



# The Veritas Standard | Parent & Student Edition

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# SCHOOL OVERVIEW

## 1.1 | HISTORY

Veritas School began with a common vision in the late 1990s held by Richmond families who had been influenced by writings advocating the return to the classical education model. These writings embraced the principles of the Trivium, the inclusion of formal Latin study, and an emphasis on studying the great books from a Christ-centered perspective.

Veritas opened its doors at Crestwood Presbyterian Church on Jahnke Road in Richmond in 2000 with 25 students in attendance. In 2003, Veritas opened a second location at Stony Point Reformed Presbyterian Church to house the upper grades. By 2007, the school had grown to 190 students in 9 grades. In 2008, the school made its first purchase of property, obtaining three acres of land adjacent to Crestwood Presbyterian Church. In the winter of 2009, the Upper School moved to this neighboring land, creating a single, interim campus. In the spring of 2013 Veritas secured its current and permanent campus located on the north side of Richmond at 3400 Brook Road. In the fall of 2017, Veritas opened the year with more than 520 students and anticipates continued growth to a maximum ideal size of 650 – 700 students.

## 1.2 | MISSION

***Veritas exists to glorify God by cultivating students of wisdom and virtue through a Christ-centered, academically rigorous classical education.***

Our goal is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and vision necessary to be effective leaders and servants for Christ in a wide variety of professions and vocations. We seek to raise up a generation of young people who have a genuine love of learning, who love Jesus Christ with all their heart, soul, and mind, and who can articulate the Christian message with clarity, creativity, and courage.

## 1.3 | STATEMENT OF FAITH

Veritas is a non-denominational Christian school. We embrace the historic tenets of Christianity as presented in this Statement of Faith. Beyond these primary doctrines, we respect and acknowledge the primacy of the family and refer any secondary doctrinal questions to parents for clarification.

1. We believe there is one eternal God existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. We believe the Bible is the Word of God, verbally inspired and inerrant, and is the supreme and final authority in faith and life.
3. We believe God created the Heavens and the Earth, and created man in His image.
4. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God.
5. We believe that humankind, by disobedience, fell from a sinless state at the suggestion of Satan. This fall plunged humankind into a state of sin and spiritual death, and brought upon all humanity the sentence of eternal death. From this condition, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary for salvation. By God's grace only, through faith alone, are we saved from our sin.
6. We believe Jesus Christ is God manifested in the flesh, born of a virgin; He lived a sinless life, suffered and died on our behalf, and He arose bodily from the grave, ascended to the right hand of the Father and is coming again in power and glory.
7. We believe faith without works is dead. The present ministry of the Holy Spirit is to indwell (live within) the Christian, enabling him to live a godly life.
8. We believe that God's design for marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other.
9. We believe there will be a bodily resurrection of the saved to life and of the lost to damnation.
10. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

## 1.4 | EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Veritas teaches that trusting and revering God is the first and most important step in acquiring knowledge. Thus, instruction at Veritas acknowledges that God is evident in creation; sovereign through history; revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ; and intimately concerned with us as individuals. Veritas teaches students how history displays God's providence; how mathematics manifests the order and symmetry of God's creation<sup>1</sup>; how the language arts provide humans with the tools necessary to extend Christ's kingdom; how science testifies of God's actions and methods<sup>2</sup>; and how through the creative arts God has entrusted to humanity a finite ability to create beautiful works<sup>3</sup>. This integrated approach, in concert with scriptural training and regular worship, combines faith and reason to encourage students to develop a thorough and thoughtful Biblical worldview.

Veritas offers a high quality, liberal-arts education that draws deeply from the history and culture of Western civilization, and we employ a classical curriculum modeled on the medieval Trivium and Quadrivium. At Veritas, we acknowledge the existence of absolute truths and God's sovereignty over all aspects of His creation. Thus, with confidence and without fear we explore challenging ideas and philosophies. Our students engage in an honest and open conversation with the past, developing a strong knowledge base through a study of the great people, thinkers, and writers throughout history while also learning to understand the consequences of ideas and actions. By combining thorough knowledge of the past with the skills to reason logically about the significant issues of their lives, students are trained to learn for themselves and to cultivate strong minds that can distinguish truth from error. With this approach to education, we seek to encourage independence of mind within a Biblical framework that equips students to think beyond the classroom and for a lifetime.

Veritas recognizes that parents are ultimately responsible for the education of their children. Faculty and staff regard their mission to be the assisting of parents in the fulfillment of this God-given responsibility. The school functions as a nurturing community where all students are respected as unique individuals created in the image of God, each with specific abilities and needs. Teachers love Jesus Christ, their students, and the subjects they teach, and they are dedicated to helping all students realize their fullest potential spiritually, intellectually, creatively, socially, and physically. Veritas seeks to serve families of all income levels, and we are committed to drawing students from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds through a generous tuition assistance program.

Student/teacher ratios that allow teachers to know each student well will be maintained. Small class sizes allow students opportunities to participate often, lead activities, and to develop their unique talents, interests, and gifts. Teachers, administrators, and staff will strive to know and love every student in a way that will encourage each student to reach his or her God-given potential.

We believe that children with a wide-variety of academic skills can benefit greatly from the classical method. Due to both funding and curricular limitations, Veritas may not be able to provide an appropriate educational experience for children with certain learning disabilities or those with specific needs. However, by challenging children and leveraging their natural abilities during different stages of childhood, Veritas strives to take ordinary children and deliver extraordinary results.

At Veritas, we believe entwining a high standard of academic scholarship with authentic, grace-infused discipleship in a nurturing and joy-filled environment beautifully prepares students to discover their purpose and potential. Three concurrent commitments undergird and illumine our philosophy: 1) intentionally **Christ-centered** in curriculum and culture, 2) education via the **classical** method, 3) and in **covenant** with God, and in partnership with the school and one another.

## 1.5 | CHRIST-CENTERED

Instruction at Veritas acknowledges that all life, knowledge, and meaning extend from our Creator. Our Christ-centered curriculum means we do more than simply provide a religion class among many other classes; rather, by integrating the Scriptures throughout the curriculum, we present the Lord as the One in whom all knowledge is united. This approach requires that all subjects, whether history, art, music, literature, mathematics, or science, be taught in the light of God's existence and His revelation to humanity through His Son, Jesus Christ. We lead students in a pursuit of truth knowing that all truth points to God, and we encourage every student to develop a deep, genuine relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

## 1.6 | CLASSICAL

Classical education defies simple definition but can be distinguished from contemporary, progressive education in its goals, its content, and its methods. Classical education has as its goal the formation of flourishing human beings rather than productive workers while encouraging students to pursue truth, beauty, and goodness rather than temporal success.

The term “classical” is not meant to signify an education that is antiquated and out of touch with current culture but rather an educational stream that flows from the Greeks, Romans and Medieval Christians. The Greeks and Romans sought the logos that unified knowledge; the Church declared that logos to be Jesus, using what they had inherited from the Classical world to serve new ends. Veritas, and schools like us around the world, are seeking to recover that stream more fully in our own age.

Several metaphors help in understanding the vast world of classical education. It can be likened to a feast in which the table is overflowing with nutritious and delectable food; our students and teachers enjoy robust conversation around the table with great minds like Homer, St. Augustine, Isaac Newton, and Charlotte Bronte. The Liberal Arts, or the Trivium and Quadrivium, offer seven traditional paths towards learning truth; these seven paths, pursued for their own value and not for utilitarian purposes, lead student towards freedom rather than servitude.

Dorothy Sayers, in her 1948 essay “The Lost Tools of Learning” offers the Trivium as a metaphor for childhood development in which subjects are taught in the stages of grammar, logic, and rhetoric; although not a historic use of the Trivium, her thoughts have offered educators much help in designing a curricular and pedagogical path that honors the natural development of a child’s mind. Applying the principles of the Trivium, teachers equip students with fundamental knowledge, logical thinking, and eloquent communication skills across all subjects.

## 1.7 | COVENANTAL

As a covenantal Christian school, Veritas serves children of believing parents. We require that parents be professing Christians and be committed to a Christ-centered “paideia” (full instruction and upbringing of a child). At Veritas, parents can have confidence they are in a partnership with other Christian parents that share similar commitments.

As believers, we are brothers and sisters in Christ, joint-heirs in the gospel and, therefore, have a great privilege and responsibility in our relationship with one another and with the mission of the school. While we are not the local church, we are a community often engaging in prayer, service, fellowship, and Biblical instruction.

Therefore, as a covenant community of parents, staff, faculty, and students, we abide by Biblical principles of Christian conduct. Words and actions which are expressly forbidden in Scripture, including but not limited to blasphemy, profanity, dishonesty, theft, drunkenness, sexual intimacy outside marriage, and homosexual practice, are not acceptable.

We expect all members of the Veritas community to be growing in their faith, pursuing godliness, and repenting of the “sins of the spirit”, notably pride, covetousness, jealousy, lust, immodesty, as all are destructive to the unity of the Body of Christ. Furthermore, we will seek to nurture the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Covenant partnership at Veritas means much more than involvement. It means that we share core and agreed upon principles and objectives (see *Principles of Partnership* below), that we commit together to do the hard work of honest, timely, and biblically-guided communication and that we will strive to model for the children entrusted to our care those things that are true, good and beautiful. We are convinced that if we are truly aligned on the major objectives, walking shoulder to shoulder in the same direction, we will not only avoid much of the distraction and division that can characterize school communities, but will give our children a profoundly formative academic, social and spiritual education.

Veritas School maintains a commitment to the principle of “in loco parentis.” This simply means we recognize that we operate as an extension of the family, the responsible unit in God’s plan for the education of children. Accordingly, we see our teachers as functioning with delegated authority from parents who are accountable to God for the education of their children. As a result, we strongly encourage parental involvement at Veritas, and we enthusiastically invite parents to participate actively in the school. We also expect parents to submit to the policies and decisions of the school.

We are also a community of learners expressing worship and faith by the engagement and development of our minds. Whether parents, faculty, or students, we are committed to being life-long learners. As such, we will create opportunities for the Veritas community to learn together through various readings, discussions, and presentations.<sup>4</sup>

## 1.8 | PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP

At Veritas, we believe learning can truly be a “garden of delight,” a place where young plants are given excellent nourishment, rich ‘soil’, and joyful encouragement. Partnering with Christian parents who are growing in their faith, in the care of a church community, means that the minds and hearts of students are cultivated not only at school, but also at home and church. We pray that in each setting, our students are being established and equipped to bear much fruit – for the glory of God and the good of others.

This partnership is at the very core of who we are as a community of faith and learning. By partnership, we mean we are in covenant with one another, and with God, in this shared vision and mission. The relationship between parent and school must be a cooperative and collaborative one for us to be successful.

