



Columbia Academy
2026-2027
Student Handbook

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2026-2027
Columbia Academy Administrative Staff

Head of School	Julia Porter Foxworth
Director of Operations, Athletics and Activities	Keith Stanley
Director of Development	Mary Lois Brady
Counselor	Dr. Scott Oliver
Elementary Coordinator & Interventionist	Angel Reagan
Marketing and Branding Director	Kaylee Beal
Student Services and Business Office Manager	Wendy Barnes
Business Office Manager	Cynthia Davis
Student Attendance and Records Coordinator	Tammy Morris
Front Office Coordinator	Becky Fortenberry

Board of Directors

President	Tommy Pennington
Vice-President	Corey McCain
Secretary	Brandi Stogner
Treasurer	Geoffery McMichael
Blake Bell	Derrick Bell
Courtney Bozeman	Garrett Douglas
Joey Reagan	Whitley Sims
Eric Thomas	Scott Williamson

Accredited By: Midsouth Association of Independent Schools (AAA Rating)
Cognia Global Commission

Grades: K3-12th

Colors: Orange, White, Royal Blue

Athletic Division: Class 3A, District 6/District 5 (Football)

THE PURPOSE OF COLUMBIA ACADEMY

Columbia Academy's primary aim is the development of men and women who are prepared for responsible leadership and well-rounded lives of meaningful service to their fellow man, their country, and to God. Columbia Academy was founded upon and is operated according to Christian and Biblical beliefs and doctrine.

Columbia Academy is concerned not only with the academic growth of its students, but also with their character and conduct both on campus and beyond the classroom. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times as ladies and gentlemen. They are encouraged to make a voluntary commitment to the moral principles and spiritual values upon which our free and Christian society is founded and to cultivate emotional balance rooted in respect for themselves and for others. Furthermore, students are expected to be men and women of integrity, honest and trustworthy in every area of life, and to respect the rights and property of others.

Columbia Academy is committed to providing a climate for high-quality learning, with special emphasis on preparing students for knowledgeable, intelligent, and responsive participation in the home, the community, and their chosen careers. The school also emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning so that graduates may remain effective and worthy members of an ever-changing society.

Board of Directors
Columbia Academy

"Only the educated are free." -Epictetus

"Education makes a people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern but impossible to enslave." –
Attributed

MISSION AND BELIEFS

Mission Statement

The Bible is the divine inspiration of God. The Scripture is inerrant in all of its parts and teachings. The Bible is the supreme authority over every area of our lives as individuals and as a school.

The mission of Columbia Academy is to provide a safe, spiritual, family environment where teachers help students to grow morally, intellectually, physically, and socially in order that they may become productive citizens in today's society.

Core Values and Beliefs

Truth
Learning
Engagement

HANDBOOK AMENDMENTS

This handbook is a summary of the rules, policies, and procedures of Columbia Academy. The Board of Directors and Head of School reserve the right to add, modify, or delete any rule, policy, or procedure contained herein without prior notice. This information is for the use of parents and/or guardians and students as a guide and does not constitute a legal contract or document.

HEAD OF SCHOOL'S AUTHORITY

The rules and regulations set out in this Handbook have been adopted by the Board of Directors as the policy for Columbia Academy.

The Board recognizes that certain instances may arise wherein it is necessary to interpret these policies for a specific situation. Further, instances may arise that are not explicitly covered by these policies. In such cases, the authority for the implementation and interpretation of these policies and the disposition of these situations is left to the discretion of the Head of School, with consultation of the Board of Directors.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND CONTRACT

Independent education is a privilege provided for young people by parents and guardians who recognize the importance of education. It is not a "right" to be exercised without respect for others, and it requires acceptance of certain responsibilities.

One of the goals of Columbia Academy is for all students to become self-motivated, self-disciplined, and self-governed. Each student in grades 6-12 will sign a student contract agreeing to uphold the terms of this handbook and agreeing to work diligently to improve himself and his school. Each student should realize that his education is important and should work hard to do their personal best. Each student should also take pride in and responsibility for their school, its programs, and its mission.

PRINCIPLES OF SELF-GOVERNANCE

- You are responsible for your community. You are encouraged to work at a variety of levels to build, maintain, and contribute to the campus and community.
- You are accountable for your choices. You are encouraged to take ownership of your actions, opinions, and beliefs.
- You are accountable for preventing your actions from infringing or violating others' rights.
- You are responsible for speaking and listening to others to reach shared understandings.
- You are responsible for addressing situations and communicating concerns about issues that undermine community or individual rights, whether they are your own or others. Any such concerns should be discussed with a teacher or Administrator.

These principles of self-governance are supported through:

- An administrative structure intentionally designed to challenge and support students in governing themselves.
- A campus community committed to Christian ideals, social consciousness, and community involvement.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ADMISSION POLICY

Notice of Non-Discrimination - Columbia Academy admits students of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Columbia Academy does not discriminate in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, athletic or other school-administered programs based on race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin.

The Board of Directors reserves the right to deny admission to or continue admission of any student where it is reasonably calculated that such admission or continued admission might create adversity, conflict, or opposition to the school's adopted Purpose, Mission Statement, and Beliefs, and educational and extra-curricular policies.

Any behavior deemed not in harmony with the purpose of Columbia Academy will result in dismissal at the discretion of the Head of School. Applicants for re-admission must have no monies owed on a delinquent account at Columbia Academy.

Each application must be approved by the Head of School and Board of Directors before it becomes binding upon Columbia Academy.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Columbia Academy admits students through an enrollment process designed to determine whether the school is an appropriate educational fit for the child and family. Submission of an application or participation in the enrollment process does not guarantee admission or enrollment.

Each student seeking enrollment is required to participate in a pre-admission interview conducted by the Head of School or his/her designee. Admission and enrollment decisions are made at the sole discretion of the Head of School and Board of Directors based on the student's academic readiness, character, prior academic performance, attendance, and discipline record. The family's alignment with the mission and expectations of Columbia Academy will also be a component of the pre-admission assessment.

Applicants will be considered for enrollment once all required materials have been submitted, including a completed application, enrollment packet, interview with Head of School and/or designee, required documentation, and a signed financial agreement. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Columbia Academy reserves the right to deny enrollment to students for any reason. Some of those reasons may include:

- Poor academic standing
- Prior attendance or discipline history which indicates concerns that may impact the learning environment or the student's ability to succeed
- Inability to meet financial obligations
- Failed drug screenings
- Criminal activity and/or record
- Columbia Academy does not accept students who are married or those who are parents.

Admission and Enrollment Policies:

- An admissions assessment may be administered during the enrollment process for applicants in grades K5–12 for placement and readiness purposes.
- Enrollment is limited by classroom capacity. When a grade level or course section reaches maximum enrollment, applicants will be placed on a waiting list. Placement from the waiting list is contingent upon available space and staffing. Families offered enrollment from the waiting list will have 48 hours from notification to accept the placement.
- The registration fee is non-refundable.
- Homeschool transfer students seeking enrollment must provide documentation verifying participation in an accredited homeschool program in order to receive academic credit for completed coursework.

NON-CONTINUATION POLICY

Columbia Academy reviews the contribution of all students regularly and reserves the right to deny continuation to any student whose behavior, attitude, disciplinary or academic record is judged by the Administration and Board of Directors to be detrimental to the welfare of the school community.

The student's conduct off-campus is a matter of serious concern. Any student's off campus action, which is inconsistent with the philosophy, policies, goals, and commitments of Columbia Academy, makes the student subject to corrective action, including suspension, dismissal, or removal from any elected or appointed position/honor.

STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

In consideration of the fact that Columbia Academy is an independent school and receives no federal funding to provide special classes, resources, or assistance for students who may have learning differences or who have been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder, Dyslexia, and other exceptionalities. Therefore, any person wishing to enroll their child at Columbia Academy acknowledges this fact and must exercise good judgment as to whether the child enrolling would be best served by attending Columbia Academy.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS AND PAYMENT POLICIES

Every effort should be made to keep tuition and other fees, including cafeteria expenses, paid up to date. Columbia Academy, Inc. primarily receives funds through tuition and other fees, and therefore, it is imperative that we collect such amounts that are owed to the school. Patrons are asked to set up tuition payments through a bank draft in the business office. A voided check will be required.

In the event that a student's tuition and other fees are overdue at the time of second-semester exams, the school will allow the student to take said exams, but grades will not be recorded until payment has been made in full. In order to meet exemption requirements student accounts must be paid in full prior exams.

In the event of a withdrawal, transfer, or expulsion of a student at the end of the school year, parents are responsible for full payment of tuition and other fees. The School reserves the right to withhold report cards, grades, and student records until tuition and other fees have been paid in full. By signing the Student Handbook Agreement or the Application for Enrollment, you are authorizing the School to withhold report cards, grades, and other student records until tuition and other fees have been paid in full.

Any acquiescence in regard to the above policies should not be viewed as a waiver of said policy, and the school reserves the right to utilize the policy even though a student has been allowed to stay in school with past due tuition or other fees or has been allowed to take midterm or final exams with past due tuition or other fees.

All money owed to Columbia Academy is due and payable on the 1st of each month. A 10% late fee on unpaid tuition will be accessed on the 15th of each month. Any patron whose account becomes 30 days delinquent will be accessed an interest rate of 18% (1.5% per month) on the complete outstanding account balance (including but not limited to tuition, fees, and cafeteria charges). Any patron whose account becomes 30 days delinquent will be mailed a letter advising them of the delinquency. When an account is 45 days delinquent, the patron will be mailed a notice stating if delinquent money is not paid by the 60th day, the patron will be asked to remove their child (children) from Columbia Academy.

All students of patrons who are 30 days or more delinquent on any money owed to Columbia Academy will not have grades posted for final exams, receive final grades, or participate in any school-sponsored summer camps or sporting events, including practices and workouts.

GENERAL POLICIES

- 1) A parent, guardian, or anyone who wants to discuss any issue should under no circumstance enter a classroom. K-12 conferences with teachers must be made at least one day in advance and arranged via email or phone call to the Guidance Counselor at a time that will not interfere with teaching time.
- 2) Abuse or disregard of staff and faculty will not be tolerated, and patrons who do so will be accountable to the Board of Directors, and penalties for such may include termination of all rights and privileges of Columbia Academy. This includes any negative comments or complaints posted via social media.
- 3) All students must be picked up at designated carline locations. Parents, guardians, or designated drivers should not park and walk to retrieve students or ask students to meet them in the parking lot. For safety reasons, all students must be dropped off and picked up through the designated carline. Under no circumstances should a student walk to a parked vehicle in the parking lot or near the Fine Arts Center
- 4) Classroom assignments for students will be made utilizing data from achievement tests, STAR reading and math scores, and teacher recommendations. We do not accept classroom placement requests; if you have a special concern, you may schedule a conference with the Head of School.
- 5) Parents should not send a student who has shown any symptoms or signs of an illness to school. Students should be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Those who have experienced vomiting or diarrhea should stay home for at least 24 hours after the last episode.
- 6) In case of an accident, students must notify a teacher or coach if any student is injured at school or while participating in a school activity. Students are to immediately notify the supervising advisor or coach if they are injured at school or while participating in a school activity.
- 7) Columbia Academy does not provide insurance for expenses involved in the treatment of athletic injuries or any other accidental injuries occurring at school. Since Columbia Academy does not carry insurance for accidental injuries, we require every parent/guardian to review his present insurance policy in order to assure that his son/daughter will receive appropriate coverage in case of injury.
- 8) Columbia Academy students will be photographed throughout the year for various purposes. All registered Columbia Academy students grant permission to be photographed. Any custody exceptions for the use of photographs must be provided in writing with documentation.
- 9) The Board of Directors and Administration of Columbia Academy do not participate in the planning or implementation of any type of senior trip. If seniors want to plan a senior trip, they must do so on their own with no official endorsement from Columbia Academy. The only off-campus activity, outside of

athletics and properly scheduled field trips, is the Homecoming parade. We specifically have no connection to any pre- or post-prom activities.

- 10) Columbia Academy uses closed circuit cameras and recordings for security and student monitoring purposes. Security cameras also record sound. Students, school personnel, and visitors can expect to be on camera and recorded in any area that they do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy. Any interference or tampering with security equipment will result in immediate suspension.
- 11) Once approved by the Board of Directors, the school calendar and test schedules become policy. No exceptions will be granted for school dates unless extreme hardship is shown. All personal trips should be planned so as to not conflict with the calendar and test schedule. Nine weeks' tests will not be given early.
- 12) No student who is married, married previously, pregnant, or a biological parent will be allowed to enter school or to continue as a student at Columbia Academy. As a Christian organization, we strongly oppose abortion and encourage students to accept their responsibilities as parents. Pregnant students will be encouraged to earn a high school diploma through correspondence courses, G.E.D., or other means that meet accreditation standards.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND POLICIES

- 1) Every effort will be made to supervise students at all times. However, if a student is unsupervised, then that student is in a place where and when he or she should not be and should move to a supervised area. Students should be in classrooms only where and when they are scheduled. Failure to do so may result in a disciplinary action.
- 2) Students are not permitted to leave the designated area where a game or school activity is taking place unless they are leaving campus. Playing in unsupervised areas during basketball games, football games, or other on-campus events is not allowed.
- 3) A Columbia Academy student is expected to respect the property of other students, staff, and personnel. No student is to borrow or use another person's property or enter another person's desk or personal belongings without permission.
- 4) A Columbia Academy student is responsible for his own personal property and is expected to take care of his/her belongings. The school assumes no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property. Students should label all personal property.
- 5) Students are responsible for their conduct while in attendance at any school-sponsored function, be it athletic, academic, literary, or social. A student, who is on school grounds or in attendance at any school-sponsored function at any place, day, or night, is subject to all regulations of the school and will be governed accordingly.
- 6) No student is allowed to use any of the school facilities unless he or she is supervised by faculty, staff, or an adult. All student requests for building utilization must go through the Administration.
- 7) Students must treat other students, faculty, and staff members with respect at all times. Being respectful means using appropriate words, an appropriate tone of voice, and appropriate actions and expressions.
- 8) Columbia Academy students are not to participate in any door-to-door sales involving any fundraiser for the school.
- 9) No student should leave a class period unless it is absolutely necessary. In case of necessity, they must sign out and inform the teacher where they are going. Students should sign out when they leave the classroom and sign back in when returning to class. Failure to inform the teacher to which you are assigned will result in disciplinary action.
- 10) Parents are encouraged to monitor their child's use of computers at home. Chat rooms, Facebook, Instagram, and message boards have become an increasing problem for school Administrators. The school will take action against any misuse of a computer at home that interferes with the normal operation of the school. There should be no disparaging comments made about the school or its faculty or staff, other students, or opponents of the school. In addition, any school symbol, uniform, letterman jacket, or any other article identifying Columbia Academy should not be used or seen on any medium in an inappropriate or unacceptable manner.
- 11) All book bags and sports bags must be placed on a hook. Personal items should NOT be left on the floor in the hallway. All book bags and gym bags must have the student's name written on them in a visible area.

