noon, at which time they will go live to parents. When projects are assigned, time must be included on home assignments for the completion of these projects.

In the Grammar School, the home assignments should be written with the parent as the audience. In the Schools of Logic and Rhetoric, the home assignment should be written with the student as the audience, but with frequent notes to parents helping them engage with their student and the material.

Write your lessons in a consistent format so that students/parents get used to how to read and interpret them. Please make objectives, your daily agenda, and due dates very clearly labeled.

Quality lesson plans start with clear objectives. Objectives should be S.M.A.R.T.

- S – Simple and Specific
- M – Measurable
- A – Attainable
- R – Realistic
- T – Time constrained

Finally, for all teachers, lessons should seek to apply the truths learned in John Milton Gregory's book, the 7-Laws of Teaching. All teachers must read this book (and re-read this book) and apply these laws in their instruction.

### **How Much Work to Assign**

Our families come to Veritas desiring some time with their child. Without a doubt, this objective is achieved as they spend time doing school with their child, but this does not mean that we should fill every spare moment with busy work. Please do not assign busy work. Additionally, just because something is a quality assignment, does not mean it should be assigned. Teachers should limit assignments to only what is purposeful and absolutely necessary.

Remember, more hours of work does not necessarily mean more results from our students. In fact, if our students have too much work, they cannot go deep with any of it and the aims of classical education are not achieved.

Please abide by guidelines provided for you by your department head for the number of hours of work to assign each week and regularly poll your students to ensure that you remain within these bounds.

### **Recording Grades**

All Veritas Academy teachers are required to keep accurate and up-to-date records of all grades. The categories and weighting of grades is pre-determined by the academic team and may not be altered by the teacher without permission from their department head. In third grade and above, grades for assignments and tests must be entered weekly into the Veritas Academy school management system (FACTS/RenWeb). Department Heads will periodically check the status of the entering of grades. Parents will have access to their children's grades; therefore, it is imperative that all information be current.

In order to provide immediate feedback and sufficient grading opportunities, teachers should enter at least one grade per week. Additionally, no single assignment should be worth more than 15% of any given semester.

Teachers form an important partnership with parents to ensure that the students succeed. This is accomplished by helping parents understand their role in each class and pursuing consistent communication with them throughout the semester.



## **Test/Major Assignment Averages**

An ideally written test should, in a well-mixed class of at least 10 Veritas students, produce a class average of around 85%. Should the class average for an exam fall below 80%, the teacher should first attempt to discern what happened and then offer a solution that enables the class average to rise above 80%.

## **Late Work Passes**

In grades 5-12, only work that is turned in on time will be graded. This policy is important for the character growth of our students. However, occasionally a student will have a legitimate excuse for not having work completed and may need a little grace extended. To accommodate these special circumstances, Veritas offers students late work passes. In the School of Logic, late work passes allow students to turn in work within one week after the grades are posted to (FACTS) RenWeb without penalty. In the School of Rhetoric, late work passes allow students to turn in work within one week after the assignment is due and communicated in FACTS (RenWeb) lesson plans and homework. Late work passes are permitted to be used on any assignment, large or small, with the exception of tests, quizzes, presentations, recitations and group assignments where the individual part is necessary for the progress of the entire group.

If a class meets four hours each week, teachers will provide each student with four late work passes. If a class meets three hours each week, teachers will provide each student with three late work passes for the year. If a class meets two hours each week, teachers will provide each student with two late work passes for the year. If a class meets one hour each week, teachers will provide each student with one late work pass for the year. As fifth grade students take on the new responsibilities in the transition from Grammar School to the School of Logic, they will be granted one extra grace pass in each course.

To keep late work passes secure, we recommend that these not be actual physical passes, but merely something that is tracked in your gradebook. If students have unused late work passes at the end of the year, they may submit each pass for one point of extra credit on their final exam, final project, or final paper.

## **Late Work for Grammar School**

Veritas Academy, desiring to promote both Godly character qualities and high academic standards, has adopted the following principles concerning student assignments turned in late:

- ◆ Homework is due at the beginning of class.
- ◆ In grades K-2, assignments may be accepted one day late if the teacher is notified of a valid reason. If later than one day, credit will not be given for the assignment.
- ◆ In grades 3-4, ten points will be deducted. Assignments turned in later than one day will not receive a grade and a zero will be entered in the gradebook.

## **Calculation of Grades**

All assignments at Veritas should be worth 100 points. Teachers should use the category weights approved by their department head and weight individual assignments to make one type of assessment worth more than another.

In the lower SL, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades, each semester counts for 50% of the overall grade. There are no final exams in the lower SL.

In the upper SL, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, each semester counts for 50% of the overall grade. If there are final exams, they should be factored into the second-semester grade. The purpose of these final exams is training for what they will experience when they arrive in the SR.

In the SR, 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade, each semester counts 40% of the overall grade each. The final exams taken at the end of the school year will count for the other 20%.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are distributed electronically after each semester. Teachers will have one full week of school to complete grading and to complete report cards after the semester is completed. At this time, department heads will review the report cards prior to distribution to parents.

Filling out report cards includes uploading grades and attendance, scoring each student on the four character traits, and writing a unique and thoughtful comment for each student.

### **Struggling Students**

If a student is struggling in your class, please contact the Learning Support Services (LSS) Coordinator for his/her school. Please reach out to the Head of GS, SL or SR to discuss prior to contacting parents if concerns are evident.

### **Attendance**

Teachers should mark attendance in (FACTS) RenWeb at the start of every class period. Please plan an activity that will engage the minds of your students at the start of your class and use this time to take attendance.

