



Golden Heart
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Student Handbook 2022-2023

Golden Heart Christian School

2022-2023 Handbook

“Providing excellence in education in a nurturing Christian environment.”

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Golden Heart Christian School

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PHILOSOPHY

The Fairbanks Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Alaska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists sponsor Golden Heart Christian School (GHCS). It was established to guide young people in developing a meaningful relationship with God, and help prepare them for life and the world to come. This training experience, from the Seventh-day Adventist perspective, can best be accomplished by the cooperative effort of a Christ-centered home, church, and school.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide excellence in education in a nurturing Christian environment.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Seventh-day Adventists believe:

- That both the Old and New Testaments are the inspired word of God.
- In the incarnation and virgin birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- That man was created in the image of God, but became separated from God by sin.
- That man is redeemed by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ.
- That the gift of eternal life is available to all mankind, and those who receive Christ by faith are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God.
- In the bodily resurrection of Christ, His imminent and literal return, and the resurrection of His people.
- Death is an unconscious state for all people until Christ returns, when the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be caught up to meet their Lord.
- That the law of God, the Ten Commandments, is binding upon mankind and it can be kept in its fullness only through faith as the power of God works in our lives.
- The Creator, after six days of creation rested on the seventh day and established the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of creation. This is why Seventh-day Adventists honor the Sabbath from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, Lord of the Sabbath.

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage an understanding of the plan of salvation and other great themes of the Bible.
- To foster an awareness of the reality of God and His personal interest in the things of everyday life.
- To instill in the student the ideals of integrity, honesty, purity, dependability, neatness, and punctuality.
- To teach the student to be responsible for his or her own behavior.
- To foster the ideals of self-respect and concern for others, recognizing the intrinsic value of every individual.
- To nurture basic skills: the ability to speak clearly, to read efficiently, to write effectively, to develop intellectual curiosity, habits of accuracy and self-discipline.
- To encourage creativity and independent thinking.
- To instruct the basic principles of good health, and to encourage the development of good habits in the areas of diet, rest, and exercise.
- To promote interest in serving their church, community, and country.

ACCREDITATION

Golden Heart Christian School is accredited by the:

- North American Division Commission of Education
- National Council for Private Schools Accreditation

ADMISSIONS

Non-Discrimination

Students are admitted to GHCS – without regard to race, color, national or ethnic origin – to rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

Special Needs

The school is limited by its staffing in its ability to help students with severe emotional, behavioral or learning problems. Children requiring such special care will be accepted for enrollment only after consultation with a qualified specialist to determine whether or not the school can meet the child's needs. Probationary admission may be deemed necessary in certain circumstances.

Admission Pledge

Prior to admission, all students and their parents must sign the Commitment of Student and Parent pledge on the application form. It is understood that every student admitted to the school pledges to follow the rules and policies of the school with a positive and cooperative attitude and to respectfully uphold the Biblical principles upon which the school is founded. See Student Conduct Agreement.

Entrance Age

Students are accepted in accordance with the school age entrance requirements of the State of Alaska.

First grade – age 6 by August 15.

Kindergarten – age 5 by August 15. The school reserves the right to recommend a child wait a year to enroll in Kindergarten. Research indicates that it may be advantageous for some children to delay the start of formal schooling to give them more time to develop readiness in academic areas such as language and fine motor skills.

Grade Placement

The school reserves the right to place the student in the grade at which he/she can achieve his/her best work, according to placement tests and recommendations of the teachers. Multi-grade classrooms allow teachers to place students at their optimum performance level.

Immunizations

As required by state law, no student will be allowed to enter school without first showing proof of having current immunizations against diphtheria, pertussis, polio, tetanus, measles, rubella, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, and varicella or medically verified chickenpox. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make sure immunizations are kept current and to provide the school with proof.

ATTENDANCE

State Law and Attendance

GHCS is bound by state law to maintain records of student attendance and punctuality. Attendance is recorded in the register which is a legal document. Reasonable allowances will be made for absence, but the only legal excuses are illness of the student or a death in the immediate family. If it is known in advance that a student must be absent, it is requested that arrangements be made with the teacher prior to the absence. Provision will be made for “legal “absences; otherwise the work missed will be “made up” at the discretion of the teacher. Parents/guardians are requested to call the school before 9:00 AM for sickness or emergency absences. Otherwise, to ensure that the students are accounted for, school personnel will make a reasonable effort to contact the parent of any student absent without prior arrangements.