- 12) No student shall use any camera, phone, recorder, or any other such technology to invade another person's privacy or record any inappropriate actions. Any violation of this rule will result in immediate suspension.
- 13) Students are not to have any contact with teachers or staff through computers or phones unless the communication is directly related to academics or school activities. Casual conversation through these mediums is to be avoided by students and teachers.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

General

Columbia Academy expects student attendance to be as consistent as possible. Students cannot do their best work or fully benefit from instruction when they are frequently absent.

Seniors must attend a minimum of five (5) class periods before leaving campus. Any student leaving campus must sign out through the front office.

Absences

Attendance may be viewed daily via FACTS. Attendance codes are "A" for absent, "T" for tardy, "P" for present, "SA" for school activity, and "CO" for check-out. Any absence other than an absence due to school activities will count toward the total number of absences.

Columbia Academy heartily discourages student absences. The school calendar affords ample vacation days during the year. Please make every effort to arrange family trips during those vacation days and not during the school days. Nevertheless, we realize that there are times when out-of-town family trips during the school year are unavoidable. Teachers should be notified in advance in order to assign appropriate classroom and homework assignments. Such trips should be the exception rather than the rule.

Students in grades K5-3rd who miss more than 20 days in an academic year will not be promoted to the next grade. Students in 4th-12th grade who miss more than 20 class periods per subject/class or who miss more than 10 class periods in a semester academic class will not meet the requirements to pass the class in which excessive absences have occurred. They will not receive academic credit for any course in which absences exceed the required number.

Absences will not be classified as excused or unexcused. Students are expected to attend class unless there are valid reasons preventing them from being present. Personal illness, family catastrophes, and other situations arise which may require a student to be absent from school. All absences will be recorded as such and will accumulate toward the total allowed for the class. In the case of extenuating circumstances, the Head of School and the Board of Directors will determine if any absence may be excluded from the total allowed absences. Information about student absences (doctor's note, parents' note, or direct parent contact) should be submitted to the attendance officer. Verification should be given in person or emailed to tmorris@cacougars.com.

All absences will be considered undocumented unless parental contact is made by note or in person. All absences, other than those due to school activities, will count toward the total number of absences. Medical absences will count toward the total number of absences for a student.

Students should plan carefully and never acquire a frivolous absence, such as checking out and leaving campus to go and eat lunch. Absences due to a school-related activity, such as an athletic or academic competition, or representing the school through some civic or community gathering will NOT count toward the total absences allowed. In these cases, the permission of the Head of School will validate the absence.

Illness

CA does its part in minimizing the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and the use of antibacterial gel. Routine cleaning is administered throughout the school day. Colds, flu, strep and COVID 19 are contagious diseases and a serious issue in a school environment. If your child is ill please keep them home.

1. Fever- If your child has a fever the evening before school or the morning of school, you are required to keep them home for 24 hours. They may return to school if they are fever-free without medication for 24 hours. If your child continues to have a fever, see your physician as soon as possible.
2. Upset stomach- If your child vomits during the evening or morning of school do not send them to school. You should wait 24 hours since the last stomach incident to send them back to school.
3. Strep Throat- A strep condition requires a doctor's visit and medication. The child must be on medication and fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.
4. Contagious Conditions-Impetigo, chicken pox, measles, rubella, mumps, whooping cough, meningitis, conjunctivitis (pink eye), etc., are contagious diseases and must be treated and no longer contagious before your child returns to school.
5. Cold- Your child may come to school if fever-free for the prior 24 hours. If your child exhibits severe symptoms such as a persistent cough or severe runny nose that distracts learning, keep them at home.

If your child becomes ill at school, he/she will be brought to the office for a symptom and temperature check. A parent or guardian will be called and expected to pick up the child as soon as possible.

Medical absences will count toward the total allowed absences for a student. When a student is absent due to personal illness requiring a doctor or dentist, the student shall present a note from the professional immediately upon his/her return to school. Medical excuses will not be accepted more than three days after an absence. Medical excuses must include the name of the clinic and a doctor's signature. The date and time of the appointment for the medical visit must be indicated on the medical excuse. The attendance officer will post the date the note is received from the student. The purpose for this action will be for the Administration to take the nature of these absences into consideration if the student exceeds the maximum allowed absence count for the year.

A student who misses school due to the death of an immediate family member (parent, stepparent, grandparent, sibling, or stepsibling) will be marked absent with an "A" and a notation made in the comment section. The purpose for this action will be for the Administration to take the nature of these absences into consideration if the student exceeds the maximum allowed absence count for the year.

If a student is absent due to a court visit, the student will be marked absent. A notation will be placed in the comment section to indicate the reason for the absence.

Students will be allotted only two official college days during their junior or senior year, which will not count toward the total number of absences allowed. Students may use these two days during their junior or senior year. Students taking college days must notify the attendance officer in advance by at least one day AND must provide the attendance officer with a note from the college or university indicating the date of the visit. Notes must be turned in the first school day after the visit. There will be no recognized senior skip day.

All students (7-12) must pick up a re-admit slip from the attendance officer on the day he/she returns to school to present to the teacher of each class missed. Elementary students must pick up a re-admit slip for any whole day or part of a day missed as well. It is the student's responsibility to discover what assignments were missed due to their absence. Students should inquire from the teacher at some time other than instructional time as to what work was missed and the deadline for completing the work. Failure to make up work by the agreed-upon deadline will result in a zero for the assignment. The minimum number of days allowed to make up work will be the same number of days missed starting from the student's return to school. Some absences may be subject

to disciplinary action from the Administration, including suspension and/or academic penalties. All work must be made up.

Perfect Attendance

To be considered for Perfect Attendance for a nine-week grading period, students must be present for the entirety of every school day for the entire nine weeks. Students who receive any tardy throughout the school day, who check out for any part of a day for any reason, or who are absent for any reason for a whole day or any part of a day are ineligible for this distinction. Absences due to sanctioned school activities are not counted against Perfect Attendance.

Tardies

- Everyone is to be in a classroom at 7:55 A.M. or be considered tardy to school. Any student who is tardy must check in at the main office.
- If a student is tardy to school, the student will report to the office, obtain a tardy slip, and then will report to class. Students in grades 4-12 who have more than 12 tardies for the year will NOT be eligible for exemption. In semester courses, students may have no more than 6 tardies for the semester. It will be the responsibility of the student to get the work missed from the teacher.
- A student must report to the attendance officer if he/she arrives at school after 7:55 A.M.
- Students who are absent due to a medical appointment will be marked as Absent/ME and will count as an absence for the time missed in each subject/class period. If a student is tardy due to a medical appointment, the student will be marked as Tardy/ME (medical excuse), and this will not count as a tardy for that class period as long as they are present for at least 30 minutes during that class period. Documentation showing the date and time for the appointment will be required. (A medical excuse from the doctor, dentist, etc.)
- Between class periods, students who are tardy will not be admitted to class by the teacher unless they have an admission slip from the attendance officer. The student must come to the office to receive a tardy slip, and a tardy will be recorded. Teachers MUST send any student to the office if they are late to class in order to receive an admission slip. Correct documentation of tardies is required in order to determine if a student is eligible for Mrs. Angie's list.
- If a student or group of students is detained by a teacher or coach and is subsequently late for another class, it is the responsibility of that teacher or coach to write excuses in those situations.
- Excessive tardiness and attendance problems will lead to an administrative review of a student's continuing enrollment at Columbia Academy.
- Any student who fails to sign in or out in the attendance office will be assigned an appropriate consequence.

All absences and tardies for medical reasons must be accompanied by a written excuse from the doctor or dentist. Medical excuse notes must include the name of the clinic and a doctor's signature. The date of the medical visit must be indicated on the medical excuse. The attendance officer will post the date the note is received from the student. Medical excuses should be turned in immediately and will not be accepted after three days. Medical notes which appear to be altered or changed in any way will not be accepted. Absences due to medical reasons will count toward the total number of absences.

Students in Grades 1st-6th will receive the following consequences for tardies:

- 1st, 2nd, 3rd tardy- No punitive action
- 4th, 5th, 6th tardy- Stay in at recess
- 7th tardy- Stay in two days of recess; call parent
- 8th tardy- Morning detention
- 9th tardy- Morning detention

- 10th tardy- Parent Conference; possible one day suspension; consequence determined by Administration. Additional tardies will result in more serious consequences including longer suspension times.

Students in Grades 7th-12th will receive the following consequences for tardies:

1. 1st, 2nd, 3rd tardy- No punitive action
2. 4th tardy- Break detention
3. 5th tardy- One morning or afternoon detention or two break detentions
4. 6th tardy- Two morning or afternoon detentions
5. 7th tardy- Two morning or afternoon detentions
6. 8th tardy- Parent Conference; possible one day suspension; consequence determined by

Administration. Additional tardies will result in more serious consequences including longer suspension times.

Students who are habitual tardy offenders shall face additional punishment as deemed necessary by the Headmaster.

Check-out Procedure

Students in Grades 1–6 may not be checked out after 2:15 p.m. Students in K3–K5 may not be checked out after 1:45 p.m.

Late check-outs during dismissal procedures create safety concerns and disrupt the orderly flow of carline operations. Parents who arrive after these times should plan to pick up their students through the regular dismissal process unless prior arrangements have been approved by the administration due to an emergency.

Students who leave during the school day are required to check-out through the attendance office. Students leaving with a group for a school activity (game, field trip, show choir competition, etc.) during school hours will be signed out as a group by the coach or advisor. The coach or advisor must provide the attendance officer a list of all students leaving school and the time of departure. Except for sudden illness and/or other extreme emergency, no student will be allowed to leave a class to check-out. Please schedule doctor, dentist, and haircut appointments for after school hours. Students will not be allowed to leave unless a parent, guardian, or designated person comes to the school and checks him/her out. If a student drives to school, a parent or guardian may call the school and tell the attendance officer to allow his child to leave school at a certain time. This is acceptable provided that the student follows normal check-out procedure.

All notes sent to the office and all incoming telephone calls pertaining to student check-outs during the school day must state the time of check-out, the reason and date(s) of the check-out, the signature of the parent or guardian, and the phone number where the parent or guardian may be reached. All check-out notes or doctor's appointment cards for check-out at any time during the school day must be turned in to the office no later than 9:00 a.m. If the student drives to school, he will be allowed to leave in his automobile. A student must produce a doctor's appointment card or a parent must confirm the doctor's appointment for the student to be allowed to check-out. Students must produce a doctor's excuse immediately upon returning. Medical excuses will not be accepted after three days from the appointment. The attendance officer will post the date that the note is received from the student.

If a student should become ill during the school day, he/she is to ask the teacher for a pass to the office. The Headmaster or Assistant Headmaster, secretary, attendance clerk, or teacher will call the parent or guardian to ask that the student be picked up. If the student has his/her own transportation and a call has been placed to the parent or guardian and the parent or guardian grants permission to dismiss the student from school, the student will be granted permission to leave in his/her own automobile. The attendance officer or the receptionist must

talk to a parent prior to the student leaving campus. Elementary aides need to bring sick students to the office and call a parent or guardian.

When any junior high or high school student who has checked out returns to school, he/she must pick up a re-admit slip from the office to present to the teacher for each class missed. The student has the same responsibility for make-up work as he/she would for any other absence. Work is due when the student returns to class. Elementary students must check-in with the office before returning to their classroom.

Students must sign out in the office before leaving school. Failure to sign out may be considered as cutting class and will result in disciplinary action. Students must sign-in when they return to school. Students that have checked out in the office **MUST** leave the campus immediately. Seniors must leave campus immediately after their last scheduled class.

Students who attend Vo-Tech classes will report directly to class upon returning to campus.

If a student checks out for a reason other than a medical appointment the student will **NOT** be allowed to make-up any test he missed and a grade of a zero will be recorded for the missed test. In the case of extenuating circumstances a student may be granted prior approval from the administration to check out and will be allowed to take a make-up test. A valid medical excuse must be turned in to the attendance officer upon return.

Students must attend a minimum of 30 minutes per class period in order to be counted present for that class. If a student checks in after 8:10 A.M. they will be counted absent for the first period.

Students may not run errands or check out for lunch and return to the school. A conference including parents, teacher, and principal will be held if early checkout has become excessive. Abuse of the early checkout policies after the initial conference may result in an assigned absence or other consequences as determined by the administration. Text messages are not permitted for check-out procedures. The attendance officer or the receptionist must talk to a parent.

Make-up Work

All work missed as a result of an absence must be made up in the manner prescribed by the handbook. The responsibility to inquire about missed work and when it is due rests with the student. Parents should check FACTS or Google classroom for posted assignments. Parents may email teachers if they have questions concerning an assignment. A make-up test may be administered at the teacher's discretion. The teacher will dictate time and place. In order not to interfere with class time and student progression, teachers will be encouraged to schedule makeup tests as early as 7:00 a.m. and as soon as the day after the test is missed. Teachers are encouraged by the administration to give students a different test as a make-up test than the one administered originally. Failure to adhere to the teacher's discretion in making up work and tests will result in the student receiving a zero for the make-up work and/or test.

ACTIVITY FUND

All money collected by any school club, class, or other organization must be deposited in the business office by 3:00 pm daily. All monies must be deposited daily. The deposit should be made by the treasurer of the organization, who will be given a receipt. Instructions concerning the withdrawal of money will be given to the treasurer and the sponsor of each organization when the account is set up. The school bookkeeper will furnish the organization with a statement upon request.

ADMISSION TO BUILDINGS AND CLASSROOMS

Students may enter the building in the morning to go to the restroom or to a teacher's room for assistance. There shall be no loitering in the halls. Students may sit outside, in a supervised classroom or in the cafeteria until the first bell rings.

During break time at school, all students in grades 7th - 12th are expected to go to the cafeteria, go outside between the high school wing and the cafeteria area, or be supervised by a teacher in a classroom.

Students should not be under the porch adjacent to the gym or on the west and east wings of the high school. The sidewalk will be the western boundary of the permitted area. The car line driveway will be the eastern boundary. On inclement days, students in grades 7th-12th will go to the cafeteria or rooms where teachers are present and remain there until the bell rings. Students in grades 1st-6th will sit in the hallway outside the classroom and read silently until 7:45 A.M. Kindergarten students will go directly to their classrooms each morning.

