

Elementary & Middle School Student Handbook 2023-2024

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ura Cipalla, Intarim NCA Directo

Laura Cipolla, Interim NCA Director lcipolla@norwalkchristian.org Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for choosing Norwalk Christian Academy (NCA)> We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and your students at NCA. At NCA, we firmly believe every child has the potential to succeed. We offer a secure and nurturing environment where your child can learn, develop, and thrive. To accomplish this, we place our Christ-centered values of respect, compassion, and service at the forefront of our approach to education.

We offer a unique multi-grade classroom experience that positively impacts students educationally and socially. This model allows students to grow with the same teacher, providing a stable, consistent environment that enables collaboration and peer-to-peer learning across different age groups. Our approach is beneficial for learners who require different curriculum needs, but still need socialization with students of their own age.

We look forward to working with each student to reach goals throughout the school year. We welcome your family to Norwalk Christian Academy.

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Norwalk Christian Academy Mission Statement

Norwalk Christian Academy is a non-denominational school which exists to disciple the next generation to know God, trust God, and to obey God for the fame of His name.

Psalm 78:4-7 (Msg)

"We're not keeping this to ourselves. We're passing it along to the next generation-God's fame and fortune, the marvelous things he has done. He commanded our parents to teach it to their children so the next generation would know, and all the generations to come-know the truth and tell the stories so their children can trust in God, never forget the works of God but keep his commands to the letter."

We believe this is achieved by:

- Fostering a Love for the Lord in response to his Love for us and a reverence for the Lord in children (1 John 4:19; Deuteronomy 6:1,4-5) Our highest calling is to introduce children to Jesus Christ, encouraging them to accept Christ as their savior and Lord and teaching them to revere and love God (1 John 4:19; Deuteronomy 6:2,4-5)
- Partnering with Parents to nurture the God Given Gifts and Talents specific to each child.
 God has ordained that parents bear the responsibly of teaching their children the Word of God, for instilling the life of faith and guiding their overall development. NCA desires to come alongside to partner in these

responsibilities. (Psalm 78:5-6, Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-4)

• Providing a Biblically focused and God-centered culture

Young disciples must be shown in concrete ways how God relates to absolutely everything in life. We must teach them to see that God's ultimate purpose in everything is His glory. God should be seen as the center of the Bible. He should be exalted and celebrated. (1 Corinthians 10:31; Deuteronomy 6:22-23)

• Promoting Education Excellence

NCA provides research-based teaching methods that are well-executed and biblically integrated to enhance critical and higher-level thinking skills.

• Creating a unified student body through worship, prayer, and the Word of God.

Weekly chapel services with worship, prayer and Bible teaching provides the foundation of developing both a unified student body as well as students changed to grow in their faith.

• Utilizing Teachers who reflect the Love of Jesus Christ inside and outside the classroom.

It is impossible to teach something you have not personally experienced. Children will not be excited about God unless those that are teaching then are excited about God. God will not be real to them if He is not real to those instructing them. Therefore, teachers must be diligent in keeping their own hearts alive for the sake of the children.

- **Providing a Loving and Safe Atmosphere for all of God's children.** Students develop best in a loving atmosphere which values and respects them. NCA commits to provide that loving atmosphere and to encourage students to thrive spiritually, emotionally, academically, and physically.
- Instilling in our students a Heart for Serving others in their church and community.

Students in all grade levels will be involved in service to their school, church, and/or community. Opportunities are provided that are appropriate for each learning level. Examples include: Operation Christmas Child, local nursing homes involvement, and assistance to needy individuals and families.

• Unveiling God's heart for the Nations and equipping our students to join His Mission.

The story of the Bible is the story of God's plan to gather the worship of all the nations that He has created. Our responsibility is not just to be part of God's mission, but to give out lives to follow Christ's command to make disciples of every "ethne'-every distinct people group in the world- beginning with our own. (Matthew 28:19-20; Psalm 86:9)

• Maintaining and inviting Physical Environments which stimulates the minds of our students.

NCA view the physical environment of the spiritual and cultural atmosphere. Therefore, NCA commits to providing a clean, secure, and attractive facility for our students.