As such, the Veritas partnership philosophy is based on three main ideas:

### Shared and Agreed Upon Goals

One of the beautiful things about a Veritas education is clearly established “telos” – meaning the purpose or end goal. With that telos in mind, we’ve designed an in and out of classroom education that begins with the end in mind. From the mortar boards of graduation to the laurel wreaths our youngest students receive their first day of school, everything we do flows out of what we call the “**Portrait of the Graduate.**” In joining the Veritas community, families are agreeing on the primary objectives captured in this portrait.

### Portrait of a Graduate

We desire to cultivate students who ...

- Understand and believe the Gospel, enjoying a sincere, growing faith.
- Experience and desire authentic Christian community.
- Communicate effectively in speech and writing.
- Reason critically, expansively and independently.
- Possess the tools and desire for a lifetime of learning.
- Serve the kingdom of God and engage their culture faithfully.

In addition to the Portrait of the Graduate, we work hard to clearly communicate other priorities, goals, and objectives that are core to who we are. We call these our “Core Commitments.” They include things like instruction in Latin and logic, the pursuit of the heart rather than just behavior, the value of great literature, art and music, the integration of disciplines, the cultivation of the affections, and so on.

Together, these make up the “90%” that define us as a school and drive curricular and co-curricular activities and programs. We will never all agree on the remaining “10%” and therefore we all have to compromise to some degree. Certainly, families will have different preferences as to the next language they want their child to study, the sports they want offered, a uniform preference, or whether or not a snow day is called. When we use the term “the 90% Rule,” we are saying that if you are aligned and in agreement with the 90%, we ask you to be understanding and gracious about the 10% that might not be your particular preference.

If we are truly aligned on the major objectives, walking shoulder to shoulder in the same direction, we avoid much of the distraction and division that can characterize school communities.

## **ORGANIZATION**

### **2.1 | MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS**

Veritas is a member of three professional organizations: Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS), the Society for Classical Learning (SCL), and Independent School Management (ISM). The ACCS and SCL are associations of schools whose primary mission is to promote, establish, and equip schools committed to a classical and Christian approach to education. ISM is a well-respected, research-based, independent school consulting company. ISM offers a wide variety of seminars, materials, and services to enable schools to achieve excellence not only in teaching and learning, but also in the more unseen business, legal, and strategic areas that will determine the future viability of a school.

Veritas is officially accredited by the Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS). The ACCS is one of eleven accrediting agencies approved by the Virginia Council of Private Education (VCPE). As a result of being a member of VCPE, Veritas is also a member of the Virginia Independent School Athletic Association (VISAA).

### **2.2 | BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Board of Trustees of Veritas School is responsible for governing the affairs and operation of the school in accordance with Scripture, the Bylaws, Mission Statement, Philosophy Statement, and Statement of Faith of the school. The Board is comprised of between five and fifteen members, who are elected for three-year terms. Because of the corporate nature of the Board, any single member, as an individual, has no authority over the school in any capacity.

### **2.3 | NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Veritas admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship, financial assistance and loan programs, athletic programs, and other school-administered programs.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **3.1 | GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

We believe that regular attendance is essential to a child's education and participation in the Veritas community. Priority should be given to having students at school. Planned absences should be minimized.

### **3.2 | SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE**

Junior Kindergarten	8:15 – 11:45 a.m. (Monday & Wednesday) and 8:15 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (Friday)
JK Extended Day	11:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m. (Monday and Wednesday)
Lower School	8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (Monday – Thursday) and 8:00 a.m. – 1:10 p.m. (Friday)
Upper School	8:00 a.m. – 3:05 p.m. (Monday – Thursday) and 8:00 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. (Friday)

Parents are expected to pick up their children promptly at dismissal time. Lower School students who are not picked up by the end of carpool time will be monitored in the front office while they wait for their parents to arrive.

### **3.3 | AFTER HOURS**

Veritas Community principles of virtuous speech and action apply to on- and off-campus school-related activities both during and outside of school hours. Modesty in dress and wholesome language are expected.

Parents are expected to supervise their children when on campus after hours, including during sports events. Parents seated in the gym bleachers may not allow their children to roam about Lingle Hall or the Quad.

Live conversation and interactions between people is to take precedence over electronic communication and entertainment, not only during the school day but after school and at school events. The Internet is not to be accessed by students through any device while on campus, unless under the clear supervision of their parents. Students on campus after school hours or on school-sponsored trips are to use electronic devices only for necessary communication purposes, and not for video or music sharing, without specific permission from the adult in charge. More than one student viewing a single electronic screen will be considered a violation of this guideline.

Students participating in an afternoon study time while waiting for a Conservatory or athletic event may use headphones to listen to music but may not share a set of headphones with another student for collective listening. Wearing headphones sends the message to others that one does not want to be bothered. Therefore, other use of headphones on campus is not allowed. Children of faculty members may use headphones in their own parent's classroom or office.

Any Veritas faculty or staff member may address these issues at any location on campus and will report the incident to the Upper School administration.

### **3.4 | SHORT-TERM ABSENCES AND MAKE-UP WORK**

If a student is absent from school, for any reason, the parents should contact the school office by email or phone as soon as possible on each day of absence. Homework for grades 3 to 12 will be posted on RenWeb for students who may have books and materials at home with them. Otherwise, make-up work will be provided to students upon their return to school.

### **3.5 | LONG-TERM ABSENCES AND PROVISION FOR MAKE-UP WORK**

If a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, for any reason, the parents should contact the appropriate school office by email or phone as soon as possible on each day of absence. Make-up work will be compiled and available for pick-up at the end of the third day of absence.

#### **Parent Planned Absences and Provision for Make-Up Work**

We will cooperate with families taking their children from school for vacations, trips, etc. However, when extended absences are voluntary (as opposed to being the result of an emergency or illness) we expect teachers to be notified at least one week beforehand and for all schoolwork (including tests, quizzes, papers, projects, etc.) to be completed within the time specified by the teacher. Teachers may provide students with work in advance of an absence but are not required to do so. In general, we recommend that families coordinate travel schedules with the school calendar to avoid voluntary extended absences.

### **3.6 | MAXIMUM ABSENCES**

If the number of parent-planned absences exceeds 10% of the number of days in the term, or if the total number of planned and unplanned absences exceeds 15% of the number of days in the term, then the student's parents will schedule a meeting with the appropriate principal to determine whether the student will receive credit for the term.

### **3.7 | TARDINESS**

A tardy is defined as any occasion when the student is late for school at the beginning of the day or late for a class during the day. To be counted "on time" the student must be in the room (or Morning Meeting location), in his or her seat, and prepared for class to begin. After the third tardy in a term, a meeting with the appropriate principal and the student (grades 7-12) or the parent (grades JK-6) will be required to discuss a plan for changing the pattern of tardiness. This plan may include detention time for future tardiness.

### **3.8 | COMPLETION OF MAKE-UP WORK**

If absent from school, students must take make-up tests and complete missed work in a timely fashion. Lower School students will be guided by their teachers to make a make-up plan. Upper School students will have a grace period equal to the length of their absence, unless a teacher determines that additional time is appropriate. For instance, if a student is absent on Tuesday and returns on Wednesday, all work must be made up by the end of Thursday. Make-up tests will not be taken home, except in extenuating circumstances and with approval of the appropriate principal.



## ACADEMICS

### 4.1 | PHILOSOPHY

See Section 1.3 for an overview of Classical and Christian Education.

### 4.2 | CLASS PLACEMENT

The teachers and administration determine class placement prayerfully each summer. Parents are asked not to make requests beforehand. Class rosters are issued in late summer. Parents are strongly discouraged from appealing the class placement of his/her child. Nevertheless, should a parent desire to appeal a placement, the appeal should be expressed to the appropriate Principal.

### 4.3 | ASSESSING STUDENTS IN TWO PRIMARY DOMAINS

All students are assessed in two primary domains: a quantitative measure of academic achievement and a qualitative measure of habits of heart, soul, and mind. Students in grades JK-6 receive academic achievement scores per subject area as well as scores for subcategories of each subject. Students in grades 7-12 receive academic achievement scores per course.

#### Habits of Heart, Soul, and Mind

A student characterized by a **teachable spirit** receives both instruction and correction without defensiveness and makes intentional application to future assignments or situations.

A student characterized by a **passion for and love of learning** demonstrates an eagerness to learn through intentional engagement in class discussions, pursuit of learning outside of class, and a receptive countenance in the classroom.

A student who **listens attentively** attends to classroom discussion, teacher instruction, and assignment directions by practicing self-control in thought, word, and deed.

A student who **asks purposeful questions** joyfully furthers class discussion by asking questions that are on topic, extend class discussions, and contribute to the betterment of the group.

A student who **respects and obeys teachers** displays first time obedience and deference to the teacher in both verbal response and body language.

A student who **shows respect and consideration for peers** considers the feelings and best interests of others during class discussions, at lunch and recess, and during group work activities.

A student who **demonstrates self-control** maintains appropriate decorum in body, action, and speech in the face of difficult emotions or challenging stimuli.

A student who **participates responsibly in a group** works diligently toward the assigned task, neither dominating the group nor detracting from the goal.

A student who **works independently with diligence** perseveres in the completion of a given task with minimal distraction or redirection.

A student who **produces neat work** submits work that reflects his best effort in craftsmanship or penmanship and is free of detracting smudges, tears, or stray marks.

A student who **expresses ideas clearly and succinctly** uses both speech and written language effectively to communicate with minimal tangents or distractions.

A student who **follows directions accurately and completely** reads directions before beginning an assignment, asks appropriate clarifying questions when given oral instructions, and executes assignments that conform to expectations.

A student who **manages time and materials well** initiates task completion independently, produces quality work in the given time, paces tasks efficiently, understands and implements a system to manage papers and materials, and spends class time wisely.

A student who **perseveres through difficult tasks** overcomes challenges and persists through challenging circumstances, personal weaknesses, or overwhelming assignments.

A student who **practices humility** modestly defers to others, rejoices in the accomplishments of others, and does not draw undue attention to himself.

Measures of the habits of heart, soul, and mind are communicated to parents of students in grades JK-6 via formal report cards, while reflections upon such habits are communicated to parents of students in grades 7-12 through informal conversations, written communication, or scheduled parent-teacher conferences.

The excellent student is not defined by numerical grades. Upper School students are encouraged to pursue the following “**Intellectual Virtues**” taken from *Habits of the Mind* by James Sire. These virtues challenge each teacher and student to apply biblical principles to the area of academics. They illustrate what it means to be faithful with one’s gifts and abilities—how a godly person would approach the learning process. As these virtues grow within a student, academic growth will follow.