Prior to going to the cafeteria for break or lunch, students in grades 7th-12th should use the restroom in the main building.

No student should be in the office unless he/she has specific business there. No loitering allowed in the office.

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies will be held as designated during an activity period or at other specified times. Programs will be presented by clubs, classes, homerooms, visiting speakers, and others.

Conduct should be above reproach at all times. All students and teachers are required to attend scheduled assemblies.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EARLY DISMISSAL

In the case of bad weather, if school is going to be canceled, we will try to make this decision prior to 6:00 A.M. A text message will be sent through FACTS and posted on the CA Facebook page.

CAFETERIA

Students will eat their lunch in the place provided by the school. All K-6th students must remain in this place until the teacher on duty excuses them. Extremely loud talking, breaking the line, or playing will not be tolerated in the lunchroom. Students are not to leave paper sacks of food, milk cartons, drink cans, or other debris on the tables at any time. All debris should be deposited in the trash containers. Any time a group cannot keep the lunchroom clean and the students behave in a disorderly way, their teacher will sit with them each day. All food and drinks must be disposed of properly, and the picnic area should be kept clean. Eating is not allowed under the patio area by the gym. Failure to keep the outside table areas clean and free of trash will result in loss of privileges for outside dining.

Students need to stay in the cafeteria or outside between the cafeteria and the high school wing during lunch and break. Students must be supervised by school personnel in order to eat at the outside picnic tables. Teachers or teacher assistants must sit outside with students for them to be allowed to eat outside during scheduled lunch times. Students should not be under the porch adjacent to the gym or the west and east wings of the high school. Do not go to any other unsupervised area. Students are not allowed to go to their vehicles without permission from an Administrator.

Students are not allowed to order food from delivery services during school hours.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

The building and equipment of this school are provided at great expense to the parents. It is the responsibility of every student to exercise care in the use of the building, grounds, and equipment and to encourage others to do the same.

Any student who damages or destroys school property will be required to pay for such abuse and will be subject to further disciplinary action by the Head of School.

Any vandalism of school property during non-school hours, unlawful or inappropriate entry into school buildings, or any prank activity that causes loss to the school monetarily will be referred to the appropriate enforcement authorities. Replacement costs or cost of repair of damages will be paid by the parents/guardians of the student responsible for the damages.

DANCE POLICY

Dances are for students and their approved date. Only pre-approved chaperones will be permitted to attend. Chaperones must be approved by the head of school.

All students and approved dates will enter the Fine Arts Center through the main entrance. All exits will be securely locked from ingress and egress, except the main (monitored) entrance.

There is zero tolerance for alcohol consumption during attendance at a school function. A DUI officer(s) will be charged with overseeing admission to the prom. The officer(s) will determine alcohol consumption based on their training and by administering a breathalyzer exam to every attendee. Students who appear to be using alcohol, tobacco, or other illegal substances will meet with an Administrator, and the parents or guardians will be contacted. A DUI officer(s) will administer a breathalyzer exam to attendees leaving the prom who are suspected of consuming alcohol during the prom. Students who attend Columbia Academy will be suspended from school for a set number of days as determined by school administration if confirmed by a DUI officer for consuming alcohol on school premises or for being under the influence of alcohol as determined by a breathalyzer test. Students found to be in possession of alcohol or who violate this policy in any way will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students who invite students from other schools must sign up their guests prior to the dance. Attendees and dates should not exceed the age of 20. Dates will be required to have a character confirmation letter from their educational institution. Columbia Academy students are responsible for the behavior of their invited guests. If a student leaves school property during a dance, he or she will not be allowed to return to the dance (subject to the faculty sponsor in charge). Vulgar or inappropriate dancing will not be tolerated.

The prom is a formal dance, and proper attire is required. Dresses with plunging necklines or low backs are prohibited. The midriff should be covered. Sunglasses and baseball caps are prohibited.

FACILITY USE POLICY

Columbia Academy facilities exist to support the school's instructional, spiritual, and extracurricular programs and may be approved for outside use when aligned with the school's mission. All use must be requested in writing, including completion of the Facility Use Request Form and Facility Use Policy and Agreement Form, and approved in advance by Administration, with school activities taking priority. Approved users must provide proper supervision, follow all school policies and safety regulations, limit use to designated areas and times, and leave facilities in their original condition; any damages will be the responsibility of the user. Activities inconsistent with the school's values or those posing safety or operational concerns are prohibited, and the school reserves the right to deny or revoke facility use at any time.

FUNDRAISING

There shall be no selling or solicitation from the school or by any teacher, student, or club in the name of Columbia Academy unless prior authorization is obtained from the Board of Directors or its Executive Committee and approved by the Head of School.

When the school sponsors a fundraising project, members are expected to support these endeavors. When tickets are issued, each family must either buy or sell the assigned number of tickets. These fundraisers are a very important part of the life of Columbia Academy, and participation and cooperation is expected in order that we may provide the best education possible for our students.

From time to time, the Board of Directors may deem it necessary to approve mandatory fundraising activities in order to raise money for school operations. Whenever the need arises, and such fundraisers are approved, all patrons are required to participate.

GYMNASIUM

The gymnasium is for student use under the direction of the Head of School, a faculty member, or a board member. Students are not to wear street shoes on the court for practicing or playing ball. No one should enter the gym except through a door that has been opened by one having the authority to do so. Students and parents should not enter or exit the back door of the gym near the girls' locker room except in an emergency situation.

Any student or group wishing to use the gym must have permission from the Head of School or Assistant Head of School. A faculty member, school board member, school approved sponsor, or Administrator must be present during the use of the gym. This policy includes break and lunch and will be enforced. Students are not allowed in the gym during the school day unless they have scheduled a class in the gymnasium. Students must be supervised in the gym at all times.

LOST AND FOUND

Articles lost on the campus should be brought to the office. Students are reminded that it is their social obligation to be highly considerate of the property belonging to others. Lost articles turned in to the office and not claimed will be donated to charity. LABEL all personal property, please. Students should label all personal belongings.

LIBRARY

The school librarian shall provide each student with a copy of the library regulations and procedures. Students are expected to exercise proper care in the use of all library materials, including books, magazines, and newspapers. Any abuse, damage, or misuse of library property may result in the suspension of library privileges, as determined by the Head of School and the librarian. Fines or replacement costs may also be assessed for overdue, damaged, or lost materials.

MAKE UP WORK

All work missed as a result of an absence must be made up in the manner prescribed by the handbook. The responsibility to inquire about missed work and when it is due RESTS WITH THE STUDENT. Parents should check FACTS or Google Classroom for posted assignments. Parents may email teachers if they have questions concerning an assignment. A make-up test may be administered at the teacher's discretion. The teacher will dictate the time and place. In order not to interfere with class time and student progression, teachers will be encouraged to schedule makeup tests as early as 7:00 a.m. and as soon as the day after the test is missed. Teachers are encouraged by the administration to give students a different test as a make-up test than the one administered originally. Failure to adhere to the teacher's discretion in making up work and tests will result in the student receiving a zero for the make-up work and/or test.

OFF-CAMPUS EVACUATION

In the event an off-campus evacuation is necessary, students will be taken by bus to Woodlawn Pentecostal Church, located just west of the school on Highway 98. The church's telephone number is 601-736-5128.

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS

Parents must provide verbal or written permission for a student to receive an over-the-counter medication. Prescribed medications must have appropriate dosage and instructions along with a signed parental consent form in order to be given during school hours. The office will provide minor first aid care to accident victims.

PEP RALLY/ ASSEMBLY DISMISSAL

To ensure the safety and accountability of all students, parents and guardians may not remove students from a pep rally, assembly, chapel, or other school-wide event without properly checking the student out through the school office.

Parents and guardians are welcome to attend school pep rallies and assemblies. Parents who attend may sit with their student's class during the event; however, students must remain under the supervision of the school throughout the event and may not leave with a parent directly from the venue. At the conclusion of the event, all visitors must exit through the designated visitor doors. Students will return to their regular dismissal procedures and must be picked up through the normal carline or other approved school dismissal process.

Failure to follow these procedures may result in restrictions on future event attendance.

SCHOOL TELEPHONE

Students may not use the school telephone during class time and will not be called out of class to do so. Parents must direct all messages through the front office. Non-emergency messages, including changes of plans, must be received by 1:30 p.m. Emergency messages will be delivered immediately.

Students may use the office telephone for emergency calls only with permission from the receptionist or attendance officer and must sign the phone log. Abuse of phone privileges will result in revocation. No appointments may be made during school hours.

Parents wishing to speak with a teacher must contact the office and leave a message for a return call during the teacher's planning period. Requests to speak with a student during the school day will be honored only in cases of emergency, and the student will be called to the office at the end of the class period. Parents should not text

or message students or teachers during school hours. All communication with teachers must occur through email or school-approved applications.

Calls will be directed to the appropriate office. The business office closes at 3:00 p.m., and no calls will be forwarded after that time.

SCHOOL VISITATION

Any parent or other person desiring to visit the school must report to the main office upon arrival for clearance and a visitor's pass. Interruption of any teacher during a teaching period will not be tolerated. After school, any type of meeting, practice, or travel to an away contest is an extension of school, and any non-guardian visitor must report to the coach or sponsor in charge before making any contact with Columbia Academy students.

Parents, guardians, and visitors are not allowed to visit classrooms. If items such as money, lunch, or a message, etc., are to be given to students, the person must come to the office for this purpose. The receptionist will see that the matter is taken care of.

No unauthorized persons are allowed in the elementary or high school hallways. All persons must check-in upon entering the building and obtain a pass. Parents will only have access to the Business Office, the Counselor's office, Cafeteria, Administrative offices, and the Receptionist/Attendance Office.

Eating Lunch with Students: Parents or family members will be allowed to eat lunch with students. Parents must check in at the front office and pick up a visitor's pass. Only approved contacts through FACTS will be allowed to eat in the cafeteria.

SENIOR PRIVILEGES

Seniors will be honored for their accomplishments and will be given certain privileges not afforded to underclassmen. However, seniors must remember that they are Columbia Academy students until they receive their diplomas. As such, they are required to obey this handbook and respect the Administration, faculty, and staff at all times. Seniors must attend all practices for Vespers and Graduation. All rules apply to these practices and services. Participation in the Vespers and Graduation services is a privilege and not a right. The Administration reserves the right to prevent any senior who violates school rules from participating in these services.

STUDENT VISITATION

The school, because of space factors in classrooms, will not be able to allow school pupils to have student visitors accompany them as visiting guests of the school. In limited circumstances, a potential new student will be allowed to shadow an enrolled student upon approval of the Head of School.

WEAPONS

Weapons of any kind will not be allowed on campus or at any school-sponsored event under any circumstances. "On campus" includes on a student's person, in his vehicle, or hidden by a student on campus. This includes BB guns, pellet guns, any item that gives the appearance of a weapon, and pocket knives. Possession of weapons on any school campus is a violation of Mississippi State Law (MS Code 97-37-17).

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Columbia Academy Requirements for Graduation and College Entrance Requirements

Subject	Units
English	4
Social Studies: World History, U. S. History, Introduction to World Geography, U. S. Government, Economics, and Mississippi Studies	4
Mathematics: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and any course of comparable rigor and content. NOTE: 7 th Grade Honors Pre-Algebra does not count toward this requirement. Pre-Algebra taken in the 8 th grade counts toward this requirement.	4
Science: Biology I, Chemistry I, and any two courses of comparable rigor and content	4
Computer Science/Technology	1
Arts	1
Advanced Electives – Courses must be chosen from one of the following three options: Option 1: Foreign Language I and Foreign Language II Option 2: Foreign Language I And one unit from the following: Option 3: (1) Any combination of an advanced level course above the required Carnegie units in: (a) English, math, science, computer science and/or (b) any Academic or Career and Technical Dual Credit (DC) course. (2) Completion of any two-year Career and Technical course may count as one unit. Example: completion of both Health Sciences I & II will count as an advanced elective. Note: Advanced World Geography is no longer accepted as an advanced elective.	2
Required Total	20
Elective Total	4
Total	24

All students at Columbia Academy will follow the noted college prep track unless test scores and academic performance indicate that the student would be better served on another track. The decision to deviate from the noted track will be made by the counselor and the Head of School in consultation with the student's parent or guardian. Students and parents should understand that any deviation from the noted track can affect a student's ability to enter a four-year college directly from high school. Deviations will be limited to the specific mathematics or science courses taken, not the total number of units needed to graduate. At no time will a student be allowed to graduate having less than the total required credits of 24 and not having met the minimum MAIS graduation requirements.

All seniors must take at least five academic courses and remain on campus for a minimum of five class periods. All electives count in the five except Physical Education. This is a requirement unless the counselor cannot schedule five. Seniors may be chosen by the Head of School as office assistants for one (1) of their five (5) classes.

The following courses may be taken in the eighth grade for Columbia Academy graduation requirements but will not count towards the Mississippi Institution of Higher Learning entrance requirements: Pre-Algebra and first-year Computer. In addition to these courses, eighth-grade Pre-Algebra students must take four (4) additional Math units, and eighth-grade Computer students must take at least an additional ½ unit in Computer.

The following courses may be taken in the eighth grade for Columbia Academy graduation requirements and for Mississippi Institution of Higher Learning entrance requirements: Algebra I & first-year Foreign Language.

MSAISNET.COM Courses

In addition to traditional courses offered, online courses are available through MSAISNET.COM. These courses are offered through the MAIS, and credit is granted from Columbia Academy in the same manner as traditional courses. These courses are offered subject to the following policies:

- All rules and regulations as set forth by MSAISNET.COM will be followed.
- Each course must be approved by the Counselor and Head of School. Online courses are not for every student, and the Head of School is given discretion in allowing a course to be taken by a student.
- Except in the case of credit recovery, a course that is offered on campus is not encouraged to be taken outside of the traditional classroom setting. If a student seeks to take such a course outside of the school's on-campus offering, prior approval must be obtained from the Head of School.
- The student and parents will sign an agreement establishing the expectations of the course, the dates for testing, and the final date at which time the course is expected to be completed.
- Although certain coursework can be completed online at home, all testing will be done at school in the presence of a proctor who is assigned by the school.
- If a class period is assigned to take an online course during the school day, all rules and expectations of the handbook, including attendance and period duration, apply.
- The grade assigned by the MSAISNET.COM instructor will be the grade assigned on the Students' Report Card and Cumulative Student Records. These courses will not receive any "grade weighting."

GRADING SYSTEM

Honors Scale

The following scale will be used to determine the GPA for an honors-level course:

Final Weighted Average	Letter Grade	GPA
101-105	A+	5.0
90-100	A	4.0
80-89	B	3.0
70-79	C	2.0
Below 70	F	0.0

Each nine-week average in an Honors Program class will be weighted by 1.05. Students receiving less than a 70 in an Honors class do not qualify for the Honors factor. The lowest passing grade in an Honors course is 70.