School Performance Attendance

GHCS believes that it is important that our students are involved in church ministry and service. When GHCS has performances, all students are required to participate.

Absence Penalty

Regular attendance is a strong trait of successful students. Frequent absences may result in lower grades due to missed instruction and opportunities for participation. A pupil who is habitually absent, for whatever cause, may forfeit period grades.

Leaving School

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds while school is in session without a request from the parent or guardian in person or in writing, and permission from the teacher and the principal’s office. Students will not be permitted to leave the school premises with anyone other than those known to the staff to be the bona fide guardian, parent, or those authorized by them.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Student Conduct Agreement

My signature on the application to attend Golden Heart Christian School indicates that during school hours and all school sponsored activities and programs:

I will show respect and reverence for God and spiritual things

I will follow school policies and procedures

I will be responsible for my actions

- By practicing the five Life Guidelines (*truthfulness, trustworthiness, no put downs, active listening and do my personal best*)
- By using appropriate language – *words that uplift and encourage*
- By using appropriate language – *words that uplift and encourage*
- By displaying a positive attitude
- By showing Christian courtesy and respect for all staff, students, and visitors
- By respecting other people's property including desks, shelves, lunches, clothes, etc.

I will respect the learning environment

- By maintaining respect for school property
- By being prepared for class with necessary materials ready
- By leaving at home items that distract from the learning process, such as toys and electronic devices.

I will support a safe environment

- By wearing adequate weather-appropriate clothing which includes for outside play during winter months, a warm coat, a hat or headband to cover the ears (even if a coat has a hood), gloves or mittens, snow pants and snow boots
- By wearing appropriate shoes that fit securely
- By understanding that possession of any kind of weapon may result in immediate dismissal

I will dress appropriately for a Christian environment

- By choosing clothes that reflect Christian values that are neat, clean, well-fitted (*not too tight or too baggy*) and in good repair (*GHCS's dress policy excludes inappropriate wording or graphics.*)
- *By dressing modestly (GHCS's modest attire excludes sheer fabrics intended for coverage, tightly fitting stretch fabrics, sleeveless tops, low cut or revealing clothing, or underwear showing. Girls should wear tights or below the knee leggings under dresses and skirts.)*
- *By choosing a natural look in grooming (Hair should be neat, clean and out of the eyes and face. GHCS's natural look excludes jewelry.)*
- *By wearing event dress for all off-campus activities or as directed by teacher*

Actions/Items Prohibited

Some items may be confiscated, some behavior may result in suspension and/or expulsion, and illegal actions will be reported to the local law authorities, as they apply to the following:

- Cigarettes/tobacco products, alcohol, drugs
- Weapons, knives, firearms, fireworks, or explosives
- Games and cards that do not portray Christian values
- Gambling and betting
- Profane, vulgar, demeaning, and insulting language
- Physical or verbal abuse of teachers and/or other students

DISCIPLINE and GRIEVANCE POLICY

A basic component of the philosophy of Golden Heart Christian School is that discipline is “disciple-ing” or “training” rather than punishment. Parents should consider the school’s disciplinary policy as an extension of their own efforts to train their children to be self-disciplined and well-balanced individuals. The greater self-discipline a student practices, the less external discipline will be required by the school. Discipline and guidance will be consistent and will be based on an understanding of individual needs and development. Our goal is to use positive guidance and reinforcement to enable each child to develop a high self-esteem in the knowledge that he is loved by others and by God. If there is a continual behavior problem the school will notify a parent, and a conference may be needed to discuss possible reasons and solutions.

Classroom Discipline

Teachers are expected to deal with routine classroom discipline problems. Disciplinary measures that seem reasonable to the teachers will be administered to students who break classroom/school rules or interfere with the learning privileges of other students. An attempt will be made to match the discipline with the misbehavior. The following are examples of appropriate disciplinary actions:

- Counseling with students
- Taking away privileges
- Time-out
- Separation from other students
- Special writing assignments
- Special job assignments

Suspension/Expulsion

Serious infractions normally require immediate suspension from school by the principal. The student will remain suspended until the School Board meets to consider his/her case. If the Board finds that the student willfully and persistently refuses to cooperate, that the student’s conduct is detrimental to other students, or feels the student is not receiving benefit from the school, the student will no longer be allowed in school. A student can only be expelled by School Board action.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is not used by the staff at Golden Heart Christian School as a method of discipline.