**Acquisition Virtues:**

**Passion for Truth**

Inquisitiveness/Curiosity  
Teachableness  
Persistence  
Humility

**Application virtues:**

**Passion for Holiness**

Desire to apply what is learned  
Love for God and others  
Fortitude  
Integrity  
Humility

**Maintenance virtues:**

**Passion for Consistency**

Perseverance  
Courage  
Patience  
Tenacity  
Humility

**Communication virtues:**

**Compassion for Others**

Clarity of expression  
Orderliness of presentation  
Aptness of illustration  
Humility

The Acquisition Virtues govern how and why people learn new things, emphasizing that wisdom is the goal of learning. One who exhibits these qualities will ask questions and will continue asking questions until he understands. He will not act as if he cannot learn anything from certain people or as if all his assumptions must be correct. Learning will not be limited to school hours or to academic settings. All of life is this person’s classroom.

The Maintenance Virtues remind us that effort is required not only to acquire knowledge but to retain it. When remembering or recalling information is a struggle, these characteristics cause a person to press on. This person won’t be found cramming for exams or only working hard when report card time comes close.

The Application Virtues demand that the learner do something with his knowledge. We are not to be simply collectors of information and insight; we must apply our knowledge to life. Having integrity leads people to hold themselves to the same standard to which they hold others. They practice what they preach, even when it is hard. These students are not those of which James would say that they look in the mirror but go away without fixing anything.

The Communication Virtues concern how we express our knowledge to others. Do we talk over their heads, or do we find ways to make sure that what we are saying is clear to our audience? Taking time to carefully present information, either in writing or orally, in a way that considers the audience is one way that we honor others—even when those others are teachers!

Humility dominates the lists as it speaks to the motivation behind all the other virtues. Is chasing the truth only for the purpose of dominating others? Does one put together a carefully constructed presentation only to look better than one’s classmates? Or, are one’s academic abilities and hard work offered with the recognition that all good things have come from God and are to be used for the good of others and the glory of God? The humble student refrains from flaunting either his mistakes or his successes in ways that belittle others. The humble student can celebrate others’ success and will help others in their weaknesses. The humble student measures neither himself nor others by their academic accomplishments.

#### 4.4 | GRADING FOR GRADES K-6

Students, particularly young students, need correction, guidance, and instruction rather than a quantitative designation on their work. This helps them to focus on their actual work, to mature as they learn new habits and skills, and to consider how they can improve.

Narrative feedback has been part of historical classical education, as it is more about a student's formation as a person than about measuring what he or she knows. At Veritas, we want to give parents rich qualitative feedback. This strengthens our partnership, and helps students to place their focus on learning, not a quantitative mark alone.

Therefore, evaluation of student progress in both academics and habits of heart, soul, and mind are reported to parents with a combination of non-numeric designations and narrative feedback. Parents are encouraged to review returned work with their children; feedback and corrections made by teachers will show where growth and improvement is necessary. A checkmark on the work signifies that the work meets or exceeds the expectations for progress in their skills and knowledge. A check-minus signifies that the work does not meet the expectations for some reason. The comments and corrections should indicate the reason.

Although report cards will be issued, conversations during parent-teacher conferences and/or phone calls are the most valuable means of reporting academic achievement, classroom interactions, and need for improvement.

##### Report Card Categories:

- E/Exceptional: This work is truly remarkable for the grade level. This is not the equivalent of an A and should be a relatively infrequent designation.
- M/Meritorious: This work deserves praise for being well done and meeting the expectations for the grade level. This ought to be the majority of grades, and in many classes will be given to every student.
- NS/Not Sufficient: This student's work does not meet the expectations for the grade level and does not align with the trajectory needed to satisfy the requirements for promotion to the next grade level.

##### Habits of Heart and Mind Categories

- S/Strong: This area is a noted strength of the student.
- G/Growing: The student shows a desire to practice this habit and is making progress in consistency.
- W/Weak: The student's lack of consistency in this habit is a hindrance to his or her own progress or to classmates' progress.

All marks of NS (Not Sufficient) or W (Weak) on a report card should have been preceded by conversations with parents. Any work or habits that are problematic enough to receive these report card designations warrant that they be communicated along the way.

#### 4.5 | GRADING SCALE FOR GRADES 7-12

For Grades 7 – 12, measures of academic achievement are reported using the following scale and corresponding grade points. Based on a student's trajectory, a teacher may raise or lower a final course grade when a numerical average does not reflect most recent patterns.

Letter	Meaning	Percentage	Grade Point
A	Mastery	90 – 100	4.0
B	Proficiency	80 – 89	3.0
C	Competence	70 – 79	2.0
F	Unsatisfactory	0 – 69	0.0

#### **4.6 | ASSESSMENTS FOR GRADES 7-12**

Upper School teachers and administrators will work together towards a reasonable distribution of assessments both during and at the end of the grading term. Students will not be expected to take more than two significant tests on any given day.

Seniors will take their final exams early so that exams are completed before the date of graduation.

##### **Term Grades**

Grades will be determined through regular assignments and assessments. Assessments will be varied and may include tests, quizzes, graded discussions, in-class or homework essays, presentations, projects, etc. Assignments for preparation or practice may also be included but will not be worth more than 10% (Grades 9-12) or 15% (Grades 7-8) of a term grade. Language Arts skills (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) are to be assessed in coursework across the curriculum.

##### **Frequency of Assessment**

Teachers are committed to measuring students' understanding with a minimum of six assessments per trimester measuring a student's mastery of the skills and content of the course. Assessments include graded discussions, tests, quizzes, in-class or homework essays, presentations, projects, etc. Language arts (Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric) skills are included in the assessment of all other courses.

Teachers recognize that scheduling an excessive number of assessments on a single day jeopardizes student performance as well as the accuracy of the measurements being made by the individual assessments. For this reason, teachers are committed to limiting the number of assessments scheduled for a particular day to two significant assessments. Short quizzes are not considered significant assessments.

Students whose schedules differ from the majority of their grade level classmates must let teachers know about their assessment load if they wish to schedule alternate testing time.

#### **4.7 | GUARDING THE INTEGRITY OF OUR SYSTEM**

In order to maintain the integrity of our grading system, we are committed to the following principles:

1. All assessments are evaluated according to a criterion-referenced base.
2. At no time are assessments graded on a bell curve.
3. Individualized extra credit is never offered, and grade inflation of any other kind is also prohibited.
4. Redoing assignments or retaking tests will only be allowed in extenuating circumstances and with the permission of the appropriate principal.

#### **4.8 | HOMEWORK**

Veritas acknowledges that students' time outside the school day is valuable to them and their families and that homework assignments should be assigned purposefully and not as busywork. Teachers assign homework primarily for the following reasons:

1. Students often need extra practice in new concepts, skills, or facts in order to achieve mastery.
2. Repeated short periods of practice or study are more effective for learning than one long period of study.
3. As students move into higher grades, homework increasingly serves as preparation for upcoming classroom discussions or activities and as opportunities to synthesize concepts from coursework.
4. Parental support is critical to a child's education at every grade level; teachers will help parents to know how to be involved in age-appropriate ways that are effective at particular grade levels. Veritas encourages parents to nurture growth in independent learning by providing schedules and environments conducive to good homework and study habits. No matter the grade level of the student, parents' frequent conversations with their children about the topics being studied are crucial to the review and application of learning.

Homework may also be assigned to students who, having been given adequate time to complete an assignment in class, did not use the time wisely. In this situation the homework serves a corrective and practical purpose.

The necessity for doing homework varies from grade to grade and from student to student. Student to student variance is the consequence of the differing strengths and weaknesses (often specific to a particular subject and/or kind of assignment) and work habits of the individual students. Homework guidelines should be regarded as applying to the average night during an average week for the average student. Some students may consistently spend more time than the guidelines prescribe; some may consistently spend less. When homework is regularly assigned, the teacher will provide some sort of assignment schedule so that students will know what to anticipate and how to plan for homework.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Approximate Time per Weeknight</u>
Kindergarten	Minimal
1 – 2	20 – 30 minutes
3 – 4	30 – 45 minutes
5 – 6	45 – 60 minutes
7 – 8	60 – 90 minutes
9 – 12	90 – 180 minutes

The times listed above, particularly those for grades K-2, do not necessarily include the time students will spend reading. We believe that students benefit greatly from time spent reading to their parents and time spent listening to a parent read to them. For this reason, teachers often encourage families to devote a set amount of time each evening to reading. Twenty minutes each day leads to an extra two million words by sixth grade!

Homework will not be assigned over Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break, Easter Break and Spring Break. Weekend assignments should not require more time than a regular weeknight assignment. Teachers will monitor the amount of time their students spend on homework, making adjustments when needed to stay within the prescribed guidelines.

Parents who are concerned about the amount of time that their child is spending on homework are encouraged to track the time the child spends working (diligently) on homework over an interval of two weeks. If the time exceeds the stated guidelines, then parents are to first alert the corresponding teachers. If the predicament persists then parents are to alert the appropriate principal.

#### **4.9 | REPORTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT TO PARENTS**

Parents are encouraged to monitor their child’s progress by reviewing graded work when teachers return it. Review of mistakes made and teacher feedback given on individual assignments gives a more robust picture of achievement than a numerical gradebook average. At the end of each month, parents of students in 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades will receive an email progress report to summarize that month’s work. RenWeb gradebooks will not be continuously available online.

Teachers are expected to notify parents when they perceive that a student is in danger of receiving a failing or unsatisfactory grade for a term. Failure of the teacher to notify parents will not, however, result in the alteration of the grade.

Fruitful partnership of teachers and parents requires sharing information and having meaningful conversations throughout the year. Teachers will use a variety of means to keep parents informed about their classroom activities, topics of study, and upcoming events. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend Launch Day and Back-to-School Night at the beginning of the year and to schedule a conference during the designated Parent-Teacher Conference days. Both parents and teachers are encouraged to schedule phone calls or face-to-face meetings, as needed, throughout the school year to discuss concerns or to plan strategies to support the student’s growth.

Emails to teachers and administrators should be used for two primary purposes: (1) to ask a quick, simple, and clarifying question; and (2) to schedule a call or conference. Using emails to raise or discuss an issue or concern is highly discouraged. If the purpose of the email is a point of concern and is more than a couple of sentences long, then it is likely that a personal meeting is needed.

Teachers are not asked to answer email after dinnertime or during weekends, as Veritas is committed to their rest, refreshment, and time with their families and churches.

#### **4.10 | REPORT CARDS**

Report cards will be emailed to parents approximately two weeks after the close of each term. Parents are then able to print copies from the hyperlink.

#### **4.11 | PROMOTION POLICY**

Students in Kindergarten to 6<sup>th</sup> grade will be promoted to the next grade level when they have demonstrated sufficient academic and social proficiency needed for future success. Evaluations will be based on multiple criteria, including class work, graded work, teacher/administrator observations, and diagnostic testing.

When it becomes apparent that a student may not be ready to be promoted to the next grade level, the parents, teacher, and Lower School Principal will meet to create a written Student Promotion Plan. The plan will clearly identify what needs to be accomplished in order for the student to be promoted.