Regular Scale

The following scale will be used to determine GPA for regular courses:

Final Average	Letter Grade	GPA
90-100	A	4.0
80-89	B	3.0
70-79	C	2.0
65-69	D	1.0
Below 65	F	0.0

The lowest passing grade in a regular course is 65.

A student's grade point average (GPA) is calculated beginning in the ninth grade (or beginning in the eighth grade with Honors Algebra I, Pre-Algebra, and a foreign language) or beginning with a transfer student's first semester at Columbia Academy.

Nine-week Average Calculation

Average daily grades (at least 12 per term) -----25%

Test grades average (at least 3 per term) -----50%

Nine weeks exam/project-----25%

In computing the nine-week average, the daily average should be written once, the test average should be written twice, and the nine weeks exam score should be written once. These four grades should be added together, and this sum should be divided by four to determine the average. No average should exceed 100.

For Quarter 1 and Quarter 3, teachers may administer a traditional written examination or, with administrative approval, assign a culminating project, presentation, or other authentic assessment in place of a traditional exam. These assessments should align with course objectives, reflect mastery of standards taught during the quarter, and maintain academic rigor comparable to a formal examination.

For Quarter 2 and Quarter 4, a comprehensive written examination must be administered. These exams are required and may not be replaced by a project or alternative assessment.

Teachers have the discretion to make certain projects mandatory for passing and receiving credit for their classes. The projects can include, but are not limited to, research papers, science fair projects, PowerPoint presentations, or other classroom projects. Failure to appropriately complete this assignment by no later than the announced deadline may result in the student receiving an incomplete for the course even though, mathematically, they could pass the class with a zero on the project.

Nine-week examinations will be administered only on the dates designated by the school calendar and will not be rescheduled or made up unless prior approval is granted by the Head of School.

Semester Average

The average will be the average of the two nine week averages.

There will be no semester exams. Instead, there will be a 2nd nine weeks exam and a 4th nine weeks exam. However, the instructor reserves the right and will be encouraged to have the 2nd and 4th nine weeks exams to include any material taught during the semester, including the previous nine week period.

Exemptions

Students in Grades 4th–12th who meet criteria may be exempt at the end of the first semester and at the end of the second semester and are subject to guidelines listed below.

- Students must have an average of at least 90 for the first semester in order to meet exemption requirements. The combined average of 1st and 2nd nine weeks must be 90 or higher. In order to be exempt for the second semester, the student must have an average of at least 90 for the second semester. The combined average of the 3rd and 4th nine weeks must be 90 or higher. Students who did not meet exemption requirements for the first semester may be eligible for exemption for the second semester if they meet eligibility criteria.
- Students who have missed more than 10 class periods per subject per semester will not be exempt.
- Students who have been suspended, including suspension due to excessive tardies, will not be eligible for exemption.
- Students who have more than 6 tardies in a semester will not be eligible for exemption in that subject.
- Students who violate the Columbia Academy Honor Code through plagiarism or by cheating on an assignment of any kind throughout the school year will not be allowed to exempt the class in which the honor code violation occurred.
- Students who owe any tuition or fees will not be allowed to exempt exams. All tuition and fees, including cafeteria charges, must be paid in full at least three days before the first day nine weeks tests begin for a student to be eligible for exemption.
- Students may NOT be checked out during an exam period.

Final Average

The final average will be the average of the two semester averages.

Weighting of Grades

Students who participate in very challenging and demanding classes, such as Advanced Placement, Honors Program, or Dual Enrollment courses, shall receive a special grade enhancement (“grade weighting”) as a reward for their pursuit of academic excellence. The weighted value for each is as follows:

- 1.05 for Advanced Placement and Honors Program taken at CA with a CA certified instructor
- 1.05 for Dual Enrollment courses taken at CA with a CA certified instructor
- 1.02 for Dual Enrollment courses taken at CA with only a CA proctor monitoring the class

The weighted value of grade enhancement for Advanced Placement, Honors, and Dual Enrollment courses taken with a CA certified instructor will be applied to each nine weeks' average. The weighted value of grade enhancement for Dual Enrollment courses taken at CA with only a CA proctor monitoring the class will be applied to the final grade received from the institution of higher learning granting credit for the course.

All Dual Enrollment courses taken on campus during the school year, whether taken to meet a required CA graduation requirement or as an elective, will be added to the student's transcript and will be included in the student's cumulative numerical average and used for ranking purposes.

Grades from other schools will not be weighed after they are transferred to Columbia Academy.

MSAIS.NET correspondence courses taken at CA will not receive a grade enhancement weighting.

HIGH SCHOOL HONORS PROGRAM POLICIES

Participation and Continuance in the Honors Program (Grades 7-12)

The Honors Program at Columbia Academy High School is designed for students who demonstrate exceptional academic abilities and the strongest commitment to depth of learning. Participation in this program is a privilege and requires full adherence to high standards of attendance, attitude, and academic performance.

Program Expectations

Students accepted into the Honors Program are expected to maintain the following standards throughout their participation in the honors program.

1. Excellent Attendance:
 - Regular attendance and active participation are essential. Excessive or unexcused absences may result in removal from the program.
2. Positive Attitude:
 - Students must cooperate with classmates and teachers, show enthusiasm for learning, participate actively in class discussions and projects, and take pride in producing original and unique work.
3. Performance:
 - Students must display critical thinking skills and depth of thought.
 - Commit to completing challenging work without complaints or excuses.
 - Be willing to read substantial amounts of material and continuously work on improving writing skills.
 - Complete all coursework consistently and on time, with jobs or extracurricular activities not accepted as excuses for late or incomplete work.
 - Maintain an “A” or “B” average annually, with an 82 average required without honors points applied.
 - Uphold the highest standards of academic integrity by reading all assigned materials (not summarized versions) and avoiding plagiarism and cheating.

Eligibility Criteria

Students must meet the following criteria to remain eligible for the Honors Program (without honors points applied):

1. Grades:
 - A final grade of a “C” in two consecutive semesters will result in ineligibility.
 - A final grade of a “C” in any three semesters overall will result in ineligibility.
 - A final grade of a “D” or “F” in any one semester will result in ineligibility.
2. Academic Honesty:
 - Any violation of the Academic Honesty Policy as outlined in the Columbia Academy Student Handbook will result in immediate removal from the program.
3. Late Assignments:
 - Accumulating 3 late assignments in a 9-week period will result in a call to parents.
 - Accumulating 5 late assignments in a 9-week period will result in being placed on probation.
 - If a student accumulates 3 late assignments in the following 9 weeks while on probation, they will be removed from the Honors Program and will not receive honors points for the remainder of the year.

Movement from Honors to Non-Honors Status and Re-Admittance Policy

The Honors Program is a comprehensive academic track rather than a collection of individual courses. Students enrolled in the program are required to complete the full sequence of designated honors classes, all of which are designed to fulfill graduation requirements while promoting advanced academic growth. Partial participation is not permitted.

Once a student enters the Honors Program in ninth grade, movement between academic tracks is limited and may be restricted due to course sequencing and master schedule constraints. Students who withdraw from or are removed from the program may not be eligible for readmission. In certain circumstances, additional coursework may be required to ensure the student remains on track for graduation. Please also refer to the Change of Schedule Policy.

Readmission to the Honors Program is not guaranteed and will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Head of School.

Agreement

Students and parents must sign an Honors Program agreement (before 7th grade and again after the 8th grade) acknowledging and indicating that they have read and understood the Honors Program Expectations and agree to commit to demonstrating these standards at all times. This signed agreement must be returned as part of the student's intention to be considered for continuation in the Columbia Academy Honors Program.

Honors Points Weighting

As of Fall 2024, Honors points will be awarded and weighted at a rate of 1.05. This weight is intended to provide honors students with an incentive to take the more challenging Honors classes most seriously. Therefore, the following will be applicable conversion(s):

Base Grade	Weighted	Base Grade	Weighted	Base Grade	Weighted
100	105	89	93.45	79	82.95
98	102.9	88	92.4	78	81.9
97	101.85	87	91.35	77	80.85
96	100.8	86	90.3	76	79.8
95	99.75	85	89.25	75	78.75
94	98.7	84	88.2	74	77.7
93	97.65	83	87.15	73	76.65
92	96.6	82	86.1	72	75.6
91	95.55	81	85.05	71	74.55
90	94.5	80	84	70	73.5

Honors Program Policy Review

The Honors Program policy will be reviewed annually by the Honors Faculty Committee to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the school and the students. Changes to the policy or movement of students in or out of the program will not be made mid-year to avoid disruption to the academic environment. Recommendations for changes to the policy will be made to the Head of School, who will make those recommendations to the Board for approval if necessary. Changes to the policy will be communicated to all current and prospective Honors Program students and their families.

Honors Faculty Committee

The Honors Faculty Committee will consist of all faculty members who teach honors program students and the CA Guidance Counselor. The Committee will self-appoint a chairperson.

GRADUATING WITH HONORS

HONOR STUDENTS -Those students who have a four-year scholastic record (or cumulative numerical average) of 90 or above.

SPECIAL HONORS STUDENTS - Those students who have a four-year scholastic record of 95 or above.

VALEDICTORIAN -That student with the highest four-year scholastic average (or cumulative numerical average). Recipients must have attended CA for four (4) years -- grades 9th – 12th.

SALUTATORIAN -That student with the second highest four-year scholastic average (or cumulative numerical average). Recipients must have attended CA for four (4) years -- grades 9th -12th.

To be considered for Valedictorian or Salutatorian, a student must be in the Honors Program and have attended Columbia Academy since the beginning of their freshman year. The student must also take and pass 70% of offered Honors courses. Early graduation deems a student ineligible for these distinctions. Final averages for regular courses and final weighted averages for Honors courses will be used when determining Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and class rank. Semester averages are added together through the first semester of the senior year; also, the third nine-week grades are included. Excluded in this figure are non-academic grades, i.e., Cheerleader, Teacher Aide, Dance Team, Library Aide, Show Choir, etc.

VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

To be considered for Valedictorian or Salutatorian, a student must be in the Honors Program and have attended Columbia Academy since the beginning of their freshman year. The student must also take and pass 70% of offered Honors courses. Early graduation deems a student ineligible for these distinctions. Final averages for regular courses and final weighted averages for Honors courses will be used when determining Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and class rank.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

Kindergarten: Students will be promoted upon successful completion of readiness skills, which are skills that indicate that the student is prepared to enter first grade.

Grades 1st – 3rd:

1. Must pass reading and math
2. May not fail any additional subject.
3. 1st & 2nd grade students must pass 2nd semester
4. Teachers may advise parents to retain a child with one F or two or more D's

Grades 4th – 6th:

6. Must not fail two or more subjects.
7. Teachers may advise parents to retain a child with one F or two or more D's

Retention

A student may be retained no more than two times during grades one through six. Columbia Academy is not equipped to meet the specialized needs of students requiring additional retention beyond this limit. Placement for the following year will be determined by a committee consisting of board members, the Head of School, and the student's teachers.

Students in grades seven and eight may not fail more than one major subject (English, History, Math, or Science). A failing grade in two or more of these subjects will result in retention. Students earning two or more D's may be advised to seek remedial assistance or tutoring.

High school students (grades 9–12) receive credit only for courses passed. If a non-required course fails, the student may either repeat that course or select an approved substitute. A student may not advance to a higher-level course without successfully completing all prerequisite courses. The school counselor is responsible for verifying that all course requirements are met prior to progression.

Students graduating from Columbia Academy may earn no more than two (2) credits through correspondence work, online courses, or any combination thereof, in accordance with state guidelines. All correspondence courses must be taken through **MSAISnet.com** and must receive prior approval. If it is determined that a Dual Credit course could be taken as a correspondence course, this request must be made and approved by the Head of School.

Correspondence courses may be approved only under the following conditions:

1. The course is required for remedial purposes.
2. The course is required for graduation and cannot be scheduled in the regular school program.
3. A documented medical condition prevents regular class attendance.
4. Other special circumstances as approved by the Head of School.

CLASSIFICATION OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 9th - 12th

FRESHMEN:	Those who have completed satisfactorily the 8th grade.
SOPHOMORES:	Those who have completed at least 5 units of high school work.
JUNIORS:	Those who have completed at least 10 units of high school work.
SENIORS:	Those who have completed at least 15 units of high school work and are currently enrolled in at least 4 academic classes. (The classification of "Senior" does not necessarily qualify the student as a candidate for graduation.)

CRITERIA FOR MISSISSIPPI SCHOLARS

The following has been established as the curriculum and requirements for Seniors of School Year 2015 and later to be recognized as a Mississippi Scholar:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 4 credits must consist of: • English I (1) • English II (1) • English III (1) • English IV (1) MATHEMATICS 4 credits must consist of: • Algebra I (1) • Geometry (1) • Algebra II (1) • One Carnegie Unit of comparable rigor and content may come from Mathematics courses approved for Mississippi Scholars Credit (www.mississippischolars.ms) SCIENCE 4 credits must consist of: • Biology I (1) • Chemistry (1) • Any two Carnegie Units of comparable rigor and content (Physics (1) preferred). Additionally, one Carnegie Unit may come from a Career Technical Education course.	SOCIAL STUDIES 4 credits must consist of: • World Geography (1/2) • Mississippi Studies (1/2) • World History Studies (1) • U.S. History (1) • U.S. Government (1/2) • Economics (1/2) ARTS 1 credit of: • One Carnegie Unit of Visual and Performing Arts meeting the requirements for high school graduation or • 2 units for the completion of the 2 course sequence Computer Graphics Technology I & II ADVANCED ELECTIVES 2 credits must consist of: • Two Foreign Languages or a 5th Math or 5th Science of higher rigor
ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS • 80 Hours of Community or Volunteer Service during 4 years of high school • 19 ACT Composite Score (Overall Score) • 2.5 cumulative high school GPA on a 4.0 scale • 3 letters of recommendation (one from each of the following – principal, guidance counselor, and business/community leader for students with more than 4 in-school suspensions) • 95% School Attendance during 4 years of high school • No out-of-school suspension • Mississippi Scholars must also complete any remaining State-mandated high school graduation requirements. • Advanced Placement courses may be substituted in Mississippi Scholars subject areas. • Dual credit and online courses are acceptable.	