Grievance Process

At GHCS we believe that true success in education can only be achieved when the parents and the teacher work as a team. Because of this belief, we continually strive to improve parent/teacher communication to create a pleasant team. Should misunderstandings or concerns arise, parents will find that the teachers will do everything possible to help correct any problem or situation. Following the example set in Matthew 18:15-20, we ask parents to speak with the teacher in a constructive and redemptive manner. If you believe the problem is still unresolved, please follow the tiered system as outlined below:

- Level One – Meet with the teacher to formally discuss your concerns and complete a Student/Parent Grievance Form
- Level Two – Complete the Appeal form. A meeting with the parent, teacher, and mediator will be arranged.
- Level Three – Ongoing/unresolved problems will be brought before the school board for further evaluation.

Right of Appeal

Inherent in the rights of every American citizen is the right to appeal decisions. Should there be a disagreement regarding a disciplinary or grievance decision, it may be appealed to the next level of administration. Every effort will be made to resolve conflict at the lowest possible level.

In all of the above, the staff will strive to remain firm, but loving. These disciplinary and grievance policies are aimed at giving the student/parent every chance to resolve problems.

INTERNET USE

Golden Heart Christian School offers Internet access for students in grades K – 8. In order for a student to use the Internet at GHCS, the legal parent/guardian and student must both sign the **Internet Policy and Permission Form** at registration or return to the principal no later than the first day of school. Access is a privilege, not a right, and requires responsible behavior.

The Internet is a powerful resource and enables students to explore thousands of libraries and databases throughout the world. Unfortunately, the Internet contains items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or offensive. However, managed appropriately, we believe that the benefits exceed the disadvantages.

Since the Internet is provided for research, access is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Students will be responsible and courteous in all written material, keep their passwords to themselves, respect the confidentiality of folders, work and files of others, and learn about and observe copyright laws.

School staff will guide students within the framework of school standards. If a student chooses to access inappropriate material, the school will not be liable and the student will forfeit Internet privileges. School staff may review files and written material at any time to maintain system integrity and insure that users are responsible. Any activity not complying with these rules may result in loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

STUDENT PHOTO/INFORMATION

Throughout the school year, Golden Heart Christian School publishes brochures, newsletters, and digital presentations, etc. highlighting student activities and accomplishments, and providing information about the programs and features of GHCS. This information may also be carried over to our website and Facebook Page for public viewing. The information we publish is usually submitted by teachers, principal, or parents. However, because of student privacy laws, we want to secure parental permission before publishing photos and/or information about any child.

Private information (such as address and phone numbers) is never published by GHCS other than internal use only, nor is it released to any other agency or media outlet. Golden Heart Christian School controls what is distributed to the public in our publications and website. We do not, however, control what is produced by outside media sources.

HEALTH and SAFETY

Illness/Contagious Diseases

A general rule of thumb for all illnesses: If you don't think your child is well enough to play during recess/gym class, he/she should probably stay home for the day.

No child with an infectious or contagious disease, deemed by the school to be a health threat to students and school personnel, shall be allowed to remain in school. The child will not be permitted to return to school until he/she has a medical release or until the school authorities are satisfied that such a threat no longer exists. *(NPUC code 3018:19)*
Students must be fever/diarrhea free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.

Medication

All medication, prescriptions or over-the-counter, shall be kept in a locked cabinet by school personnel. Students are not allowed to have prescription medication on their person, in their backpack, or at their desk. School personnel are not permitted to give a student any medication without a completed release form on file at the school.

Student Supervision

Adequate supervision will be provided in the classroom, on the playground, during recess, before and after school, and during activities sponsored by the school.

Student Accident

When a student has an accident, it will first be determined whether or not it appears to be serious. Whenever a student sustains a blow to the head, parents will be notified at once. If it is suspected that a student has sustained a serious injury of any type, the student will not be moved. An ambulance will be called immediately. Parents will be notified immediately when any serious injury is suspected. If the parents cannot be reached, the doctor and emergency contact specified on student records will be called. After attention has been given to the student, an accident report will be completed and submitted to the principal.

In case of a minor accident that may involve cuts or abrasions, first aid will be administered. The first aid administered may include washing the wound with soap and water and covering with a bandage. The use of disinfectants and ointments or medications is prohibited except when specific requests in writing are made by parents. GHCS maintains first - aid equipment sufficient to care for minor accidents.