Students in grades 3 to 6 who receive a report card grade of NS (Not Sufficient) in Language Arts or Mathematics, will be required to have a written Student Promotion Plan.

Students in grades 7-12 must meet the following criteria for promotion:

1. Pass Humanities and Language Arts (either Logic or Rhetoric)
2. Earn an annual GPA of 2.00 or higher
3. Remain on track to meet all graduation requirements by the end of his/her senior year

Any 8<sup>th</sup> grader earning a "C" in Algebra I will be scheduled to retake the course the following year in order to build a strong foundation for high school mathematics.

The final course grade, including all trimester grades and any applicable exams, will be used in determining promotion.

#### **4.12 | CO-CURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY**

Every student is considered academically eligible for co-curricular activities at the beginning of each school year. Veritas has chosen to determine eligibility often and for short periods of time so that students regain eligibility quickly after academic improvement is shown. Beginning the fourth week of the school year, eligibility will be determined on a week-to-week basis according to the following guidelines.

Grades 9 to 12 (and any 8th grade Varsity level participant):

- Each Friday grades will be reviewed by the Upper School office.
- If a student has less than a 69.5% in one course, the student may be ineligible, by determination of the Upper School Principal after the situation is assessed.
- If a student has less than a 69.5% in two or more courses, the student is ineligible to participate in co-curricular contests and performances during the upcoming week (the following Monday through Saturday).
- The grade check on the following Friday will determine whether the student has become re-eligible for the next upcoming week.
- NOTE: Students are required to practice even while ineligible and to attend any contests or performances that do not require early dismissals from school. The penalty for ineligibility is that the student may not participate in contests and performances.

Grades 7 and 8:

- Each Friday grades will be reviewed by the Upper School office.
- If a student has less than a 69.5% in any course, eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Upper School Principal after conferring with the parents and teacher of the class(es) involved.

The Upper School office will communicate all eligibility changes to parents, teachers and leaders of co-curricular activities.

#### **4.13 | CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS**

A controversial subject is a subject which Christian families and churches commonly consider divisive or very sensitive, whether or not the introduction of the topic was planned by the faculty member or brought up by a student. If the subject is to be covered by the teacher, it must be deemed by the administration that the topic is necessary for the achievement of the goals set forth for that particular course. In covering the subject, the faculty member will conduct an impartial, charitable discussion with the students.

##### **Nudity in Art**

Students at Veritas encounter the classic art of each time period that they study. Much of this art, from the primitive ceramics of ancient prehistoric civilizations to the exquisite sculpture and painting of Renaissance Europe, reveals the human figure in various degrees of nudity. Sometimes it is stylized and exaggerated; other times very earthy and realistic. This nudity was often a reflection of the religious or philosophical atmosphere of the time and frequently adorned cathedrals, monasteries, and other sacred buildings and sites.

While art containing nudity will not be displayed publicly at Veritas, parents should be aware that students at or above the third grade level will incidentally encounter clear reproductions of these works in many of the supplementary resources which we make available for reports and reference. Teachers will refer students to their parents if questions arise. We encourage parents to counsel their children to approach these works with appropriate maturity and respect. Students should not attempt to draw inappropriate attention to or make inappropriate comments about such art as they encounter it.

Veritas does not include or honor art that uses religious symbols, events, people, or man (who is created in the image of God) in deprecating or disparaging ways. Our aim is always to think upon what is excellent and praiseworthy, according to the exhortation found in Philippians 4:8.

##### **Secondary Doctrine**

Secondary doctrine is defined as any issue that is not addressed in the Veritas Statement of Faith and that orthodox Christians have historically debated. Examples of secondary doctrines are the charismatic gifts, sacraments, and eschatology. Classroom discussion of secondary doctrine will undoubtedly occur in Bible classes. Due to our intentional integration of Biblical principles in all subjects, discussion of secondary doctrine may also occur in other classes. In all circumstances, teachers will be careful to limit their own participation in a discussion to an informative, non-partisan level and avoid speaking to students in a manner that would cause offense to the parents. When a secondary doctrine is discussed, presentation of all sides of the issue is encouraged. Teachers will close all such discussions by encouraging students to follow up on any questions they may have with their parents and pastor.

#### **4.14 | FIELD TRIPS AND RETREATS**

Attendance is mandatory for school field trips and retreats. Field trips and retreats require appropriate attire, vehicle seating, safety measures, and student behavior in order to be effective and worthwhile. The same standard of student conduct applies on field trips and retreats as it does at school.

When parents drive, the vehicle must not be a convertible and must be equipped with a seat belt for each person in the vehicle. The teacher will determine seating assignments. Students must leave and return with the assigned driver. If a parent finds himself/herself unavailable to drive, that parent does not make any other arrangements without first contacting the teacher. Only parents or school staff may drive and chaperone on trips unless special arrangements have been made with the appropriate Principal. Drivers must complete the Parent Driver information in RenWeb prior to driving on a field trip.

Off campus experiences provide unique opportunities for new and deepening relationships. For this reason, the use of electronic devices for entertainment is prohibited unless an administrator gives specific permission to parents and/or students. Teachers and chaperones may give permission for phone calls or camera use.

Younger siblings may not attend field trips. This ensures that parents properly supervise children on the field trip.

#### **4.15 | ANNUAL CLASS TRIPS**

High School students typically take class trips each spring. While we certainly expect all students to enjoy the time they spend with their classmates off campus, these trips are not vacations. They are learning experiences deliberately correlated to some portion of our upper school curriculum. All class trips aim to accomplish three or more of the following objectives:

1. Reinforce a concept previously considered by students in a particular course.
2. Introduce students to a new concept that will be further considered and developed in a particular course.
3. Expose students to a real-world application of a concept appearing in the Upper School curriculum.
4. Present to students a piece or pieces of visual and/or performing art exemplifying truth, goodness, and beauty.
5. Expose students to opportunities they may want to pursue after graduating from Veritas and/or college.
6. Demonstrate to students the direct application and/or significant impact of a well-developed Christian worldview outside of the classroom.
7. Model and reinforce characteristics of intelligent travel as well as proper decorum in public spaces such as museums, concert halls, and memorials.

In addition to our desire to educate students, we also hope to provide students an opportunity to enjoy fellowship and strengthen friendships with students at their grade-level. All overnight trips will include at least one male and at least one female chaperone. Faculty members generally serve as chaperones. A great effort is always made to consider and take all necessary and reasonable safety precautions.

Trip leaders will coordinate one or more parent meetings well before the date of the trip. These meetings will include medication administration policy and protocols.

#### **4.16 | SUMMER READING**

Veritas students are given a summer reading assignment that is selected to prepare them in some way for the following year's courses. Specific grade assignments are published at the beginning of each summer.

#### **4.17 | STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Veritas students in grades 3-9 take the CTP-4 (published by the ERB) each year. Students in grade 10 and 11 take the PSAT in the fall.

Students in grades 11 and 12 will consult with Veritas' college advisor about the appropriate plan of action for taking college admissions standardized tests such as the SAT and ACT.

#### **4.18 | LEARNING DIFFERENCES AND DISABILITIES**

Veritas is committed to making every effort within its capacity to support students with diagnosed learning differences and other disabilities through reasonable classroom accommodations and through fee-based services. Fee-based services offered on campus include educational therapy and small group instruction.

Prior to admission parents must disclose all specific recommendations that have already been given by therapists, specialists, or other examiners that may be vital to the student's success at Veritas. The admissions process will include determining whether Veritas offers sufficient services to meet a student's needs. Any admitted student must be capable of meeting the classroom behavioral standards expected of all Veritas students.

Teachers offer reasonable amounts of individualized assistance for the needs of all students. If a student requires additional support or possible accommodations\* in their work, the teacher will involve both the parents and the Director of Academic Support to set forth a plan of action to assess the student's needs.

A teacher is not free to make accommodations in a student's work without the approval of the Academic Dean on a formalized Student Support Plan (SSP). Developing such a plan involves one or more meetings with parents and may also include the classroom teacher(s), educational specialists, a school administrator, and a recommendation for testing.



Parents are responsible to secure any needed outside testing, which must be done by a licensed and certified educational diagnostician. After review of the testing reports, the Director of Academic Support may compose a written SSP. The SSP may involve a combination of classroom accommodations, educational therapy, or small group instruction. Veritas reserves the right to decline any accommodation recommended to a student by a diagnostician, if it deems the accommodation to be a hindrance to the learning experience of other students or unaligned with the school’s mission.

\*Accommodation refers to changing either the conditions in which work is done or the nature of the work itself. Extra time, shortened assignments, or the replacement of written with oral assessment are examples of accommodations.

#### 4.19 | ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADES 7-12

In order to be enrolled and considered a student at Veritas, students must meet certain requirements. If a course is offered (which a student has not already completed with a passing grade) in one of the following subject areas, then the student’s schedule must include the course:

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. Bible             | 5. Foreign Language                    |
| 2. Logic or Rhetoric | 6. Humanities (Literature and History) |
| 3. Mathematics       | 7. Fine Arts <sup>5</sup>              |
| 4. Science           |  |

A senior may propose a plan to the Academic Dean to take a college or dual enrollment course in place of a Veritas course. Approval will be on a case-by-case basis. Humanities, Senior Thesis and Theology/Bible may never be replaced in a senior’s schedule.

#### 4.20 | GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A. A student must meet the following requirements to receive a **Classical Studies Diploma**:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Specific Course Requirements</u>
History	4.0	Humanities courses
English	4.0	Humanities course
Mathematics	3.0	To include Pre-Calculus
Science	3.0	To include Physics
Foreign Language	3.0	To include Latin 3
Fine Arts	2.0	
Biblical Studies	2.0	
Rhetoric	<u>2.0</u>	To include Senior Thesis
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.0</b>	

B. A student must meet the following requirements to receive an **Advanced Classical Studies Diploma**:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Specific Course Requirements</u>
History	4.0	Humanities courses
English	4.0	Humanities courses
Mathematics	4.0	To include Calculus
Science	4.0	To include Physics and one advanced course
Foreign Language	4.0	To include Latin 5
Fine Arts	2.0	
Biblical Studies	2.0	
Rhetoric	<u>2.0</u>	To include Senior Thesis
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.0</b>	

C. Veritas may confer a **College Preparatory Diploma** when a student is admitted to Veritas without sufficient time to fulfill all the requirements for a Classical Studies Diploma or when a current Veritas student faces extenuating circumstances. Both situations require the approval of the administration. Current students may not opt into the College Preparatory Diploma plan simply to lighten their academic load.

Students must fulfill the following requirements: 22 high school credits to include the following minimums: History—3.0; English—4.0; Mathematics—3.0; Science—3.0; Fine Arts—1.0; Completion of a Senior Thesis Project, to include both a written and an oral component.