CHANGE OF SCHEDULE FOR GRADES 7th-12th

Each year, students will be given a choice sheet for classes they would like to take for the next year. These choice sheets will be one consideration used by the counselor and the Administration in making out schedules. Graduation requirements, combined needs of all students, teacher loads, and room availability will be the paramount concern in scheduling. Schedules may not be changed for mere convenience or preference. A student in grades 7th-12th must request a change of schedule on a prescribed form kept in the counselor's office within the first five (5) days of the first and second semesters. The counselor, with the approval of the Head of School, will make the decision whether to allow the requested change. No change will be made at any other time unless the counselor initiates the change and the change is approved by the Head of School. Students who sign up for a sports program must complete the season.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are by no means free but are provided by the school and parents. Every year, Columbia Academy must replace worn-out and outdated books. It is expected that textbooks will be used for a minimum of five years. Unless reasonable care is exercised by every student in the use of these books, there will not be sufficient funds to provide enough books in usable condition. Therefore, each student is held responsible for the textbooks issued to him/her.

Fines will be levied at the time books are checked in or inspected during the year for the following damage or abuse:

1. Loose, torn, or bent covers
2. Torn or creased pages
3. Writings, drawings, or other marks
4. Dirty pages or dirty and scratched covers beyond reasonable wear and tear.

Students will be required to pay the price of a new or replacement book for any book lost or damaged beyond further use.

Students will be issued etextbook in various classes. If a student withdraws for any reason, they will be responsible for the remainder of the cost of the etextbook.

TECHNOLOGY & ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICIES

STUDENT USE OF PHONES OR PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Columbia Academy recognizes that cell phones and smart watches are an important part of culture and modern communication. Therefore, it is understood that students could be in possession of these devices at school. Teachers shall preserve the integrity of the teaching and learning environment, as well as the integrity of the Personal Electronic Devices (PED) - “cell phone” - policy outlined below.

Columbia Academy recognizes that there are times when these devices may be helpful to support the learning environment. There are also times when these devices are distracting and destructive to student learning. CA encourages faculty and instructors to actively integrate technology and the use of PEDs in classroom instruction and lesson planning. Integration must be strictly for educational purposes.

1. There should be no PEDs (including but not limited to mobile phones, tablets, personal computers, smart watches, etc.) utilized by students at any time during the school day, including at carline. Students in grades 1-12 will be provided a school issued device for classroom use. No use of personal electronic devices including cell phones and smart watches will be permitted during class time.
2. Cell phones and smart watches should be put away and turned off in a visible location during class time. If devices are used in any manner without permission, are visible, or make a sound, including alarms, noises, incoming calls or messages, etc., they will be confiscated by a teacher, Administrator, or other staff member. If asked, students will provide and surrender their phones immediately and without dispute or discussion. Surrendered devices should be intact, with no items removed or missing (including memory cards or SIM cards).
3. Earphones, Earbuds, Bluetooth devices, and other devices that transmit and receive data over a network, or other portable audio devices should also not be used on campus at any time without direct permission or without a direct classroom connection (ex., Computer class). The consequences for the use of these auxiliary, extension, or accessory devices will be the same as PEDs.
4. Cell phones, smart watches or school issued Chromebooks, Macbooks or desktop computers are not to be used to capture, transmit, or share any academic materials, lesson, or information about an assignment without direct permission from a teacher. Use of electronic devices in this manner could violate Honor Code policies and could result in assignment(s) receiving a zero and possible student discipline.
5. Columbia Academy will provide an electronic device to use within the classroom (ex. Chromebooks, iPads, or computer lab desktop). These devices may be connected to the CA internet and are capable of receiving and transmitting data.
6. Any misuse, abuse, damage (whether purposeful or as a result of neglect) to any provided electronic device (ex. Chromebooks, Macbook, IPADS, or computer lab desktop), inappropriate browsing, unauthorized downloading, or any attempt to interfere with the CA internet network could result in student conduct actions and/or financial responsibility to the parents or guardians of the student.
7. A cell phone or smartwatch confiscated by a teacher, Administrator, or other staff member will be transferred and held in the Administration office. Students will pay fines to the Business Office (cash only; no coins will be accepted). Fines collected for PED confiscation will be added to the technology fund.

8. If a cell phone or device is confiscated on any day it will be returned on the next day that school is in session. For example, if a phone is confiscated on a Friday, it will not be returned until the following Monday.

FIRST OFFENSE: Confiscated device(s) will be held in the Administrator's office for a period of 15 calendar days. If a parent or guardian chooses to pay a \$25.00 cash fine, the device will be returned to the student after a 24 hour hold time.

SECOND OFFENSE: Confiscated device(s) will be held in the Administrator's office for a period of 30 calendar days. If a parent or guardian chooses to pay a \$50.00 cash fine, the device will be returned to the student after a 24 hour hold time.

THIRD OFFENSE: Confiscated device(s) will be held in the Administrator's office for a period of 30 calendar days. If a parent or guardian chooses to pay a \$100.00 cash fine, the device will be returned to the student after a 24 hour hold time.

FOURTH OFFENSE and EACH INSTANCE AFTERWARDS: The Head of School will consult with the Board of Directors, and the parent or guardian will be notified of the consequence to be received.

COMPUTER USE

In support of Columbia Academy's mission, the school provides computing, networking, and information technology resources to the Columbia Academy community of students, faculty, and staff.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Computers and networks can provide access on and off campus, as well as the ability to communicate with users worldwide. Such open access is a privilege, not a right, and requires that individual users act responsibly. Users must respect the rights of other users, respect the integrity of the systems and related physical resources, and observe all relevant laws, regulations, and contractual obligations.

RULES FOR THE USE OF COMPUTERS

- Computer resources are for academic activities only.
- No one shall attempt to change the basic computer set-up parameters or desktop configurations.
- Unauthorized access or alteration of school-related records, files, or information will result in severe disciplinary action.
- At no time will any student send or receive email on school computers unless it is pertaining to a school assignment. Students are not allowed to enter chat rooms, or use Instant Messaging. Students are not to reveal personal identification data, addresses, or phone numbers or that of any fellow student or faculty or staff member.
- Any attempt to access inappropriate, pornographic, or any offensive or questionable material will result in severe disciplinary action.

EXAMPLES OF MISUSE

- Using an unauthorized computer account
- Obtaining a password for a computer account without the consent of the account owner
- Using the campus's local area network to gain unauthorized access to any computer system
- Knowingly performing an act that will interfere with the normal operation of computers, terminals, peripherals, or networks.

- Knowingly running or installing on any computer system or network or giving to another user a program intended to damage or to place excessive load on a computer system or network. This includes, but is not limited to, programs known as computer viruses, Trojan horses, worms, and other malicious viruses.
- Attempting to circumvent data protection schemes or uncover security loopholes
- Violating terms or applicable software licensing agreements or copyright laws
- Deliberately wasting computing resources. Students should not print without permission from their teacher.
- Using electronic mail or a website to threaten or harass others
- Using email or any platform to share information about test questions and/or answers
- Masking the identity of an account or device
- Posting materials on electronic bulletin boards or websites that violate existing laws or the Columbia Academy's code of conduct. Playing games during instructional time.
- Attempting to monitor or tamper with another user's electronic communications, or reading, copying, changing, or deleting another user's files or software without the explicit agreement of the owner

Existing Legal Content

All existing state and federal laws, as well as Columbia Academy regulations and policies, apply. Included are not only those laws and regulations that are specific to computers and networks but also those that may apply generally to personal conduct.

Misuse of computing, networking, or information resources may result in the loss of computing privileges. Additionally, misuse can be prosecuted under any applicable legal statutes. Users may be held accountable for their conduct under any applicable school policy, procedure, or agreement.

Complaints alleging misuse of Information Technology (IT) will be directed to those responsible for taking appropriate disciplinary action. Reproduction or distribution of copyrighted works includes, but is not limited to, images, text, or software without permission of the owner is an infringement of U. S. Copyright Law and is subject to civil damages and criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment. If a minor child carries out the misuse or abuse, there exists an element of parental responsibility and liability.

Enforcement

Penalties may be imposed under one or more of the following: Columbia Academy regulations and policies, Mississippi laws, or the laws of the United States.

The Administration handles minor infractions of this policy or those that appear accidental in nature internally in an informal manner by electronic mail or in-person discussions. More serious infractions are handled via formal procedures. Infractions such as harassment, unauthorized use of information technology systems, attempts to steal passwords or data, unauthorized use or copying of licensed software, violations of Columbia Academy's policies, or repeated violations of minor infractions may result in the temporary or permanent loss of access privileges while the situation is under investigation.

Offenses that are in violation of local, state, or federal laws will result in the immediate loss of computing privileges and will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Reporting Misuse

Students, faculty, and staff must report all incidents of abuse to the Administration.

HONOR CODE

Columbia Academy's Administration and teachers expect its students to be honorable. We value the principles of honesty, integrity, and respect both in academics and outside the classroom. We share a common responsibility to preserve these ideals because we realize that each individual's actions affect the school's climate of trust.

The functions of the honor code are to communicate the meaning and importance of intellectual honesty to all students of the school; to articulate and support the interest of the community in maintaining the highest standards of conduct in academic affairs; and to identify, sanction, and educate those who fail to live up to the stated expectations of the school community with regard to these standards.

The honor code is the school policy that defines the expected standards of conduct in academic affairs. The student body, faculty, and staff at Columbia Academy will not tolerate any violation of the Honor Code. The Honor Code expressly forbids the following academic violations:

1. **Cheating** - Cheating includes the actual giving or receiving of any unauthorized aid or assistance or the actual giving or receiving of any unfair advantage on any form of academic work or attempts thereof. Such acts include, but are not limited to, deception; the use of talking, signs, or gestures during a quiz; copying from another student or allowing the copying of an individual assignment; passing test or quiz information during a class period or from one class period to members of another class period with the same teacher; submission of pre-written writing assignment at times when such assignment are supposed to be written in class; illegally exceeding time limits on timed tests, quizzes, or assignments; unauthorized use of study aids, notes, books, data, or other information; computer fraud; sabotaging the projects or experiments of other students; and sharing of information through the use of electronic devices during an assessment. Use of electronic devices during an assessment for purposes other than those specifically permitted by the instructor, including the use of AI-powered devices or software.
2. **Plagiarism** – Plagiarism includes copying the language, structure, programming, computer code, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and passing off the same as one's own original work or attempts thereof. Such acts include, but are not limited to, having a parent or another person write an essay (including the purchase of works online) or do a project which is then submitted as one's own work. Plagiarism is also defined as failing to use proper in-text documentation and/or failing to include a Bibliography page. Columbia Academy will employ a plagiarism detection service if such conduct is suspected. Directly copying or paraphrasing text, code, or ideas from another source without proper attribution, including the use of AI-generated content.
3. **Falsification/Lying** – Falsification includes the statement of any untruth, either verbally or in writing, with respect to any circumstances relevant to one's academic work or attempts thereof. Such acts include, but are not limited to, the forgery of official signatures; tampering with official records; fraudulently adding, deleting, or manipulating information on academic work; or fraudulently changing an examination or other academic work after the testing period or due date of the assignment; lying or failing to give complete information to a teacher; and feigning illness to gain extra preparation time for tests, quizzes, or assignments due.
4. **Stealing** – Stealing includes the taking or appropriating without the right or permission to do so and with the intent to keep or wrongfully make use of school work or materials of another student or the instruction materials of a teacher. Such acts include but are not limited to stealing copies of tests or quizzes, illegitimately accessing the teacher's answer key for tests or quizzes, stealing the teacher's edition of the textbook, using AI to produce work, and stealing another student's homework, notes, or handouts.

5. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty – Facilitating academic dishonesty by intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this code.
6. Any form of cheating, including the use of AI technology, is a serious offense and will result in appropriate disciplinary action, as determined by the institution's policies and procedures. It is essential to maintain academic integrity and uphold the principles of fair and honest academic practices.

DUTY TO REPORT VIOLATIONS

Academic dishonesty is a negative force in the academic life of a school. It jeopardizes the quality of education and depreciates the genuine achievements of others. All members of the school community, students, faculty, and staff share the responsibility and authority to challenge and make known acts of apparent academic dishonesty. Any student, faculty, or staff member noticing any failure to follow the honor code is encouraged to report the incident to the appropriate authority, such as an Administrator or teacher. The anonymity of the reporting person will be maintained.

PENALTIES

Teachers will note offenses in FACTS and will notify the administration for disciplinary action to be taken.

- First Offense: The student will receive a zero, and a student/teacher/parent conference will be held.
- Second Offense: The student will receive a zero plus one day of early morning detention. The student will be dismissed from any honor society or student government membership or position.
- Third Offense: The student will receive a zero and will be suspended for two (2) days.
- Subsequent Offenses: Head of School's discretion to include suspension or expulsion.

THE PLEDGE

Students and parents voluntarily sign the following pledge and, in so signing, promise to uphold the honor code and to anonymously report any infractions to the proper authorities:

"I pledge that all of my academic work in every subject will be original. I will not plagiarize, copy, or cheat in any way. I understand the school's honor code and will support it. Every time I sign my name on a piece of work, I reaffirm my acceptance of this Honor Code."

DRESS CODE

STUDENT DRESS / GROOMING FOR GRADES K 5 – 12th

During regular school hours, students will adhere to the board-approved uniform policy. Parents are primarily responsible for ensuring their students are properly groomed and dressed. Parents should make a special effort to see that their students conform to the dress and grooming regulations that have been established by the school. If parents will not or cannot accept this responsibility, the Administration will be forced to assume this for them. Administration should have to take very little action in enforcing these codes. Parents should plan haircuts so that the code is not broken. The Administration may require a student to get a haircut before returning to school with no grace periods.

COLUMBIA ACADEMY COLORS:

ORANGE
WHITE
ROYAL BLUE

GENERAL:

1. Hats or caps are not to be worn on campus, except for athletic competitions or practices. If a hat or cap is worn or visible at an inappropriate time, it will be confiscated for 30 calendar days. After this time has expired, the student may pick up the hat or cap from the office. At the end of the year, all caps or hats which have not been picked up will be donated to charity.
2. Undergarments must be worn. If a t-shirt is worn under a collared shirt it must be solid white, orange or royal blue.
3. Tattoos are strongly discouraged and all tattoos are to be covered at all times, including all school related activities.
4. No unnecessary attire is allowed. Hair that is gapped or standing up, such as mohawks and unnatural color, and brings undue attention to an individual or group is prohibited.
5. Any other attire deemed inappropriate or disruptive by the Head of School shall not be worn.
6. Columbia Academy students who are attending school-sponsored field trips, educational excursions, or other events sponsored by Columbia Academy shall be in school dress code compliance and also in compliance with the school's policy concerning hair, unless permission to deviate has been granted by the Administration.
7. Students who are returning to campus from Vo-Tech are expected to be in dress code compliance (hats, shirts, etc.) when they exit their vehicle.
8. For both males and females, properly sized collared shirts or Columbia Academy approved spirit tee shirts may be worn. Shirts must cover the waist of the pants, shorts, capris, or skirts. Collared shirts must adhere to the Columbia Academy brand, including logos and colors. Tee shirts worn must be school-issued or purchased from the Cougar Store. Shirts produced by individuals or purchased via another source are not to be worn during regular school hours. Spirit wear must meet all dress code requirements in length, coverage, and adhere to the Columbia Academy brand in regard to logos. The shoulders and mid-drifts should be covered. No cropped tops. If any tee shirt is deemed inappropriate by the administration, the student will not be allowed to wear it to school.
9. Outer garments (sweatshirts, sweaters, hoodies, and lightweight pullovers) must be those purchased from the Cougar Store, through CA sponsored activity or organization participation, or are solid orange, white, royal blue, or gray. Solid color outer garments not purchased through Columbia Academy should not display full front or back logos that do not conform to the formal CA Brand. (Example: A gray Cougar baseball sweatshirt is allowed, while a gray "Ole Miss" sweatshirt is not.)