Student Insurance

Each student is covered by an accident policy, which partially covers medical bills as a result of an accident at school or in route to and from school. Claims are to be made through the principal immediately after the accident. Charges not covered by student accident insurance are to be assumed by the parental guardian. Our insurance does not cover injuries caused by tackle football or injuries caused by riding all-terrain vehicles or motorcycles. Eyeglasses are not covered by school insurance. Replacement or repair is the responsibility of the parents.

Emergency Response Procedure

GHCS has Emergency Response Procedures posted in each classroom, and teachers and students are familiar with the process should an emergency occur.

The principal or designated teacher will keep parents informed of the situation to the best of their ability, and make arrangements for students to return to their legal parent/guardian or designated location as quickly as possible, should the need arise.

In case of a major emergency, and it is necessary for the students to remain at school longer than the regular school day, the school is equipped with emergency supplies such as water, flashlights, and battery operated radio.

Personal Survival Kit

Each student is required to have a Personal Survival Kit. Please enclose all food items in one-gallon Ziploc bag with your child's name written on the outside. Food items must be packaged for a long shelf life. Suggested items: dried fruit, nuts, granola bars, crackers, canned fruit, blanket/small sleeping bag, bottled water (8-16 oz.)

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Hours

School begins daily at 8:00 AM and closes at 3:00 PM Monday through Thursday; Friday closing time will be 12:00 PM. Doors will be opened to students thirty minutes prior to the start of school and will close thirty minutes after the end of school. During school hours the doors will remain locked.

Stormy Days

Please check the local news media on days the weather is questionable. If the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District cancels school for weather, GHCS will also be closed.

Transportation

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their children to and from school. If your child will be going home with someone other than their regular method of transportation, please notify the school.

Parents/guardians who drive students other than their own to and from school are required to maintain insurance coverage of \$100,000 - \$300,000 personal liability as well as \$50,000 property damage. Drivers and students are required to follow Alaska State law in regards to car seats, booster seats, and wearing seat belts.

It is expected that drivers understand that they are operating a vehicle in a public area with children present. It is therefore the driver's responsibility to park in designated areas and drive with caution, refraining from all driving practices which may be deemed unsafe or drawing attention to themselves.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome on campus but are asked to obtain permission to visit classes. Visitors should be quiet and unobtrusive so as not to interrupt the school program or instructional times. Previous students or students from other schools requesting to visit for more than an hour should receive permission from the principal prior to the day of the visit.

Telephone Use

Teachers and students should not be called during school hours except in cases of emergency. Text messaging the teacher is the preferred method of communication during the school day should the teacher and/or a student need to be reached.

School phones are for school business only. Students must ask permission from teachers or school staff to use a school phone.

Cell phones must be kept on silent in the student's backpack. They are for emergency use only, or as directed by the teacher.

Meals

A wholesome, well-balanced breakfast and lunch are necessary in the educative process. We encourage parents to uphold the standards of our church in relation the diet and health. No pork or other unclean meats are permitted. Sodas, sugary drinks, and beverages containing caffeine are to be excluded from meals at school and during school trips.

Parental Involvement

GHCS encourages parents to be involved with their children's education. Contact the teacher to see how you can work "hand-in-hand" to enrich the learning environment.

Homework

In a multi-grade classroom most students, if working efficiently, have time to complete most assignments in school during the day. Homework may include but is not limited to the following:

- unfinished class work
- study for spelling test
- teacher assignments
- make-up for absences
- special projects

We recommend students spend at least 30 minutes of independent reading at home each day as part of their homework assignment.

School-sponsored Field Trips

Many educational benefits are derived from the regular field trips taken throughout the school year. Your child is well supervised and care is taken for his/her safety. Application for enrollment indicates your approval (as parent or guardian) of these class-sponsored activities. The school will send permission slips home to be signed by parents before each field trip. All who drive students on field trips must maintain active vehicle insurance coverage of \$100,000-\$300,000 personal liability as well as \$50,000 property damage.