- D. Students must maintain full-time enrollment in accordance with the Enrollment Requirements and will, in most cases, earn more than the minimum number of credits for any diploma. Credits reflect courses taken in grades 9 to 12; no 8<sup>th</sup> grade courses are included in the graduation requirements or in the student’s high school GPA.

#### 4.21 | ACADEMIC HONORS DISTINCTION

Graduating students may also earn one of three honors distinctions. Based on a cumulative GPA computed using grades earned in all courses completed at Veritas in grades 9-12, students may earn an honors distinction according to the following scale:

GPA	Honors
3.50 – 3.69	Cum Laude
3.70 – 3.89	Magna Cum Laude
3.90 – 4.00	Summa Cum Laude

#### 4.22 | UPPER SCHOOL AWARDS

**Heart of the Lion |** In the spring of each year the Upper School faculty and administration will select one male and one female student from grades 9-12 to be recognized with the *Heart of a Lion* award. This award is given to the student best representing the ideals of Veritas in both habits of heart and mind and in academic excellence. Recipients of the award are recognized publicly during an assembly near the year’s end and are given a book signed by all members of the upper school faculty and administration.

**Book Awards |** Each spring faculty members in each academic department award a book to a 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade student. Teachers collaborate to determine a worthy recipient as well as to select the particular book to award to the recipient each year. Departments issuing awards are defined as follows:

1. Bible / Humanities
2. Mathematics
3. Science
4. Foreign Language
5. Fine Art
6. Performing Arts

Department members aim to select a recipient whom they believe has demonstrated excellence in a manner consistent with the mission of the school and particular to their department. Both a student’s character and academic achievement are factored into the decision<sup>6</sup>. The book selected should in some way correspond to the excellence for which the student is being recognized.

Book awards are formally presented to recipients by faculty members in the presence of the student’s peers at an Upper School assembly. Faculty members highlight each recipient’s exemplary character and academic achievement and offer a brief description of the book before publicly presenting the award.

**Outstanding Senior Thesis Award |** After the presentation of senior theses, members of the thesis board will review both the written thesis and oral presentation of each senior to determine the most outstanding thesis. The senior will be publicly recognized and awarded a book in conjunction with the Upper School departmental book awards. In effect, this award functions as the book award of the Logic/Rhetoric department.

#### 4.23 | COLLEGE GUIDANCE

Students and parents are introduced to the Veritas college preparation process in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The school works with parents and students in a team approach and serves as a resource to families. Parents are kept informed about local college fairs, college open houses, and college representative visits to Veritas. Veritas continues to cultivate relationships with colleges,

both in and out of Virginia, that appear to be good matches for our students. The college advisor will facilitate introductions between parents, students, and colleges.

## **STUDENT LIFE AND CULTURE**

### **5.1 | ATHLETIC TEAMS AND PROGRAMS**

Athletics at Veritas, together with Academics and the Arts, serve to cultivate students of wisdom and virtue. Rather than sitting tangentially at the side of Veritas school culture, athletics are an integral part of our pursuit to form fully flourishing young adults who possess the qualities listed in the Portrait of a Graduate.

Veritas believes that athletics serve the following purposes in the lives of our students:

- **Moral formation:** The challenges of training and competition call students to practice virtues such as courage and self-control, while less-than-virtuous responses offer opportunities for the Gospel's message of hope to be applied.
- **Physical well-being:** Exercise and activity are important components of stewarding our bodies.
- **Skill development:** Each sport includes skills that are foundational to playing well. Coaches design drills to ensure that students are improving not only in their physical fitness but also in athleticism.
- **Christian community:** Teams serve as microcosms of the Body of Christ, giving places for practicing things such as encouragement, forgiveness, and bearing one another's burdens. Athletic events provide the Veritas community, as a whole, opportunities for conversation and fun.
- **Competition:** Playing one's best against a worthy opponent has value, whether the contest ends in victory or defeat. Submitting to the decisions of officials, playing as a team, and gracious winning and losing serve to both test and strengthen students' virtuous attitudes and actions.

In all its pursuits, Veritas aims not towards immediately measured achievement but to the rightful ordering of students' loves and the formation of virtuous habits. Therefore, our coaches look beyond a season's statistics to the cultivation of young men and women for whom athletics are effective means to worthy ends but not the ends themselves. In this way, we aim to equip students for balancing their athletic pursuits with other commitments and callings in ways that diverge from society's preoccupation with sports.

Athletics also provide, along with Academics and the Arts, a place to use the classical Trivium as a helpful metaphor. Just as language has mechanical correctness (Grammar), reasonable arrangement (Logic), and beautiful expression (Rhetoric), sports have skills and rules, coordinated play, and elegant execution. The sports selected for Veritas's program and the progression of training through the grade levels seek to develop skillful and beautiful performances.

Any student-athlete participating on a Junior Varsity or Varsity team will be expected to commit to all practices and contests. High school practices and contests normally occur four days per week, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. However, certain sports' contests are held on Saturdays. Effort is made to not schedule contests on Wednesdays, but there may be some situations where a Wednesday contest is unavoidable. Likewise, practices or contests will not typically be held on school holidays, except for basketball during the Christmas break.

For middle school level sports, the student athletes will normally practice and participate in contests three days per week, except in sports whose contests are held on Saturdays. No practices or contests will be held on Wednesdays or school holidays unless unavoidable.

### **5.2 | STUDENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 7-12**

Clubs are student-based activities, led by a staff advisor, which may or may not occur during the normal school hours. The addition of clubs that are consistent with the overall philosophy of Veritas will occur as interest and resources allow.

### **5.3 | UPPER SCHOOL HOUSES**

The purpose of the House System is to cultivate students of wisdom and virtue by fostering community, building relationships, growing leaders, and serving others. Each student is assigned by the administration to a house upon entering

the Upper School. Siblings belong to the same house. Each Upper School faculty member is also assigned to a house and is expected to play an integral role in house life.

House activities include social gatherings, service projects and a variety of competitions. Houses earn points throughout the year, and the winning house is designated the Honor House for the following school year. Houses are encouraged to develop traditions, mottos, crest, banners and t-shirts that increase their camaraderie.

#### **5.4 | HOLIDAY OBSERVANCES**

Veritas recognizes the necessity of joy and thankfulness in the Christian life. The school seeks to provide students with opportunities for joyous celebration and thankful recognition of God’s providence and blessing in their individual lives (e.g. birthdays and personal accomplishments) and in history (e.g. Columbus Day, Memorial Day, Martin Luther King Jr., etc.).

Veritas will emphasize the scriptural and spiritual elements of holidays such as the cross and resurrection at Easter and the incarnation of Christ as Christmas, rather than secular elements (Easter Bunny and Santa).

Veritas is not “against” secular images and symbols. These are matters of conscience and Christian freedom for each family. The school simply chooses to de-emphasize secular elements in its recognition of holidays.

Many believers view “Easter Week” as a sacred time for sober contemplation on the significance of Christ’s death and resurrection. The school will observe the significance of the week in classroom devotions and discussions and in assembly services but will not encourage parties and celebrations.

Halloween will not be acknowledged at Veritas. Other holidays (e.g. Columbus Day, Presidents’ Day, Valentine’s Day, etc.) shall be observed when their recognition is deemed spiritually or academically beneficial to the students and consistent with the Veritas Philosophy of Education. Interpretation and application of these holiday observance guidelines shall be the responsibility of the Head of School.

## **CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

### **6.1 | PHILOSOPHY**

Pointing one another to Christ is a high goal at Veritas. While calling children to honor God and others by self-control, respectful attitudes and right behavior, we point them to Jesus when they fail, reminding them that He offers both forgiveness and the power to be reconciled with their fellow man. When students or adults treat others uncharitably or disrespect Veritas community standards, we believe it is a great opportunity for them to see their need for Christ – to repent from sin, to trust in His righteousness and to be reconciled in their human relationships.

Furthermore, our discipline policies and procedures are intended to encourage children to learn biblical ways to talk and play with, and to support and encourage one another; to handle disagreements; to receive correction; to steward the physical world and to express emotions.

In summary, two things drive our philosophy: first, a desire to see students look to and trust in Jesus; and second, a desire to live in biblical community with one another.

### **6.2 | CODE OF STUDENT CITIZENSHIP**

Veritas has developed a Code of Student Citizenship based on a practical mixture of:

1. The ethical and moral principles of Scripture.
2. Institutional preferences that are conducive to achieving the school’s mission.

All students are expected to abide by the Code of Student Citizenship. Each teacher will use a system of classroom management to encourage compliance with the school code. Students who do not follow the code will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Code of Student Citizenship at Veritas is stated as follows:

1. God is glorified when we respond to situations and topics with appropriate attitudes and behaviors. **Reverence** is fitting when considering God's holiness and name and during times of corporate worship and prayer. Likewise, **solemnity, celebration** and **merriment** all have appropriate times and places in the life of the school. Teachers will proactively instruct students in biblical and community standards for the variety of circumstances that they will face. Students are called to ever-increasing proper attitudes and decorum as they mature.
2. Fidelity to the truth is commanded by God and is the core of all meaningful relationships. Students will demonstrate **honesty** in all their dealings with one another and the staff.
3. Because the classroom is a community of learners, students will refrain from practices that distract classmates from their work. Arriving late to class interrupts **learning**; students are expected to arrive promptly.
4. Veritas cares about the **health and well-being** of its students and staff, so the possession and use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or weapons of any sort is strictly forbidden on school grounds. Students are to refrain from aggressive physical contact such as hitting, wrestling and the like.
5. The Bible mandates appropriate use of and response to **authority**; therefore, an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy will be maintained between students and staff. Students must obey instructions from Veritas staff promptly, completely and cheerfully. Students are to make eye contact when spoken to by an adult.
6. Scripture exhorts us to avoid unwholesome **speech** while using only words that build one another up. Insults, gossip and unkind, vulgar or profane speech have no place in the Veritas community.
7. Students are expected to exhibit good **stewardship** of their own belongings, as well as the property of others and the school. Students will not take or use items not belonging to them without permission of the owner; when using the possessions of others, including textbooks, students will treat them with respect and care. Staff and students will together strive to keep the school's campus neat and clean. Students may not chew gum on campus.
8. The most appropriate paradigm for student relationships is that of **brothers and sisters in Christ**. Groups of friends are encouraged to look out for others who ought to be included in activities and conversations; exclusive *tete-a-tete* conversations are discouraged. Public displays of romantic affection are not permitted on school grounds or at school-sponsored events.
9. Students and staff, as people of **integrity**, are expected to conduct themselves according to biblical and Veritas community standards, both in school and out of school. This expectation of conduct includes the area of social media and electronic communications.

### 6.3 | HONOR CODE

Honor, or a good conscience (Hebrews 13:18<sup>7</sup>), is both a classical and a Christian value which is at the core of godly character. In order to fulfill our mission of glorifying Christ, parents, teachers, administrators, and students must all cultivate a character of honor.