Girls Dress

1. Properly-sized full length khaki slacks or blue denim jeans, khaki capris, khaki skirts, khaki walking shorts may be worn. Skirts that gather at the side may NOT be worn. Denim skorts or skirts may be worn if they are the proper length. No denim shorts or athletic shorts may be worn.
 - Must be properly hemmed
 - Not split or cut in any manner
 - May be pleated or non-pleated
 - Length of slacks shall not exceed the bottom of the shoe
 - Length of shorts, skorts, and skirts not to exceed 4 inches above the back crease of the knee
 - No stretch fabric, jeggings, frayed, sagging, oversized, extremely tight fitting, zip-off pants, warm-up windsuits, sweat suits, etc.
2. Oxford-style, button-down shirt, long or short sleeve. All shirts should be in solid white, orange, or royal blue.
3. Young ladies are NOT permitted to wear any attire that exposes bare skin at the back, shoulders, or the front.
4. On dress-up days, skirts or dresses should not exceed 4 inches above the back crease of the knee and should not expose bare skin at the back, shoulders, or front. This includes spaghetti straps and one-strap tops and/or dresses with exposed midriffs.
5. Slacks, jean skirts, and skorts should not be sagging below the waistline.
6. Excessive ear piercings are not allowed.
7. Young ladies are to wear their hair in a well-groomed manner.

Boys Dress

1. Properly sized full-length khaki slacks or denim blue jeans. No denim shorts or athletic shorts may be worn.
 - Must fit at the waist and have a front waistband and belt loops
 - Must be properly hemmed, no banded bottoms
 - Not split or cut in any manner
 - May be pleated or non-pleated
 - Length of shorts should not exceed 4 inches above the back crease of the knee.
 - No stretch fabric, frayed, sagging, oversized, extremely tight fitting, zip-off pants, bell bottoms, warm-up windsuits, sweat suits, etc.
2. Collared polo/golf-type shirt, tucked in (long or short sleeve). All shirts must be orange, white, or royal blue.
3. Oxford-style, button-down shirt, long or short sleeve. The button-down shirt must be properly buttoned and tucked in. All shirts must be solid white, orange, or royal blue.
4. Columbia Academy spirit tee shirts may be worn in place of collared shirts Monday through Friday.
5. Outer garments (sweatshirts, sweaters, hoodies, and lightweight pullovers) must be orange, white, or royal blue. Gray is also an acceptable color for these items only.
6. Clean shaven (no mustaches, beards, or other facial hair, not even one-day growth), which should include face, neck, and cheeks. Shave at home or be removed from class to shave. No extreme haircuts or sideburns past the middle of the ear.
7. Young men are to wear their hair in a well-groomed manner, clean and neatly cut, and not hanging over eyebrows, ears, and the collar. It should be kept combed, brushed, and clean.
8. Young men are not to come to school wearing earrings or any other piercings.

Shaving

Young men who come to school not in compliance with the shaving requirements mentioned in the Dress Code section for boys (item # 6) will be removed from the classroom and required to shave at school. Students will also be assessed a \$2 shaving supply fee.

Shaving violations, beginning with the first one, are considered dress code violations, and consequences will be given as outlined in the Dress Code Policy.

In the event a student turns in a medical excuse from a doctor to limit shaving for a brief period of time, the excuse can only cover a period of 30 days. If a doctor deems a student needs additional time to limit shaving, then the medical excuse must be updated on a monthly basis.

Haircuts

Hairstyles for young men shall follow the guidelines found in the Dress Code section for boys (items #6 and #7). Hair should not touch the ears, eyebrows, or collar of the shirt when combed, brushed, or pulled down (for those with curly or wavy hair).

Students will receive a warning (recorded in FACTS) for a first violation of the haircut policy and will be given a specific time to get his hair in compliance with handbook standards. A second haircut violation will be considered a dress code violation, and consequences will be given as outlined in the Dress Code Policy.

Extracurricular Dress

Uniforms for students who participate in extracurricular activities (e.g., sports-related uniforms, dance team-related uniforms, etc.) may not meet the above-listed dress code. These uniforms are considered event-specific and should be worn only to and for the duration of related events. Pants and shirts worn for these events must be approved by the coach/teacher and the Administration. Should an event occur during normal school hours, students may change from their academic attire into their event uniform for the duration of the event. Students should then change back into approved dress code attire upon completion of the event. Examples of such events would be: sporting events, practice sessions, pep rallies, parades, team or group photography sessions, or any other events requiring students to wear clothing that does not meet the dress code. Uniforms must be worn for events, such as academic competitions, science fairs, and any other activities where Columbia Academy is being represented. Students who are not dressed properly will not be allowed to participate in these activities.

During football season, cheerleaders may wear approved cheer suits, and football players may wear football jerseys, which are as follows: Pee Wee on Tuesdays, Junior High on Thursdays, and Varsity on Fridays. Also, girls in K5 – 3rd grades are allowed to wear cheerleader uniforms on Fridays. These days, football players must wear school uniform bottoms, as detailed in the dress code.

For all other sports, student athletes may wear approved team shirts on Fridays only when the team sport is in season. School uniform bottoms, as detailed in the dress code, must be worn.

For other games during the week, athletes must be in school uniform unless permission has been granted from the administration to deviate from the dress code.

Special Cougar Pride Dress-up Days

Cougar Pride days will be announced and approved by the Head of School. The general dress code guidelines, as detailed in the dress code section, will be followed. If a student is not participating in the dress-up day, he should be dressed pursuant to the dress code. If a student makes a poor effort to participate in the dress-up day, the Administration will require him to change into approved school wear.

School Picture Days

School pictures will be taken both in the fall and spring of the school year. The following policy outlines dress attire for these pictures and has been established to make our annual and class pictures look as uniform as possible:

Senior Pictures Tux and drape photographs for Seniors will be taken in the Fine Arts Center.

Fall Pictures

- Individual pictures and class group pictures will be taken.
- Boys and Girls K3 – 6th grades are required to wear school uniforms for Fall school pictures.
- Boys in 7th – 11th grades are required to wear a coat and tie for Fall school pictures. School uniform bottoms, as detailed in the dress code, must be worn.
- Girls in 7th – 11th grades are required to wear professional clothing (excluding low-cut blouses) for Fall school pictures. Skirts or dresses should not exceed 4 inches above the back crease of the knee and should not expose bare skin at the back, shoulders, or front. This includes spaghetti straps and one-strap tops and/or dresses with exposed midriffs.
- Make-up pictures will be taken at a scheduled later date.

Spring Pictures Individual pictures will be taken for grades K-6. Students do not have to wear school uniforms but must adhere to school dress code requirements.

ID Badges

ID Badge photos will be taken yearly for identification purposes on scheduled orientation days. IDs must be worn daily. IDs must not be altered in any way. Damaged IDs must be replaced. Replacement ID's are \$10.00 and replacement lanyards are \$5.00. Failure to wear and ID during school hours will result in a disciplinary action.

CONSEQUENCES FOR DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

The following consequences shall be in effect for all violations of the dress code, for example, not wearing school ID, tampering or damaging school ID, and wearing caps in the building. Dress code violations do not reset each quarter but will count cumulatively for the entire school year.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| ● First Offense | Warning |
| ● Second Offense | 15 minutes of detention time |
| ● Third Offense | 30 minutes of detention time |
| ● Fourth Offense | 30 minutes of detention time |
| ● Fifth Offense | One hour of detention time |
| ● Sixth Offense | One hour of detention time |
| ● Seventh Offense | One hour of detention time |
| ● Eighth Offense | Parent Conference; possible one-day suspension; consequence determined by the Administration. |
| ● Additional tardies | will result in more serious consequences, including longer suspension times. |

Detention times will be determined by the Administration and will be scheduled either at break, before school, or after school.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Corporal Punishment

Certified school personnel and/or the Head of School/Assistant Head of School of Columbia Academy shall have the right to administer corporal punishment to any student for a violation of any rule or regulation of the school. Such corporal punishment shall be administered in accordance with school policy. Acceptance of the use of corporal punishment is assumed by the signing of the handbook signature sheet and/or continued enrollment in Columbia Academy.

Discipline in the Classroom

The teacher shall be recognized as the person in authority to maintain good discipline in the classroom. Every teacher is authorized to administer any discipline necessary to correct bad conduct, bad attitude, or failure to do the required work. This includes corporal punishment (paddling). The teacher must have another certified teacher as a witness. This authority extends to all school property and all school activities, subject to the limitations that:

- Students may be expelled or suspended only by the Head of School or Assistant Head of School.
- Discipline methods must fall within limits set forth in school policy.
- Disciplinary action for the following will be left to the discretion of the teacher:
 - Failure to bring required materials (a fully charged computer, books, pen, papers, signed test papers, progress reports, etc.)
 - Copying homework or sharing answers and or test questions electronically. (Grades K-6 Only) (Honor Code for 7-12)
 - Cheating on tests will result in an automatic zero, and the parents will be notified.

Non-Major Violations/Repeats

A student sent to the office for discipline reasons may face any of the following consequences:

- Conference with an Administrator (and possibly the parent) with a warning to correct behavior.
- Break detention
- Morning detention 7:00 A.M. until 7:45 A.M.
- Afternoon detention 3:00 P.M. until 4:00 P.M.
- Corporal punishment

The above steps are a guide to the Administration in dealing with repetitive disciplinary actions. Continued repeat offenders will face more serious consequences, including the possibility of suspension from school.

Major Violations

If it is determined by the Head of School or Assistant Head of School that a student has committed any of the acts listed below, the student will be subject to disciplinary action, including corporal punishment (paddling), with the probability of suspension until he/she and his/her parents have had a conference with the Head of School. In certain cases, the student may be suspended or expelled from Columbia Academy.

- a. Truancy / Falsifying an excuse
- b. Profanity
- c. Gambling
- d. Fighting
- e. Insolence or Disrespect
- f. Stealing
- g. Leaving campus without permission
- h. Possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs (including paraphernalia), or weapons on campus or at any school-sponsored activity at another school or any off-campus location, or as evidenced by social media

- i. Destroying school property or private property
- j. Cheating – see Honor Code
- k. Aggressive behavior toward another student (physically, verbally, etc.)
- l. Harassment or intimidation of another student, faculty, or staff member
- m. Indecent exposure
- n. Unauthorized entry on the campus or use of school premises
- o. Multiple Dress Code Violations – See Dress Code.
- p. Repeated non-major offenses—see above.

Students who refuse to abide by a school rule or who refuse to accept the consequence assigned by the administration for a disciplinary issue will be subject to suspension or expulsion.

When a student has committed multiple non-major offenses without improvement, displayed immoral behavior, or has been arrested, he/she is subject to suspension or expulsion. Any student that has been arrested is to inform the Head of School.

A student may also be suspended or expelled for excessive absences or tardiness, lack of respect to teachers or staff, or any other serious breach of conduct that, in the judgment of the Administration, clearly is contrary to the school's philosophy.

Parents and students must be aware that attending Columbia Academy is a privilege. Students who are not committed to obeying the rules of conduct will not be permitted to remain in school.

Result of Suspension

Students who are suspended are expected to make up all work, including tests, on their own time and at the discretion of the teacher. The highest grade obtainable on all work, including tests made up in this manner, is a 65. Failure to make up said work in the time prescribed by the teacher will result in the student receiving a 0 for the work.

A student who is suspended is banned from all activities that he is involved in and from attending any school activity during the suspension. The suspended student should not be on the CA campus or any other school's campus during the suspension. If the student's suspension encompasses a weekend, the above restrictions also apply to those weekend days.

Result of Expulsion

Once a student is expelled or asked to withdraw from school, he is not to return to the campus unless he submits a request in writing, and the request is granted by the Head of School. This also includes graduation, athletic contests, or any other school function.

Unnecessary Contact

Students shall not have any unnecessary physical contact with another student, whether or not with the student's permission. Inappropriate physical contact, including, but not limited to, intimate touching, kissing, etc., at school or a school-sponsored activity is prohibited.

Hazing and Initiation

Antagonistic actions toward other students accomplish no positive educational purposes and generally lead more toward resentment and hard feelings than goodwill. No such actions of any kind will be allowed by organizations or clubs associated with Columbia Academy, either on or off campus. No hazing or initiations for non-school clubs or activities will be allowed by Columbia Academy, either on or off campus. No such actions between students will be tolerated. Coaches will ensure that student athletes are supervised at all times and that no form of improper conduct or hazing will be tolerated.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Columbia Academy is committed to ensuring that students have a school free from sexual harassment, either at school or via social media, and therefore recognizes the need to have and enforce a sexual harassment policy. Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and any other visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature that meets the following criteria:

1. Any unwanted or inappropriate sexual attention that includes touching, looks, comments, or gestures.
2. Verbal conduct such as epithets; derogatory or obscene comments; racial slurs; sexual invitations; sexual jokes; propositions; suggestive, insulting, or obscene comments or gestures; or other verbal abuse of a sexual nature.
3. Graphic, verbal commentary about one's individual body or sexual deficiencies. This includes inappropriate text or requests for inappropriate photographs.
4. Flirtations, advances, leering, whistling, touching, pinching, assault, coerced sexual acts, or the blocking of normal movements.
5. Visual conduct such as derogatory or sexual posters, photographs, cartoons, drawings or gestures, or other displays of suggestive objects or pictures.
6. Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report sexual harassment.

This behavior is unacceptable at Columbia Academy and at Columbia Academy functions, such as athletic events, dances, plays, field trips, etc., and through social media. Columbia Academy encourages all individuals who believe they are being harassed to firmly and promptly notify the offender that the behavior is unwelcome. Since the school recognizes this may be ineffective or impossible, the incident(s) should be reported to the Head of School or Assistant Head of School.