### **Non-Denominational Policy and Classroom Instruction**

Veritas Academy is committed to an orthodox, non-denominational statement of faith. We do so out of concern for two dynamics. First, we are a Christian ministry and desire to be in community with those who agree with a time-tested, classic orthodox statement of faith. Second, we understand that there exist different ways to express our faith, especially in the local or denominational setting.

For this reason, we require all families and staff to sign, as part of their application process, the Statements on Faith, Life & Conduct included in our by-laws. At the same time, we have left certain issues to the determination of the family as they seek to express faith in ways consistent with their convictions. These issues include the following:

- ◆ The mode of church government and authority.
- ◆ The time and mode of Christian baptism.
- ◆ The relationship between human free will and salvation.
- ◆ The question of security of salvation.
- ◆ The nature of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, including:
  - The question of when the Holy Spirit comes into the life of the believer.
  - The subject of sinless perfection.
  - The gifts of the Holy Spirit, the understanding and expression of which have been variously interpreted throughout Church history.
- ◆ The interpretation of verses referencing future events (eschatology).

For the purposes of classroom instruction, there will be times when one or more of these issues will be raised for discussion. As a teacher, you have the opportunity to determine the direction the discussion will take. Within the parameters of Veritas Academy's non-denominational policy, teachers have the freedom to discuss such matters insofar as they pertain to the class content. However, teachers do not have the freedom to teach one certain view of the previously mentioned items as the correct one. This includes direct statements and indirect statements or gestures which have as their result the conveying of criticism toward one side or the other of the above mentioned items.

Practically, when class discussion touches these items, it is best to present both sides of an issue with the sober conclusion that men and women of faith are found on both sides of the issue. The students should also be encouraged to dialogue with their parents and pastors in order to reach conclusions consistent with their scriptural convictions.

Another potentially sensitive issue is evangelizing students without parental knowledge. If a situation arises in which you feel that sharing the gospel, including calling for a commitment to Christ, is appropriate, please communicate with the student's parents your understanding of the situation. It may be that they very much want you to help their child receive Christ. On the other hand, some parents may want to reserve for themselves or their churches the explanation and decision process of the gospel. In such cases, the parents will be grateful to know that their child is asking questions pertaining to faith.

## Getting a Substitute

### *Grammar School*

- ◆ Unexpected absence (i.e. you're sick or an unexpected event occurs on a school day)
  - It's ***your responsibility*** to arrange for your own substitute from the approved sub list found on Google Drive. If a sub cannot be located, the Team Lead or Academic Assistant can assume this responsibility.
  - Once a substitute is confirmed, call the GS Head to inform her that a sub is covering your class(es). If that person is unavailable, try contacting the Academic Dean (Amanda), or Academic Assistant (Cindy). Bottom line, the teacher must talk to someone, not just leave a message (by 7:15 a.m. the day of the absence).
  - Complete the Substitute area in (FACTS) RenWeb
- ◆ Advance notice absence (i.e. you know in advance that you need off)
  - Confirm absence date/plans in advance with the GS Head and your Team Lead
  - Secure substitute(s) and email that information to GS Head, Team Lead and the Academic Assistant
  - Email HR ([hr@veritasacademy.net](mailto:hr@veritasacademy.net)) and Accounting ([allison.malone@veritasacademy.net](mailto:allison.malone@veritasacademy.net)) if your absence is school related so that they do not make any payroll deductions.
  - Complete the Substitute area in (FACTS) RenWeb

### *Schools of Logic & Rhetoric*

- ◆ Unexpected absence (i.e. you're sick or an unexpected event occurs on a school day)
  - It's ***your responsibility*** to arrange for your own substitute from the approved sub list found on Google Drive. If a sub cannot be located, the Dept. Head or Administrative Assistant can assume this responsibility.
  - Once a substitute is confirmed, call your Dept. Head to inform them that a sub is covering your class(es). If that person is unavailable, try contacting the Academic Dean (Melonie),

or Head of SL (Starrla) or Head of SR (Troy). Bottom line, the teacher must talk to someone, not just leave a message (by 7:15 a.m. the day of the absence).

- Complete the Substitute area in (FACTS) RenWeb
- ◆ Advance notice absence (i.e. you know in advance that you need off)
  - Confirm absence date/plans in advance with the SL or SR Campus Head and your Dept. Head
  - Secure substitute(s) and email that information to SL or SR Campus Head, Dept. Head and the Administrative Assistant
  - Email HR ([hr@veritasacademy.net](mailto:hr@veritasacademy.net)) and Accounting ([allison.malone@veritasacademy.net](mailto:allison.malone@veritasacademy.net)) if your absence is school related so that they do not make any payroll deductions.
  - Complete the Substitute area in (FACTS) RenWeb

**AGREEMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK**

Employer and Employee agree that this Handbook exclusively sets forth Veritas Academy employment policies and procedures and represents and expresses their complete agreement regarding the terms and conditions of employment. Employer and Employee further agree that none of these policies and procedures can be amended, modified or altered in anyway by oral statements or in any other way, but can only be altered by written amendment signed by the Head of School of Veritas Academy.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Veritas Academy Employment Handbook. I have thoroughly read and understand Veritas Academy employment policies and rules set forth, and agree to abide by them.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Employee's Signature*                      *Date*

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT**

I, as an employee of Veritas Academy acknowledge that my employment is “at-will”. The corporate “at-will” policy means that neither you nor this company is committed to continue the employment relationship for any specific term. Rather, the employment relationship will continue at will. Either side may terminate the relationship at any time, with or without notice. Also, Veritas Academy retains the right to demote, transfer, change job duties, and change compensation at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause in its sole discretion. In deciding to work for Veritas Academy, or continue to work for this organization, I understand and accept these terms of employment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Employee's Signature*                      *Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Employee's Name (please print)*