Upper School students will be expected to write the following pledge on graded assignments and sign their name below the pledge: "I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this assignment. If I am aware or become aware of a breach of honor, I will discuss it with an adult."

This pledge does not require a student to name a violator, but it does require the student to disclose his knowledge that an offense has occurred to an adult member of the community. The student may choose to go to his teacher, his parents, or to an administrator to disclose the offense and to seek counsel about how to proceed. Responsibility for investigating offenses will lie with adults in the community.

At a teacher's discretion, students may be permitted to substitute a one word summary of this pledge, IURAMENTUM, which was historically the oath of loyalty of a Roman soldier to his emperor but in our setting will be taken as a symbol of the longer pledge. Teachers will periodically remind students of the full wording and significance of the honor pledge.

### 6.4 | LOWER SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

The classroom is the primary place for discipline. The teacher provides consistent classroom expectations and gives his/her students opportunities to practice meeting these expectations. When a discipline issue occurs, the teacher privately and compassionately talks with the student and helps him/her understand the need for God's forgiveness. Students may also receive logical consequences for their actions, such as sitting out during recess. Teachers will communicate regularly with parents regarding discipline issues.

Teachers will send students to the Lower School Principal for either habitual behavior issues or more serious offenses such as lying or bullying. When a student is sent to an administrator for discipline, his/her parents will be contacted and apprised of the details of the visit. Possible disciplinary measures may include but are not limited to restitution, janitorial work, and/or parental attendance during the school day.

Serious misconduct may result in suspension or expulsion from Veritas. The Lower School Principal, in consultation with the Head of School, will make the decision after discussion with the parents.

## **6.5 | UPPER SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Faculty members are expected to maintain discipline in the classroom and are expected to communicate all behavioral concerns to parents. In cases of serious or complicated offenses or when a pattern of minor offenses has developed, students will be referred to an administrator, who will communicate with parents and determine appropriate consequences. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following list: detention, suspension, service/restitution, or expulsion. Decisions to suspend or expel will be made by the Upper School Principal and Dean of Students in consultation with the Head of School.

At the Head of School's discretion, serious discipline issues are subject to being recorded on a student's permanent transcript.

## **6.6 | MAJOR INFRACTIONS**

Certain conduct may result in immediate and permanent dismissal from Veritas. The Principals, in consultation with the Head of School, will make the decision, after discussions with the parents of the student. Major infractions, for both in and out of school behavior, include but are not limited to:

1. Use of or possession of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs
2. Lying
3. Cheating
4. Stealing
5. Sexual immorality
6. Destruction of other's property
7. Possession of a weapon or threats made to the safety of others
8. Persistent patterns of bullying (abuse or intimidation of other students)
9. Rebellious disrespect for authority
10. Leaving school without permission
11. Skipping classes
12. Persistent patterns of disobedience and class disruption
13. Any violation of United States or Virginia law

## **6.7 | CONSEQUENCES FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Plagiarism is inconsistent with good scholarship and is a moral matter that affects the learning community. Veritas seeks to nurture moral character in issues surrounding academic honesty.

Veritas assumes the honor and integrity of its students. If some should abuse this confidence, the school is prepared to act as follows:

- Teachers who find proof of plagiarism will first of all discuss with the student the facts of the case and its moral implications.
- Teachers will report the facts and their recommendation for any additional consequences to the appropriate principal.
- Plagiarism will result in a mark of zero for the plagiarized work. Because plagiarism is an offence against classmates (as discussed above), offenders will need to confess and apologize to the other students in that class before they may be considered fully restored within the learning community. Teachers may assign additional academic consequences, such as re-doing the assignment involved, on a case by case basis.
- In all but clearly inadvertent cases of plagiarism, a disciplinary consequence will be imposed. The specific consequences will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- The academic and disciplinary consequences will be communicated to the student and parents. Any party involved may request a meeting. A meeting must be scheduled in cases of repeated plagiarism.

- Students or parents have the right to appeal their case before the Head of School who may also choose not to hear the appeal.

Additional guidance on this topic can be found in the Upper School Student Handbook.

## **6.8 | COMPUTER USAGE**

Students are not allowed to use any of the school’s computers unless they are designated explicitly for student use. Students are ordinarily not allowed to use any computer or other device to access the internet during the school day. Only in limited, pre-approved, and supervised situations are students permitted to use a computer while on campus.

## **6.9 | PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Veritas is committed to a campus where distractions are minimized, face-to-face conversations are prized, and contemplation is possible. We are acutely aware that everyone in our community—administrators, faculty, parents, and students—are drawn continually towards our screens. Calling one another to something richer, we place firm boundaries around the use of electronics during the school day. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, iWatches, cameras, and other Internet-accessing devices. These are not allowed in classrooms without express teacher permission.

Because cell phones distract from the human interactions that we value, they must be turned off and out of sight between 7:30 a.m. and 3:05 p.m. Parents are asked to communicate with their children through the school offices during the school day and to refrain from texting and calling their children while they are at school. Upper School students may voluntarily place their phones or other devices in a designated place in the Upper School office to avoid temptation during the day. Upper School students are also welcomed to use the office phone to call parents during the school day.

Any electronic device used without permission will be stored in an administrative office until the end of the day. After a first offense, confiscated devices will need to be retrieved by a parent. Repeated offenses may result in disciplinary action, including detention or suspension.

Students on campus after 3:05 may use their phones to text or call their parents. Electronic devices may not be used by students for internet access on campus at any time, unless they are under the clear supervision of parents. Two students viewing a single electronic screen will be considered in violation of this policy.

## **6.10 | UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE POLICY**

The Uniform and Dress Code Policy is an expression of the following values: unity, simplicity, order, and modesty. Uniforms contribute to the learning atmosphere by lessening distraction; students are required to wear clothing that is non-conspicuous and free of trends that are associated with social status.

To find the grade-level and gender specific lists of uniform items for the current school year, please consult the school website (current families/resources). The following guidelines govern how those items are to be worn.

The Veritas Uniform and Dress Code Policy requires students to maintain the following standards:

### **Apparel**

- Clothing must be clean and without holes, tears, or excessive fraying.
- Sweatshirts and sweaters must be worn with a collared, tucked in shirt underneath.
- Shirts are to be tucked in at all times, except during active outside or gym play. Exception: Upper School girls may wear an oxford cloth blouse untucked on non-formal uniform days.
- Shoes designed for laces are to be worn with appropriate, tied laces.

### **Jewelry**

- Excessive jewelry is not permitted.
- Lower School girls may not wear dangling earrings.

- Boys are not permitted to wear make-up, earrings, or exposed necklaces. Upper School boys may wear a single conservative bracelet.
- Jewelry in pierced body parts, with the exception of earrings for girls, is not permitted.

#### Hair

- All students must keep their hair neatly groomed and conservatively styled. Hair should be kept out of the eyes so as not to interfere with eye contact or line of vision.
- Unnatural hair colors are not permitted.
- Hair accessories should be modest in size and appropriate to uniform colors and style.

#### Make-up and Tattoos

- Excessive, distracting make-up is not permitted.
- Lower School girls may not wear make-up other than lip gloss/balm.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted.

#### Outerwear

- Only approved items may be worn as the first warmth layer on top of a uniform shirt. See the grade level lists for specific items.
- Rain coats and winter jackets may be worn in addition to the warmth layer but should follow the spirit of the uniform guidelines in regards to slogans, characters, team promotion, and not being distracting.

#### Special Dress Days

- Student apparel (e.g. Jeans Day clothing) and school gear (e.g. backpacks, lunch containers, notebooks, and the like) shall not display any commercial slogans, product promotions, celebrity representations, sports team promotions or any pictures / cartoons of commercial characters.
- On occasion when the uniform requirement is suspended (i.e. Jeans Day, retreats, a team spirit day, etc.) the spirit of the dress code is still in effect; student appearance is expected to be neat and modest.
- Tuesdays are Upper School formal uniform days, except when a change is announced due to a school event on a different day of the week.

The expectation is cheerful and consistent compliance on uniforms from the parents and students, and correspondingly cheerful and consistent enforcement by the school staff. The final interpretation and application of the uniform policy rests with the appropriate Principal.

Students not complying with the uniform and dress code policy will be asked to rectify their appearance. Repeated offenses may result in the student not being permitted to attend class until the uniform is corrected. If necessary, parents will be notified to bring the appropriate uniform pieces to school.

### **6.11 | VISITORS**

The Veritas school day, including lunch, is for the benefit of students and faculty in the current school community.

- Former students who live locally are welcome to attend school events, such as games and concerts, but may not normally visit during the school day. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis; requests must be made ahead of the visit and will only be granted in unusual circumstances. Current students are encouraged to maintain friendships with former students outside the school day.
- Former students whose families have moved away from Richmond may request to visit during a school day when back in the area.
- Prospective students are welcome to participate in all activities while visiting on campus, and current students are encouraged to engage them in conversation.
- Alumni are always welcome to visit on campus.



- Adult visitors, such as youth pastors, are welcome to visit at lunch but should call ahead to ensure that there are no other activities planned.
- Parents are always welcome on campus.

Student life events, such as Upper School parties and Soirees, are for current Veritas students only.

## **6.12 | STEWARDSHIP OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

God has given Veritas a lovely school home, and we seek to be good stewards of it. Each member of the school community is expected, therefore, to be a good steward of the parts of our campus that he or she uses, just as family members contribute to the collective care of their homes.

Students of all ages are expected to pick up their own trash and belongings in classrooms and common spaces. They may also be asked to take turns in cleaning common spaces, such as wiping lunch tables. Teachers will discourage rough use of furniture and supplies in order to build habits of care and consideration. Careless damage may result in either a work assignment or in monetary remuneration. Purposeful damage of school property or the belongings of a fellow student will result in disciplinary consequences.

Offices, kitchens, lounges, and workroom equipment designated for teacher-use may not be accessed by students without express permission of an adult. This includes photocopy machines, refrigerators, and computers. Students may not use classroom phones except in an emergency; students wishing to make phone calls should do so from the Lingle or Graves offices.

The lawn is dedicated to recreation and casual walking but should not be used as a straight pathway between buildings, lest bare paths be created.

Elevators are available for student use only when there is a physical need. At most, one classmate may accompany a student on the elevator to carry belongings.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **7.1 | VOLUNTEERING AT VERITAS**

Parents are encouraged to volunteer at Veritas in many different capacities. Some volunteer positions are for one-time events while others are ongoing. Volunteering helps foster a closer, caring community at Veritas, while allowing teachers to focus on academics. Many of Veritas' events and activities are dependent on the support and creativity of parent volunteers. Parents will have an opportunity to sign up for either leading or participating in committees both in the Upper School and Lower School. Some of the committees include the following: prayer, hospitality, room mothers, field days, teacher appreciation, and literature week. The committee coordinators will work directly with the administration to carry out their activities.