All complaints will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. Should complaints prove to be legitimate, the offending student will be subject to disciplinary action that may result in the student being expelled from Columbia Academy without a refund of fees.

Note: The fraternization of teachers and students is strictly prohibited.

Columbia Academy believes that students should have an educational environment that is free from humiliation, oppression, and abuse. Harassment is any persistent, willful, and deliberate action done by an individual or group to hurt, distress, upset, frighten, or threaten another person or persons, whether face-to-face, through other people, or through social media.

Harassment can be, but is not limited to:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, or any use of violence
- Verbal: name-calling, making inappropriate noises, spreading rumors, malicious gossip, or teasing, either written or oral
- Emotional: deliberate excluding, tormenting (hiding books, threatening gestures, extorting money, etc.), racial taunts, graffiti
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or abusive and/or suggestive comments

1. Faculty will make it clear in the classroom that harassing behavior is unacceptable and that consequences will be imposed to ensure that perpetrators change their behavior.
2. All reports of behavior, no matter how trivial, will be investigated and dealt with fairly and positively by classroom teachers. In this way, students will gain confidence that reporting of incidents will not be ignored.

3. If the incidents of harassment are serious and persistent, the classroom teacher will report the behavior to the school administration. Administration will ensure that the incident is dealt with effectively and promptly.
4. Administration will find out all the facts surrounding serious incidents of harassment by talking to all parties involved, including any witnesses. All the evidence and all views will be taken into account.
5. Records of all serious and/or repeated offenses will be kept in FACTS. All staff in contact with the students will be informed by the administration and required to monitor closely the students involved.
6. Parents of both perpetrators and victims of any serious incidents or repeated offenses will be informed as soon as possible and asked to come to the school for a discussion of the problem and its resolution.
7. For those individuals or groups found guilty of bullying, the administration will use any of the available methods of punishment that will reflect the seriousness of the offense, such as restrictions, detention, suspension, or possibly expulsion.
8. Administration will discuss with the guilty person or persons the implications and effects of their actions on the victim.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students, staff, and parents know what harassment is and know that it is unacceptable behavior at Columbia Academy. Our desire at Columbia Academy is to create an atmosphere where harassment is not accepted, to empower victims of harassment to seek appropriate help, and to develop procedures for reporting, investigating, and dealing swiftly with harassment if and when it occurs.

INAPPROPRIATE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Columbia Academy recognizes social media as a tool for communication and social interaction, but one that can be used inappropriately. Students are encouraged to post only social media content that will promote the school and its students and staff in a positive manner.

Columbia Academy will not tolerate the use of social media to bully or sexually harass any of its students. Students who violate this will be subject to discipline by the school administration, which could include suspension or expulsion.

Inappropriate social media content includes, but is not limited to:

- bullying remarks
- negative verbal comments
- inappropriate photographs
- pornography

DRUG/ALCOHOL/TOBACCO POLICY

Columbia Academy reserves the right to administer a drug/alcohol test on an individual student if it is believed that a reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use exists. All new applicants to CA may be required to undergo a drug test at their family's expense.

Alcohol, Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, and Drugs

Columbia Academy does not approve of the use of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, vapes (including paraphernalia), drugs (including paraphernalia), controlled substances, intoxicants, or performing enhancement drugs by students. Students are not to engage in the drinking of any alcoholic beverages or the use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, drugs, controlled substances, intoxicants, or performing enhancement drugs in the school building,

on the school grounds, or at any school-sponsored activity, including those being held at other schools or off-campus locations. Pupils who have in their possession alcohol, e-cigarettes (including paraphernalia), drugs (including paraphernalia), controlled substances, intoxicants, or performing enhancement drugs will be subject to referral to the legal authorities as indicated by law and will be categorized as having a first test positive. Re-admittance of any student after suspension under this provision will be conditioned on the consent of the student and parents or guardians to allow testing of said student for drugs, alcohol, or performing enhancement drugs at the school's discretion.

A student who is found to be in possession of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes (including paraphernalia), controlled substances, intoxicants, performance enhancement drugs, or drugs (including paraphernalia), or uses alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, controlled substances, intoxicants, performance enhancement drugs, or drugs in the school building, on the school grounds, or at any school-sponsored activity, including those being held at other schools or off-campus locations, will be subject to suspension and expulsion.

Columbia Academy students who are evidenced by social media as using or in possession of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, controlled substances, intoxicants, performance enhancement drugs, or drugs (including paraphernalia) of any sort, whether at a school function or a non-school function, will be subject to disciplinary action of suspension and/or expulsion.

Drug dogs may be brought in at various times during the year without being announced to check cars, lockers, book bags, purses, and a student's person.

DRUG TESTING

Columbia Academy has implemented a drug testing program to assist and benefit the students of Columbia Academy. The board of directors, administration, and faculty strongly believe that the use and abuse of drugs (excluding those prescribed by a physician to treat a specific medical condition) can:

1. Be detrimental to the mental and physical well-being of its students, no matter when such usage should occur during the year.
2. Seriously affect the performance of individuals as students;
3. Be dangerous to the student and his/her classmates.

Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the Columbia Academy Drug Screening Program is as follows:

1. To educate students concerning the dangers of drug abuse.
2. To help prevent any drug use and abuse by the students of Columbia Academy.
3. To identify any student who may be using drugs and to identify the drug.
4. To provide reasonable safeguards in order that every student is medically competent to participate in school-related activities.
5. To remove the stigma of drug abuse from those students who are not drug users.
6. To reassure students, parents and the community that the health and academic progress of each of its students is the primary goal of Columbia Academy.
7. To re-emphasize to the student his/her responsibility as a positive role model on or off campus.

Procedure

Each student in grades 7th-12th and the parents or guardians of each student in grades 7th-12th must sign a consent form, which authorizes the drug screening of each student. This consent form will be a part of the school handbook insert. The testing procedure shall be:

1. Every student in grades 7th-12th will be tested for drugs during the school year and will be subject to random testing at any time therein. The number of tests conducted each year will be determined by the Head of School.
2. The method of testing is urinalysis.
3. The collection and coding of specimen samples are executed in a manner that ensures total confidentiality and identification.
4. The samples will be collected and analyzed using pathologists' most up-to-date methods.
5. If a student refuses to take a test, it will be considered a first test positive and will be probable cause for expulsion.
6. Students will have a maximum time of 60 minutes to provide a urine specimen. After 60 minutes, the student can either provide a hair sample and pay the entire amount of the hair test. The student's parent or guardian will be contacted to give permission for the student to be transported to an off-campus testing site, or the parent may transport the student to the testing site. The facility used will be determined by the school. A parent will be required to meet the student and Administrator at the testing site to provide authorization for the test to be conducted. The cost of the test will be paid by the parent.

All specimens showing a positive result will automatically be retested using the remaining available sample by the testing laboratory immediately to ensure that no error has occurred. The second test will be a more specific test. If the first positive result is verified and confirmed, the following steps will be taken:

First Incident of Positive Test Results

1. The Administration is advised of the results.
2. The student and parents or guardians are advised.
3. Depending upon the attitude and responsiveness of students and parents, the student is subject to expulsion or will be required to attend a drug counseling program at the expense of the student. The drug counselor will be determined by the Head of School. The student will be suspended from school for three days due to a drug policy violation.
4. If drug counseling is required rather than expulsion, the drug counselor will determine the length and manner of the program to best suit the student. The student will follow the recommendations specified by the assigned drug counselor. The counselor will report to the school and communicate recommendations when counseling has been completed. A final off-site drug test must be conducted.
5. The student is suspended from extra-curricular activities during this drug counseling period. An off-site drug test will be conducted, and the student must have a clean drug test screening prior to participating in extracurricular activities. The site for this testing will be determined by the school and a parent must accompany the student for this test. A school administrator will transport the student to the facility, and the parent will meet them at the testing facility. The time and date for this test will be determined by the school. The parent and the student will not be given advance notification of when the test will be administered.
6. After a first positive test, the student is subject to take every test given at CA while the student is attending CA. A clean drug screen will be required prior to the student being allowed to participate in extracurricular activities.

Second Incident of Positive Results

The specimen showing a positive result will be re-tested immediately to ensure that no error has occurred. If the positive result is verified and confirmed, then the following steps will be taken:

1. The Administration is advised of the results.
2. The student and parents or guardians are advised.
3. The student will then be expelled from Columbia Academy.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

School Bus Policy

The operation of school buses is considered, by the Board of Directors, to be a service to parents who might experience hardship in getting their students to and from school on a daily schedule.

Bus Routing

1. Bus routes will be determined by July 31st of each year.
2. Routes will be routed to serve as many students as possible, utilizing pick-up points and a straight-line approach to and from school.
3. Bus routes, in most cases, will be limited to thirty-five miles in length and/or one hour and twenty minutes in driving time.

Bus Drivers

1. Bus drivers must have a valid class A or B CDL with the "S & P" endorsement. Air break restrictions must be removed.
2. Bus drivers shall conform to drug testing policy as required by Federal and State laws.
3. Bus drivers shall pick up and deliver students in the safest possible manner to ensure the students' well-being.
4. Bus drivers should never leave a child at an uninhabited drop-off point. Drivers will have the option to deliver the child to their residence or to the next drop-off point. A parent or guardian may request home delivery of their child in an emergency by directly contacting their driver.
5. Bus drivers will report all disciplinary problems to the Head of School.
6. Bus drivers will assign seats to all students riding the bus. It is the responsibility of the bus driver to check the bus before and after bus routes daily and report any damages to the Head of School.

Student Conduct on Bus

1. Students will be courteous and respectful to bus drivers at all times.
2. A student will board the bus in a proper manner and remain in his assigned seat, facing forward throughout the bus ride.
3. Loud talking, throwing things, and sticking hands out of windows will not be tolerated.
4. Students shall remove all personal items when getting off the bus.
5. Parents will be responsible for any damage, especially to SEAT COVERS, caused by their child.
6. The Administration may suspend or remove permanently any student's privilege to ride the bus.

REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO VEHICLES

Vehicles brought to school by students are to be parked in designated areas of the campus. Students will not be permitted to sit in parked vehicles at any time during the school day or school activities. Upon entering the school campus, all radios and music should be turned to a low volume. Students must park their vehicles in the designated area and exit the vehicle immediately.

Parking permits must be purchased in the Business Office if a student parks a vehicle on the school campus. All students with parking permits are required to put a school-issued CA decal on the back window of their vehicle. The cost of the permit for the year is \$50.00, and if the permit is purchased during the second semester, the cost is \$25.00. Every student who drives his/her own vehicle to school will be required to buy a parking permit and park in an assigned spot during school hours. To obtain a parking permit, drivers must supply the Business Office with a description of the vehicle being driven, the corresponding tag number, a copy of their driver's license, and a copy of their current liability insurance card.

No student is allowed to drive any ATV or any other non-registered vehicle on campus without permission from the Administration.

A student may NOT return to his vehicle during the day without special permission.

Students who drive a vehicle or ride in vehicles driven by students will be dismissed each school day at the ringing of the bell at 3:00 P.M.

The speed limit on campus is 5 MPH. Duty teachers will have the authority to issue detention to students who exceed the speed limit or drive dangerously.

No student should leave the campus during or after school with any person other than his/her regular ride without special permission from parents via a note or telephone call to the office.

Any vehicle may not advertise or carry innuendos pertaining to drugs, sex, alcohol, or any other lettering that would conflict with the Christian philosophy of Columbia Academy.

Tinted Windows on Automobiles (According to the Mississippi Highway Patrol): The minimum amount of light must be 35%. Maximum light reflective must be 20%. The vehicle must have a sticker stating compliance. This is a small sticker found on the corner of the windshield.

Vehicles on campus, whether properly registered or not, may be searched when there is reasonable cause to believe that the rules, regulations, or policies of Columbia Academy are being violated. The Administration may request that a student unlock the vehicle or any compartment thereof.

The Administration reserves the right to suspend or refuse to allow driving privileges of any student when regulations are not followed.

ATHLETIC, ACTIVITY, HONORS, CLUB AND ORGANIZATION POLICIES

NCAA Eligibility

As a prospective student-athlete at a Division I or II institution, you have certain responsibilities to meet before you may participate. Information concerning who needs to register with the Clearinghouse and what documents should be submitted can be found at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net. Prospective student-athletes should begin this process during the second semester of their junior year or the first semester of their senior year.

Sports Participation

All students who participate in a sport must have a current physical on file with the Athletic Director. Any student who participates in a sport must remain in that sport for the entire season. No student will be allowed to drop sports participation mid-season. The student athlete will be assigned to the corresponding coaches' roll through the end of the season.

Student Council

The Student Council of Columbia Academy is established:

- To represent our school and God in a positive manner.
- To promote proper school spirit and pride.
- To act as a neutral representative body of the students, free of conflict of interest, and to promote good communication and positive relationships between students, faculty, parents, and administration.
- To unify student organizations.
- To promote high scholarship and the importance of education.
- To initiate, sponsor, and direct student activities for the school community and to encourage involvement of students in all activities.
- To represent the student body at official functions and public occasions.

All powers of the Student Council are delegated to it by the CA Administration. The Administration has the right to veto or revoke any act of the Student Council.

The Student Council Executive Board shall consist of the following Student Body Officers: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The Student Council Senate shall consist of the class officers from grades seven through twelve. The Student Council House of Representatives shall consist of one student representative from each homeroom. The faculty advisor(s) shall be appointed by the Administration. See the Student Council constitution for more detailed requirements.

Key Club

Key Club is a service club for students in grades 9 – 12. The objectives of the Key Club are to develop initiative and leadership, to serve the school and community, to cooperate with the school administration, and to prepare students for useful citizenship. The Key Club holds regular meetings. The key club sponsor will provide a list of scheduled meeting dates. Each member must provide 50 hours of service each school year. Membership is based on Key Club Board and faculty recommendations and is by invitation.

Annual Staff

Publication of the school yearbook, the RAGUOC, requires the cooperation of sponsors, staff, dedicated students, and faculty. The sponsors are appointed by the Head of School; the sponsors appoint staff officers. The staff is made up of students interested in working on the publication. Students must be approved by the Head of School to serve on the RAGUOC staff. A student must be recommended by the sponsor and/or English teacher to serve on the Annual Staff. They must have exhibited a good work ethic and attendance in their academic and extracurricular career. Final approval of the staff will be made by the Head of School.