Homeschool Program

Golden Heart Christian School honors and values Seventh-day Adventist home school education and wishes to provide opportunities to enrich home school education. GHCS may offer participation in school activities such as:

- Field Trips
- Achievement testing
- Week of Prayer
- School Portraits
- Public Library
- School Picnic
- School Programs
- Music classes or lessons
- PE or gym activities
- Swimming Lessons
- Special Events

Home school students wishing to participate in GHCS activities must adhere to the following:

- GHCS guidelines and student conduct requirements as outlined in this handbook
- Pay all their own fees
- Be accompanied by a parent for all off-campus activities
- Understand that they are not covered by the school insurance policy

Grading and Progress Reporting

Grade report cards are issued quarterly. However, since no written report can reflect all the aspects of academic growth, teachers and parents need to communicate on a continuous basis and share additional information and concerns. Parent-Teacher Conferences are held following the first and third quarters and progress reports are issued at this time. Additional conferences may be scheduled at other times outside of school hours by the parent/guardian, the student, or the teacher.

Testing

A national standardized achievement test, MAP, is administered yearly to grades three to eight. This test is designed to measure individual proficiency in reading, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation, use of references, and mathematics. Results are used to provide information for effective educational guidance and become a part of each student's cumulative record. In addition, the following tests may also be given:

- Metropolitan Readiness Test
- Reading Level Competency Tests
- California Achievement Test (CAT)
- Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP)

Information gathered from testing scores is available to parents during conferences with teachers and/or the principal.

Cumulative Records

Information contained in the student's cumulative record is confidential, and is not released without written permission of the parent or guardian. Alaska State law regarding protection of and access to the records is observed. Parents/guardians of students transferring in from other schools must sign a request for release of records to Golden Heart Christian School at the time of registration. When a student transfers to another school, his records shall not be released to that school without a written request signed by the parent or legal guardian. Please see Grade Reports and Record Transfers in the Finance Policy section at the back of this book for additional information.

Home and School Association

The Home and School Association is GHCS's parent organization whose purpose is to unite the home, the school, and the church in their endeavors to provide a Seventh-day Adventist Christian education for their children. The Home and School is involved in many aspects of school life such as fund-raising, auction, field trips, and teacher support and appreciation. Members of the Fairbanks Adventist Church and patrons of the school are members of the Home and School Association. The Home and School Association officers for the planning committee shall be appointed by the school board at its first meeting each school year. Anyone interested in serving on the Home and School planning committee should submit his or her name to the school board.

School Constituency

The constituency of Golden Heart Christian School consists of the members of the Fairbanks Seventh-day Adventist Church. The school constituency is to meet annually and special meetings may be called as needed.

Asbestos Notice

The Federal law requires a public announcement to be given to school patrons regarding any asbestos material in the school. The GHCS facility has been checked by a certified asbestos person. The asbestos in the school is in a non-friable condition and presents no hazard to anyone at the present time. It will be checked at stated periodic intervals to ascertain any change in the material.

FINANCE POLICY

Financial Operation

Golden Heart Christian School is operated on a tuition basis with additional subsidies from Fairbanks Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Alaska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. These subsidies are derived from gifts and offerings from church members. Our school is dependent upon its patrons and churches for its financial operation.

Entrance Fee

Each student is charged a registration fee of \$200.00 for grades 1-8, and is due at registration. Early registration until June 30, 2022. After June 30, 2022, the registration fee goes up to \$250. This fee is *non-refundable and covers swimming lessons, workbooks and/or copying, student accident insurance, achievement testing, and student processing.

* A portion of the \$200 will be returned if the student is not accepted for the current academic school year.

Tuition

Grades 1-8 \$2,500.00 (\$250 per 10 months)

Tuition Payment Plan

Any teaching institution that is to remain financially solvent must operate on a sound accounting basis. Therefore, the following policy will apply:

- Each family enrolling a student(s) must fill out a financial payment plan.
- Financial payment plans will be reviewed by the GHCS finance committee for approval.
- Tuition is billed on the 1st of each month beginning with August and due on the 15th of each month or next business day, August through May.
- If payment is 30 days late, a 10% late fee and warning letter will be included with the statement requesting a revised written payment plan.
- If payment or a revised payment plan has not been received within 15 days of the warning letter, the school finance

committee will meet with the family to determine a course of action and will inform the school board.

Past Debts

All past due accounts must be paid in full for a student to register. A proposal for payment may be submitted to the GHCS school board to be considered for approval.

Grade Reports and Record Transfers

If a student account is not current, end of the year grade report cards will not be released until payment is made or the school board has given clearance due to proper financial arrangements. Likewise, requests for school records to be sent to another school will be held until payment is made or clearance is given by the school board.

School Board Actions

Any action taken or policy adopted by the GHCS School Board after this handbook is published shall have the same effect as anything printed in this document.