### **7.2 | PARENT FORUMS AND GATHERINGS**

The administration will hold various parent forums and meetings each year for the purpose of maintaining strong communication with parents. Because of our particular covenantal model, it is critical that parents take advantage of these opportunities when possible.

#### **Veritas U**

Veritas U offers parents the opportunity to attend evening workshops, book discussions, and seminar series led by members of our faculty and administration. Veritas U evenings are held two to three times each year. Examples of Veritas U courses: an introduction to classical Christian education, reinforcing the fundamentals of Singapore mathematics, Navigating the Digital Age, inspiring your children to read, and a discussion of *That Hideous Strength* by C. S. Lewis.

## **7.3 | PARENT ENGAGEMENT**

When describing the role parents play at Veritas, “engagement” might be a more accurate term than “involvement.” While involvement is important, we believe digging deeper – engaging with content, classmates, and community – will bear the best fruit.

### **Connecting**

Engagement is a natural result of connecting. We desire and expect that Veritas parents would be connected – both to what their child is learning and also to the lives of those we are in community with. To be a part of Veritas is to not only partner with the school but to partner with the other families God has brought together in this important work. As parents care for their children, it speaks volumes when parents are truly interested in what students are learning and experiencing at school. Knowing that parents also care for classmates and classmates’ families prepares children for the communities they will love and serve in the future.

### **Reading**

One of the best ways to be engaged with a child’s education is to read. Read to children, with them and in front of them. Encourage children to read beyond the classroom requirement so that they understand that reading is not about school, but about learning, growing, and stewarding the mind God has given them. The benefits of reading are quickly evident in the life of a student – well beyond the assigned work – and equips children for a lifetime of learning and joy.

### **Modeling**

By God’s design, parents are, by far, the most significant influence in a child’s life. While Veritas School strives to consistently put before students that which is true, beautiful and good, to provide tools for a life of learning, and to fill classrooms with faculty who love God and others, the daily witnessed practices of parents are far more important.

For the partnership between parents, church and school to be of greatest effect, the experience of each must be consistent, winsome, authentic and compelling. Children are keen observers. Hypocrisy, double-standards and inconsistency are deeply felt.

What do our children witness as we navigate conflicts with our spouse, neighbor, boss, pastor? How are we most entertained? Whom do we invite to dinner and what do we talk about? Which books are dusty on the shelf and which do we read over and over? How do we speak of those in authority? Do we remain faithful to our commitments and how do we handle disappointment? How and how often do we seek forgiveness? Are we kind?

The truth is that we all – without exception – regularly fail in every area of our lives. In these moments, what do our watching children learn about God and our need for Jesus? About repentance and restoration? Modeling humility, repentance, and a growing faith is a tremendous gift to give our children.

Veritas is not a perfect school seeking to partner with perfect parents who attend perfect churches. We do, however, desire to humbly seek to honor God and His good and perfect gifts by together giving attention to that which is praise-worthy.

## **COMMUNICATION PHILOSOPHY AND COMMITMENTS**

### **8.1 | THE GOAL**

In light of covenantal commitments as well as our desire for real spiritual community at Veritas, we want to make every effort to be governed by Biblical principles in our relationships with one another. The very definitions of covenant and community remind us that we are in partnership with one another, having agreed on the general goals and directions we believe God has

given our school. Moreover, we are commanded to treat one another as brothers and sisters in Christ for the purpose of building up one another in Christ. This should be our mutual goal and a foundational commitment in all that we do.

## **8.2 | EMAIL**

Emails to teachers and administrators should be used for two primary purposes: (1) to ask a quick, simple, and clarifying question; and (2) to schedule a call or conference. Using emails to raise or discuss an issue or concern is highly discouraged. If the purpose of the email is a point of concern and is more than a couple of sentences long, then it is likely that a personal meeting is needed.

## **8.3 | TEACHER OR CLASSROOM ISSUES**

Should a parent become concerned with a classroom issue, we expect that the parent would first go directly to the teacher to raise the concern. The exception would be where there is a serious issue of safety or morality, or behavior considered egregious, in which it may be appropriate to contact an administrator immediately.

## **8.4 | CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION**

We consider it a great privilege to serve families in educating their children from a classical and Christian perspective. We are committed to upholding and supporting each parent's authority in the lives of their children. This kind of relationship requires clear communication. We recognize that in this relationship there lies a great temptation to talk to others (gossip) about a specific issue or person rather than take direct action to resolve conflicts in a manner consistent with scripture. We have outlined the proper lines of communicating and dealing with grievances according to the biblical principles<sup>8</sup> found in Matthew 18 and James 3. We believe that Scripture teaches that conflicts should be handled discreetly and carefully, while believing and speaking the best about each individual involved. Veritas staff and administration will abide by these same principles in communicating with parents and students.

It is also helpful to employ the principles of "seeking to understand before being understood" and "giving the benefit of the doubt." We encourage all members of the Veritas community to lead with the words "help me understand" as opposed to "why did you?" when addressing a concern or issue.

If at any point in time, there exists a question, concern, or grievance, and it is not clear as to the proper channel or contact, do not hesitate to contact an administrator or the Head of School for counsel/direction. Otherwise, the general procedures below should provide a basic guide:

### ***Parents/Students to Teacher:***

If an issue should arise regarding an individual teacher's actions, rules, or procedures, the parents and/or student should speak directly to the teacher. A respectful demeanor is expected at all times. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, the parent may bring the concern to the Principal.

### ***Parents to Principal:***

Parents may present concerns about an individual teacher's behavior, rules, or procedures directly to the Principal if the matter was not resolved with the specific teacher.

Also, if the offense is considered to be egregious, immoral, unethical, or dangerous, the matter can be taken straight to an administrator such as a Dean, Principal, or Head of School. A respectful demeanor is expected at all times.

### ***Parents to Head:***

If appropriate channels have been pursued and no resolution has been made, concerns of grievances may be then taken to the Head of School. This is the last recourse regarding school curriculum, programs, rules, staff members, and other school activities. However, if a parent believes that the Head of School is derelict in his duties, or is acting in a way that is unethical, immoral, or reflects incompetency, then it would be appropriate to take the concern to the Chairman of the Board.

### ***Parents to Board:***

No member of the Board has any individual authority apart from the Board as a whole. Therefore, no Board member should be approached with a specific school related issue or concern. Instead, the matter should be taken to the appropriate staff

member, faculty, or administrator. Furthermore, no individual Board member may speak on behalf of the Board, or directly to school-related issues, unless the board has already ruled on the issue or the Board member has been specifically authorized by the Board to do so.

It is understood that if any disputes arise which are not covered by this policy, the Administration and/or Board will decide what procedures to follow based on reasoning from the procedures established by this policy. It is also understood that, especially during the attempted resolution of concerns, the principles of Matthew 18 and James 3 will be followed.

## **8.5 | RESOLVING CONFLICT**

Partnering well requires healthy, biblical communication from everyone in our community. The school has to communicate clearly the goals and priorities mentioned above, teachers must communicate how a student is faring – academically and otherwise, parents must communicate if they have questions or concerns. The Veritas Standard outlines principles and practices that we commit to in being a part of this community. We ask that parents and teachers pay particular attention to this section of the Standard both on an annual basis, and when a challenging situation arises.

### **Normalizing Conflict**

The Gospel is clear: we are all sinners, fallen short of God's glory. We experience destructive conflict because we want what we do not have. As we seek to satisfy our desires, we may find others do not always cooperate with our plans. In the Veritas School environment, over 600 men, women and students are brought together five days a week, seven hours a day. While not the defining experience of our life in community, conflict is neither abnormal nor to be avoided, but rather a welcome opportunity to examine our hearts, our desires, and how we seek their fulfillment. Because we believe the Gospel's indictment of our own hearts, we are neither shocked nor disheartened when conflict arises at school, but we stand ready to open a conversation that moves beyond symptoms to the root cause. What a privilege to move together from conflict to peace-making, through the revealing, healing work of the Gospel!

### **In the Midst of Conflict**

While understanding that conflict is a normal, and even helpful part of growing together, working through our disagreements can still be very difficult. With this in mind, we believe the following principles provide a helpful foundation as we seek mutual understanding and biblical reconciliation:

- We will believe the best of one another, giving the benefit of the doubt when misunderstandings or miscommunications arise.
- Our goals are truth, restoration and partnership; these goals trump seeking vindication or one of us needing to be right. Conflict resolution is not a zero-sum game.
- We will remember that most conflicts are brought about by a confluence of peoples' sin rather than one sole contributor – a sinful act eliciting a sinful response. We will acknowledge that we all sin and that we don't know everything about any given situation.
- We will remember that both parental and school authority are not based on moral superiority but on position; before God we are all equally destitute and in need of a Savior. The Gospel helps us to be humble and vulnerable with one another, and points the way to reconciliation.
- When we feel the swell of self-defense, we will listen longer and/or ask a question rather than begin talking.
- We will apologize for the small issues that may have contributed to the conflict along the way to resolution of the bigger issue.
- When appropriate, we will give one another space and time to prayerfully consider the issue before us, without demanding immediate answers and resolution.

### **Guiding Principles**

One key to healthy communication is to understand the awesome power of the tongue and to take our words seriously. The tongue is a tool, a weapon if you will, that can cause great good as well as great harm. It has the power of life and death. As Christians involved in gospel community with one another, we should take great care that our words are life-giving, full of

grace, and a source of encouragement. When they are not, we should repent to God and to those we have offended. Some of the surest indicators of true gospel-centered relationships are admitting mistakes and confessing sin against one another.

Consider the following verses:

1. Proverbs 12:18: There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.
2. James 3:8: No human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.
3. Philippians 2:3-4: Put others' interest above your own.
4. Ephesians 4:2: Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.
5. Philippians 2:14: Do everything without grumbling or complaining.
6. Ephesians 4:29: Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

### **Helpful Questions**

Will this be helpful to say?

Is my goal to build up the other person(s)?

Am I concerned about the other person's interests, perspective, and point-of-view?

Will the words I use benefit those who listen?

Am I talking to the person to whom I need to be talking?

Am I talking about someone inappropriately?

Am I giving ear to anyone who is talking about someone inappropriately?

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **9.1 | SCHOOL CLOSINGS FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event of inclement weather, even if Veritas is officially open for classes, parents who do not believe road conditions in their area permit safe travel should not attempt to get their children to school. They should keep their children at home and notify the school that they are going to do so.

During times of inclement weather (or other school closing emergencies), parents should monitor local television stations (CBS-6 and NBC-12) for announcements about Veritas starting delays, early dismissals, or cancellations. Delays and cancellations will also be posted on the school's Facebook page ([facebook.com/VeritasRichmond](https://facebook.com/VeritasRichmond)) and communicated through our Parent Alert text and voice mail system as early as possible on the affected day.