Hall of Fame

Membership in the Hall of Fame shall be decided by points. Seniors will complete an activities checklist during January of their senior year. Points will be awarded based on participation in school activities, outstanding service to the school, and outstanding scholastic achievements. The four seniors with the highest number of points shall become Hall of Fame members. Points shall be earned as follows:

MAJOR AND MINOR ACTIVITIES: Points awarded accordingly. A copy of the checklist noting points per activity is on file in the guidance office and business office. Students who drop out of these activities during the year shall forfeit the points earned by participation in that activity.

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT: Based on the semester average in each academic subject, with 2 points for each A and 1 point for each B.

ATTITUDE AND COURTESY: Each student who is considered for membership in the Hall of Fame shall be rated on “attitude and courtesy” on the following basis: Each member of the high school faculty will rate the students using the following scale: Excellent, 2 points; Satisfactory, 1 point; Unsatisfactory, 0 points. These points shall be added to the total points earned.

Honor Society

The Columbia Academy chapter is affiliated with the MSAIS and the National Honor Society (NHS). Membership is a special privilege reserved for students who demonstrate qualities of leadership, scholarship, good character, and service to the community and school. Once selected for membership, a student has the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities. Members must maintain at least a 90 GPA to retain active membership. Members who fall below this standard will be warned and given one nine-week grading period in which to correct the deficiency.

If the situation is not corrected within that time, a student is considered inactive and is unable to participate in chapter activities. Serious infractions can result in immediate dismissal from the chapter. A copy of the constitution and by-laws of the NHS is available from the sponsor.

DECA

DECA is an association of marketing students that is designed to enhance the co-curricular education of students with an interest in marketing, management, and entrepreneurship. DECA helps students develop skills and competence for marketing careers, build self-esteem, experience leadership, and practice community service. DECA is committed to the advocacy of marketing education and the growth of business/education partnerships. Members must have a minimum of a “C” average and be approved for membership by the DECA sponsor.

Mu Alpha Theta

Mu Alpha Theta is a national mathematics organization that encourages excellence in mathematics and encourages students to continue taking mathematical subjects. Membership is determined by having at least a 90 overall average and a 90 average in mathematics classes. Members must be juniors or seniors. Members must complete 5 hours of service each semester. Members must pay an annual \$15 fee to cover costs for certificates, decals, and pins. Each member must be enrolled in a college preparatory class to be a member.

Homecoming Requirements

The following are the criteria for the Homecoming Court:

- The Homecoming Queen shall be any senior girl who has been a student at Columbia Academy since the beginning of her freshman year. The senior class will make nominations, and the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior classes will vote.
- The Football Maid and all class maids must have been students at Columbia Academy since the beginning of the preceding school year.
- The Football Maid shall be any qualified senior girl who is elected by the varsity football team.
- Senior, junior, sophomore, and freshman maids are to be elected by their classes. Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Maids cannot have been elected class maids before.

ACTIVITY POLICY

Students representing Columbia Academy through inter-school activities are to maintain adequate academic standards and acceptable moral behavior. Columbia Academy reserves the right to restrict a student's participation in any inter-school activity because of inadequate performance/behavior at school or off campus.

Eligibility

Columbia Academy students participating in any extracurricular activities are subject to the guidelines adopted by the MAIS, its governing committees, and the Columbia Academy Board of Directors concerning inter-school competition, as well as the following requirements concerning eligibility during the school year.

1. To be eligible for the first semester of a school year, a student must have accumulated four (4) major units (credits) from the previous academic year. (The previous academic year is interpreted to be a complete year or any part of a school year in which a student is enrolled at either a member school or a non-member school). Seventh and eighth graders must have passed four (4) major subjects.
2. To be eligible for the second semester, a student must pass 4 major units (credits) the first semester of that same academic year. Seventh and eighth graders must have passed four major subjects.
3. A student who becomes ineligible after the first semester may become eligible again if, after the third nine weeks, he/she is passing four (4) major units (courses) to the extent that they should pass those courses for the year. This determination will be made by the Head of School and the Athletic Director. If the student has not brought the grades up to passing, the student will be ineligible for the remainder of the year.

Anyone becoming ineligible under this policy will not be able to practice after school or participate in any game or contest. The student may participate in the strength and conditioning program during school hours.

It is impossible to cover every possible contingency; therefore, the Head of School, the Board of Directors, and/or or the Eligibility Committee of the MAIS is empowered to review and consider any request concerning eligibility and any item not specifically covered by Columbia Academy or MAIS regulations.

Sportsmanship

Columbia Academy has produced athletic teams with fine records in sportsmanship as well as in the number of games won. We feel that our student body and adult spectators should live up to the high standards of sportsmanship exemplified by our athletic teams.

Whether the game is played by elementary, junior high, or high school students, we urge everyone to remember that the evaluation of our school and community depends not only on the sportsmanship of our players but also on the fans and spectators.

We must remember that sportsmanship is something we take with us to the game. When we attend games out of town, we reflect the spirit of our school and our community in public places, just as we do at home games. Adult spectators are expected to respect all players, coaches, officials, and other fans. Spectator action can cause the school to have fines levied against it and receive probationary status. Spectators must not address any player, coach, or official in any derogatory manner.

Player Ejection (MSAIS Rule)

- Schools will be responsible for disciplining an athlete after his/her first ejection.
- Any player who is ejected for the second time in a school year will not be allowed to participate in athletics for two (2) weeks.
- Any player ejected for the third time in a school year will be banned from participating in athletics for the remainder of the school year.

Columbia Academy reserves the right to take further actions than the MAIS requires. In addition, a player who exhibits unsportsmanlike behavior that does not warrant an ejection will be subject to disciplinary action by the school.

Fan Ejection

All fans in attendance at CA athletic competitions, whether on-campus at CA or at another school or venue, are expected to show good sportsmanship. Any fan ejected from an athletic competition will be responsible for paying both the fine assessed to the individual for being ejected and the fine assessed to Columbia Academy for the fan ejection.

Registration Requirement

Before a child practices or tries out for any sport, they need to be presently attending or registered and accepted to attend Columbia Academy.

Lettering/Letterman Jackets

In order to receive a letterman jacket, a student must have participated in and completed a varsity sport or have been a member of the cheerleading squad, dance team, or show choir as a varsity member and completed the season or year. VARSITY MEANS grades 10, 11, AND 12. For sports, substantial inter-school competition is required to letter. Participating in a varsity sport/activity while in junior high does not qualify. Participation and awards earned on the varsity level while in junior high can and should be acknowledged when the student does receive the jacket as a junior, pursuant to the policy.

The wearing of a letterman jacket is a privilege earned by participation and completion of these activities, pursuant to policy.

Students will be allowed to order their letterman jackets at the beginning of their junior year. The cost of the jackets will be the student's responsibility. The jackets will be ordered through the Cougar Store.

Students are responsible for purchasing all individual patches, such as MVP, All Star, All-District, and so forth. State Championship patches will be paid for by the school.

Game/Contest Day School Attendance

To participate in any activity, (i.e. Sports, Cheerleader, Dance Team, and Show Choir) the participant must attend at least three (3) complete academic periods the day of the activity. Elementary students must be present for a minimum of three hours. Any exception to this policy must be approved by both the Athletic Director and the Head of School. Any exception should be limited to family tragedy or medical issues supported by proper documentation.

Completion of Sport

If a student starts one sport and quits before the completion of that sport's season, he will not be able to participate in another sport (play or practice) until the initial sports season is complete. Any student who quits an activity will not be recognized for that activity at any awards program. All student athletes will be supervised by the corresponding coach through the completion of the sports season. No athlete will be allowed to drop a sport mid-season.

Cheerleaders

Cheerleaders will be under the direction of the cheer coach and must attend all home games, playoff games, and practice sessions unless excused by the sponsor. Cheerleaders are expected to cheer during football as well as basketball games. Cheerleaders will be required to cheer at all home basketball games, district away games, and post-season tournaments. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the group and forfeiture of any rights of the cheerleading group (i.e., they may not be recognized at the Athletic Awards Program). Any cheerleader who does not represent Columbia Academy in a respectable manner (e.g., fighting, suspension, use of ugly language, or cheating) will be dismissed from the squad. Cheerleaders are representatives of the school at all events in which they participate, and as such, their conduct must be above reproach and consistent with standards set by Columbia Academy.

When tryouts for cheerleaders are held in the spring, each child wishing to try out must be registered and accepted by February of the spring semester.

Cheerleaders will be subject to the cheerleader code. (See cheerleader sponsor or the Head of School for a copy.)

Music to be used in any performance at Columbia Academy or for school activities must be appropriate for a school audience.

Missing Work due to Participation

Athletes must turn-in all long-term assignments (reports, essays, projects, etc.) on the due date whether the date is a game day or the day after. Students should turn in these assignments before they leave school if they will not meet that class due to an early departure.

A student-athlete is not required to take a test or turn in an assignment on the day after an away game unless the test or assignment was announced two days before.

Athletes will have one extra day to turn in homework assigned during any period on the day of an "away" game. Students are responsible for getting this work turned in on time.

Assignments are posted on FACTS or Google Classroom and may be viewed daily by students and parents.

Tests

This policy applies only to "away" games. All work, whether homework or tests, is due as normal on days of "home" games. For tests missed due to early school departure on the game day of away games, students must take the test within the next two school days.

For classes missed due to games played on Friday: It will be the athletes' responsibility to get all assignments, if any, which were given on Friday and be prepared for class on Monday (including preparing for any test given on Monday).

Transportation

All students participating in a Columbia Academy activity and utilizing school transportation must return from that activity using the same transportation unless the parent/guardian completes a form provided by the school for that activity, dated on that date, releasing the student to a specific person who will be at that activity.

No Excused Absences

No student will be excused for being tardy the day following an activity, regardless of the return time from the activity. A doctor's excuse is the only excuse accepted on days immediately following an activity.

BELL SCHEDULE 2025-2026

Regular Schedule

7:45		1 st Bell	
7:55		Tardy Bell	
7:55	8:45	1 st Period	(50)
8:48	8:57	Homeroom	(9)
8:57	9:11	Break	(14)
9:15	10:05	2 nd Period	(50)
10:09	10:59	3 rd Period	(50)
11:03	11:53	4 th Period	(50)
11:53	12:17	Lunch 7 th -8 th -9 th (1 st Lunch)	(24)
12:21	1:11	5 th Period class 7 th -8 th -9 th	(50)
11:57	12:47	5 th Period class 10 th -11 th -12 th	(50)
12:47	1:11	Lunch 10 th -12 th (2 nd lunch)	(24)
1:15	2:05	6 th Period	(50)
2:09	3:00	7 th Period	(51)
2:30	Kinder-Building Dismissal		
2:45	Elementary Dismissal		
3:00	7th-12th Dismissal		

Elementary Lunch

10:00 – 10:20	K3
10:15 – 10:35	K4
10:30 - 10:50	K5
10:35 – 10:55	1st Grade
10:45 – 11:05	2nd Grade
10:55 – 11:15	3rd Grade
11:00 – 11:20	4th Grade
11:20 – 11:40	5th Grade
11:25 – 11:45	6th Grade

Elementary Recess

5th & 6th: 11:50-12:10
1st & 2nd: 1:00-1:20
3rd & 4th: 1:20-1:40

On ½ days: *Kindergarten dismisses at 11:35 a.m., Elementary dismisses at 11:45 a.m., 7th-12th dismisses at 12 pm.*

Chapels begin at 8:10 & 9:05 am. For Grades 7-12, 2nd & 3rd Periods will be shortened following chapel. Special elementary chapels will be held periodically. Times and dates will be announced.

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

7:45		1 st Bell	
7:55		Tardy Bell	
7:55	8:45	1 st Period	(50)
8:45	9:00	Break	(15)
9:05	9:35	Chapel	(30)
9:39	10:25	2 nd Period	(47)
10:29	11:15	3 rd Period	(46)
11:19	12:05	4 th Period	(46)
12:05	12:30	Lunch 7 th -8 th -9 th (1 st Lunch)	(25)
12:33	1:15	5 th Period class 7 th -8 th -9 th	(42)
12:08	12:52	5 th Period class 10 th -11 th -12 th	(44)
12:52	1:15	Lunch 10 th -12 th (2 nd lunch)	(23)
1:18	2:05	6 th Period	(47)
2:08	3:00	7 th Period	(52)
2:45	Elementary students will be dismissed. No bell will sound for this dismissal.		

PEP RALLY SCHEDULE

7:45		1 st Bell	
7:55		Tardy Bell	
7:55	8:45	1 st Period	(50)
8:57	9:11	Break	(15)
9:15	10:05	2 nd Period	(50)
10:09	10:59	3 rd Period	(50)
11:03	11:53	4 th Period	(50)
11:53	12:17	Lunch 7 th -8 th -9 th (1 st Lunch)	(25)
12:21	1:11	5 th Period class 7 th -8 th -9 th	(42)
11:57	12:47	5 th Period class 10 th -11 th -12 th	(44)
12:47	1:05	Lunch 10 th -12 th (2 nd lunch)	(23)
1:10	1:40	Pep Rally	(30)
1:43	2:15	6 th Period	(33)
2:18	3:00	7 th Period	(42)
2:45	Elementary students will be dismissed. No bell will sound for this dismissal.		

Columbia Academy

Student Handbook Acknowledgement and Contract

Pledge by the student:

I have read and understand the 2026-2027 Columbia Academy Student Handbook and agree to abide by all the requirements therein.

I promise to work very hard to achieve my personal best. I understand that my education is important, and I will try to make the most of every opportunity I have to learn. I will do my best to attend school every day. I will arrive on time and in uniform.

I understand that Columbia Academy's standards for academics and behavior are very high and that there will be consequences if I do not live up to these standards. If I fail to honor any one of these standards, I will take responsibility for my actions, try to learn from my mistakes, and work to improve my behavior. I know that I must always work to be a better student, a better citizen, and a better person.

I pledge that all of my academic work in every subject will be original. I will not plagiarize, copy, or cheat in any way. I understand the school's honor code and will support it. Every time I sign my name on a piece of work, I reaffirm my acceptance of this honor code.

Student Name (Printed): _____

Student Signature: _____ Date Signed: _____

Pledge by the parent:

I have read and understand the 2026-2027 Columbia Academy Student Handbook and agree to ensure my child abides by all the requirements therein. Specifically, I understand and agree to the following:

1. The parent is responsible for ensuring that the dress/grooming code is met.
2. My child may be photographed for regular school activities, and those photographs may be placed in a newspaper or on the Columbia Academy school website and the school's Facebook page.
3. All students in grades 7-12 will be drug tested a minimum of two times during the school year pursuant to the policy.
4. Student behavior/involvement in off-campus activities may be considered for continued enrollment at Columbia Academy.
5. Corporal punishment may be used on my child.

Parent Name (Printed): _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date Signed: _____