### **9.2 | HEALTH AND ILLNESS**

All students attending Veritas must have a completed "Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Health Form" and up-to-date immunization record on file (typically required for JK, K and 6<sup>th</sup> grade) with the school office. Families seeking exemption from state immunization requirements must complete and submit a notarized copy of the "Commonwealth of Virginia Certificate of Religious Exemption." Both of these forms may be obtained from the student's doctor or the school office.

Students with asthma, food allergies or diabetes should have completed management plans (see our school website for forms) on record with the school nurses.

It is expected that students are sent to school healthy, well rested, and ready for class. Students with a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, diarrhea, contagious viruses, severe colds, vomiting, intestinal flu, and the like will be sent home to avoid infecting others. Students should be fever and symptom free without medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Students who are lethargic, tired, and unable to do their schoolwork will be sent home for rest and recuperation.

If it is suspected that a student has head lice, they will be evaluated by the school nurse. Children found with head lice will be referred for treatment, but data no longer supports exclusion for nits (eggs). Following the prescribed course of treatment, students should be re-evaluated by the school nurse before returning to class.

Parents should provide the school with emergency numbers of friends and/or family who can pick up their children from school. A parent is required to have the children picked up within 30 minutes of receiving a call from the school office. Sick children cannot remain in the school office past this period of time. If parents are not reached within a timely manner, the emergency contact will be called to pick up the children.

Veritas will follow Virginia state and local guidelines in handling a pandemic illness.

### **9.3 | MEDICATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The School Nurse, or a Veritas staff person who has completed Medication Administration Training (MAT) must administer all medication (prescription or over-the-counter (OTC)), taken by a student. No student will be permitted to administer any form (prescription or OTC) of medication to himself/herself or any other student except as indicated below.

#### *Permission to Carry Inhalers or Epinephrine*

An Upper School student may be permitted to carry his or her own epinephrine administration device or respiratory inhaler if a physician signs an authorization form stating the student is trained and able carry and self-administer the medication. Physician authorization is found on the bottom portion of the *Prescription Medication Authorization Form*. If the student's prescribing health care provider does not give authorization for a student to carry his or her own epinephrine administration device or respiratory inhaler, the medication will be kept in an accessible location in the school office. Trained staff will administer the needed medication and parents will be notified.

Prescription medication will be administered to students only at the request of the parent and upon completion of the *Prescription Medication Authorization Form*. A copy of the physician's prescription is required or the physician may complete the bottom portion of the *Prescription Medication Authorization Form*. All prescription medications must be brought to the front office in original packaging with prescriptive information on the container/package by a parent/legal guardian.

A supply of over the counter medication is kept in the front office. Leaving student-specific medication in the front office on a long-term basis is discouraged. If students requires over the counter medication, a completed *Over the Counter Medication Authorization Form* is required. The form can be emailed upon request and hardcopies are available anytime in the front office.

School staff will administer non-prescription medication for no more than 10 consecutive days. If a student requires an over-the-counter medication for longer than 10 consecutive days, a physician order will be required. If no *Over the Counter Medication Authorization Form* is signed by the student's parent giving permission for Veritas staff to administer medication, no medicine will be given to a student. School staff cannot accept permission over the phone to administer medication to a student.

Over-the-counter cough drops and throat lozenges may be carried and taken by students with a hand-written note from their parents or with verbal permission from the parents to the student's teacher. Over-the-counter cough drops and throat lozenges do not require completion of a Medication Administration Consent Form.

### **9.4 | MEDICAL EVENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

A student comes to school clinic or the Upper School/Lower School Coordinator when they have a health-related issue. Students in the Lower School should be accompanied by at least one "buddy." The staff member then evaluates the student's health needs. If there is no significant evidence of injury, the student is treated and returned to class.

Parents are notified and the incident is documented in RenWeb by the care-giving staff member when the following medical events occur:

- OTC medicine is administered (with permission form on file only)
- Significant cut or head injury
- Child complains of dizziness or feeling light-headed
- If there are any unusual or repetitive complaints throughout the day
- If signs of swelling or symptoms of a serious injury are noted

- When there has been an accident such as a hard fall from the monkey bars or out of the swings, even if there is no evidence of a definite injury

Significant incidents that occur on the school property or at a school event (when parents are not present) that require follow up medical attention are written up by the School Nurse and reported in RenWeb.

## **FINANCES AND RE-ENROLLMENT**

### **10.1 | TUITION AND FEES**

Acceptance of a student for enrollment constitutes a significant financial commitment on the part of the school (textbooks, personnel, and supplies). Therefore, all tuition fees are non-refundable and non-transferable regardless of the circumstances except in the following circumstances:

- The student is withdrawn from Veritas due to physical health issues which make attendance impossible. The parent will not be obligated to pay the remaining tuition.
- The student is withdrawn from Veritas as a result of a parent's loss of job or contract income which prohibits the family from paying the full tuition on time and in the foreseeable future. The parent will be obligated to pay 50% of the remaining tuition.
- The student is withdrawn from Veritas as a result of a family move to a location more than 75 miles from the school and farther from the school than their current residence. The parent will be obligated to pay 50% of the remaining tuition.

For the three above exceptions, remaining tuition is the portion of the annual tuition, as set forth above, which is not yet due in accordance with the School's payment schedule at the date of the student's withdrawal. In the event that the tuition paid exceeds the total amount due for the entire school year in accordance with the above exceptions, the School will refund the difference.

In all other circumstances:

- Tuition is due on the first day of each month.
- In the event that tuition and/or fees are not paid within the first 10 days of the month, they will be considered "late." At such time, a \$50 late fee will be assessed to the parent's account.
- If tuition and/or fees are still not paid and no arrangements are made within the following 15 days, the Head of School or Business Manager will personally contact the family. The essential elements or agreements made at that time will be recorded and filed.
- If an agreement is not made or adhered to, and payment is not received after 60 days, students may be dismissed and grades withheld until payment is received.

### **10.2 | TUITION ASSISTANCE POLICY**

At Veritas, we believe that families from all income levels should have the opportunity to enroll at the school. Levels of financial assistance offered will depend on a number of factors, including total (gross) family income, number of family members, number of children enrolled at Veritas, and any additional extraordinary financial circumstances. An outside consulting service (FACTS) is used to assist Veritas in accurately determining a family's level of financial need for tuition assistance. A Tuition Assistance Committee, appointed by the Head of School, reviews the recommendations and makes the final decisions on awards. The Director of Admissions or Head of School will communicate the results to the family.

It is expected that families will pursue every other available means of financial assistance prior to applying for aid directly from Veritas. If other assistance is available to a family, the school asks the family to utilize it to make more of the school's funds available to other families in need. Generally, every family will be expected to pay a minimum of 25% of total tuition, regardless of the amount of assistance for which they qualify. If a family qualifies for assistance from other scholarship sources or financial aid funds (other than Veritas), these funds will be used to reduce the amount of assistance taken directly from Veritas and will not necessarily reduce the family's tuition obligation to the school. Generally, every family must pay the minimum amount determined by the FACTS assessment.

To apply for financial assistance, simply complete the financial aid application (made available online). Returning families who submit applications for tuition assistance by the established deadline will be given first priority in the distribution of financial aid. New families who submit application for tuition assistance early in the Veritas admissions process will be given next priority in the distribution of available funds. The purpose of tuition assistance is to provide financial aid for tuition expenses to families with demonstrated legitimate financial needs. Those families receiving tuition assistance will be encouraged to gradually reduce their dependence on financial aid from the school.

### 10.3 | RE-ENROLLMENT

Re-enrollment is offered to Veritas students who are in good standing academically, behaviorally, and financially. Enrollment packets for current students will be available through RenWeb once tuition rates are published. Space is reserved for the student in the designated grade level when the enrollment packet is submitted online.

Parents should contact the school administration if they have questions regarding their child's enrollment for a new school year. School administration will be in communication with parents should an adjustment need to be made to the student's grade level for academic or social reasons.

### 10.4 | DEVELOPMENT (FUND-RAISING)

Veritas has a focused development program under the direction of the Head of School and Director of Development. The program includes an Annual Fund drive, which will be conducted in the fall of each year. The Annual Fund is typically used to make strategic investments in the growth of the school. Every parent is encouraged to make a gift each year to the Annual Fund, regardless of giving level. It is important for the Veritas community to have as close to 100% participation as possible. Foundations and corporations will often place an emphasis on the percentage of participation from current parents and faculty when making gift decisions. High participation levels also help as we approach outside donors and show a strong support for our school's endeavors and mission.

Additional initiatives to fund particular projects must be approved by the Head of School. The school may also conduct periodic capital campaigns to provide for building and campus needs. To ensure the success of the development programs and preserve an academic school culture, Veritas does not allow individual or class fundraising efforts that involve product sales or soliciting members of the Veritas community. Upper School clubs and teams may hold periodic fundraisers that target populations other than Veritas students, parents, and donors but only with the express permission of the administration.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> If you are interested in reading more about the relationship between mathematics and theology consider reading the following works: *The Divine Challenge: On Matter, Mind, Math and Meaning* by John Byl (2004), *Mathematics: Is God Silent?* by James Nickel (2001), *Mathematics in a Postmodern Age: A Christian Perspective* by Howell and Bradley (2001), and *Beauty for Truth's Sake* by Stratford Caldecott (2009).

<sup>2</sup> If you are interested in reading more about the relationship between science and theology consider reading the following works: *The Philosophy of Science and Belief in God* by Gordon Clark (1964), *Redeeming Science* by Vern Poythress (2006), *The Science of God* by Alister McGrath (2004), *Where the Conflict Really lies* by Alvin Plantinga, and *The Open Secret* by Alister McGrath (2008).

<sup>3</sup> Consider the following excerpt from *Art for God's Sake* by Philip Graham Ryken (2006): "If the opening chapters of Genesis portray God as a creative artist, then it only stands to reason that the people he made in his image will also be artists. Art is an imaginative activity, and in the act of creating we reflect the mind of our Maker."

<sup>4</sup> Examples of such opportunities include Parent Forums, special speakers, book discussions and the Veritas U program.

<sup>5</sup> This arts requirement is a reflection of our commitment to the arts being a critical part of our curriculum rather than being viewed as an accessory to a student's academic experience.

<sup>6</sup> For example, math teachers might select *Student A* because he/she has proven to be resilient, pursued every opportunity for extra help, devoted great time and put forth exemplary effort in battling through his/her misunderstandings in *class A*.



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He/she might even be a sophomore. Teachers might select a title such as *The Art of the Infinite – The Beauty of Mathematics* because department members believe the book will expose the student to perspectives on mathematics and content that may further revive the student's interest in the subject. Note that this student may not even have earned an A in the class yet still receive the award for a compelling reason.

<sup>7</sup> **Hebrews 13:18:** Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things.

<sup>8</sup> **Matthew 18:15-17a:** If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen, tell it to the church.... **James 3:4-5, 8-10:** Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! ...but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not be so.