Belief Statement

Our Statement of Faith: The Bible is the inspired Word of God and is to be our final authority in all matters of our Christian lives and daily living. Human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, penned the words we read in the Bible. As a result of being inspired of God, it is truth without any mixture or error; it is infallible. (Psalm 12:6; 119:105, 160; Proverbs 30:5; 2 Timothy 1:13; 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21) God is the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. He eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are equal and are one God. (Genesis 1:1, 1:26-27, 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:3)

Jesus Christs is the Song of God born a virgin. He is equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sings of all by dying on the cross. He rose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to heaven's glory and will return to earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:22-23; John 1:1-5; 14:10-30; Acts 1:9-11; Romans 1:3-4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 1 Timothy 6:14-15; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 4:14-15)

The Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son as God. He is present in the world to make mankind aware of our need for Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit indwells a believer at the moment of salvation and provides the power for Christian living, the understanding of spiritual truth and the guidance in doing what is right. We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings, were given as authenticating signs to the early church, were therefore temporary, and are not to be expected as the norm for the church in all ages. All believers receive spiritual gifts that differ, according to the will of God, to be used for the common good. (John 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 3:16; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:1)

Mankind: We are all made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. We are the supreme object of God's creation. Although mankind has tremendous potential for good, we are all marred by sin. Sin separates us from God. (Gen. 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Isaiah 59:1-2, Romans 3:23)

Salvation is a gift from God to mankind. We can never make up for our sin by selfimprovement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can we be saved from sins' penalty. Eternal life begins the moment we receive Jesus Christ into our life by faith. Because this eternal life is through Jesus Christ all believers are secure in salvation for eternity. Our salvation is maintained by grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. (John 1:12; 14:6; Romans 5:1; 6:23; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25; 10:10, 14; 1 Peter 1:3-5)

The Church is the body of Christ, which is composed of all believers who have accepted

Christ as Savior. (1 Corinthians 12: 12-13

Individual Persons: God created each of us with a purpose. Each person is to have a relationship with the Father through His Son Jesus, and to live under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Each person has been given gifts to serve alongside other followers of Christ in the family environment of a local church. God wants to use all believers as His ambassadors in reaching others with the gospel of Christ. (John 1:1-4; Romans 8:28-30: 1 Corinthians 12:12-21; 2 Corinthians 5:20)

Eternity: We are all created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or in union with God through forgiveness and salvation. The place of eternal separation from God is called Hell. Heaven is the place of eternal union and eternal life with God. (Revelation 20:15; John 3:16; Romans 6:23; Revelation 21:27)

Marriage, Gender and Sexuality: We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female, and that these two distinct, complimentary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4) Marriage between one man and one woman for life reflects Christ's relationship with His Church. (Eph 5:21-33) Thus, marriage between one man and one woman serves as the foundational unit of a stable society. (1 Cor 7:2)

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Fellowship Community Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thes 5:22)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed

toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Fellowship.

The Sanctity of Human Life: We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including preborn babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps. 139)

Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct: This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Fellowship Community Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Elders is the Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application to the extent that such interpretation is not inconsistent with the above.

Tuition, Registration, Book Fees

The following fees are set for the 2023-2024 school year: Tuition: \$5,500.00/year Registration: \$100.00 Book Fees: \$400.00

Withdrawing from School

If a student chooses to withdraw, they must pay for the current semester as per the withdrawal policy. To ensure compliance with the policy, parents need to inform the school administration in writing or at least two weeks before the student's last day of attendance. Additionally, upon withdrawal, students must have all school materials returned.

School Hours

Daily Schedule	Wednesdays	Late Start/Arrival	
8:00 Classes start	8:00 Classes start	10:00 Classes start	
3:00 Dismissal	1:00 Dismissal	3:00 Dismissal	

Before and After School Clubhouse

Norwalk Christian Academy provides paid before-school and after-school care. Care will be provided through *Clubhouse*. Before-school care runs from 7:00-8:00AM and afterschool care runs from 3:00-5:30PM, 1:00 on early dismissals and all day for no school days. (Except when center is closed) Before and after school care is an extra charge.

<u>Curriculum</u>

Norwalk Christian Academy strives to provide its students with the best curriculum possible. We use Curriculum provided by Bob Jones University and known as bjupress.com. This Curriculum is Bible based and has rigorous learning standards in all subject areas, And Curriculum is reviewed annually. We are pleased to offer the following subjects at NCA.

Core Classes	Special Classes	Supplementary Classes
Language Ars	Chapel	Health
Mathematics	Art	Handwriting
Science	Music	Keyboarding
Social Studies	Physical Education	
Bible	Spanish	

Grading Scale

Individual subject's curriculum-based objectives is our approach to assess and evaluate student's academic performance. This is based on their mastery of specific learning objectives in a subject. Students are assessed on their ability to demonstrate proficiency. This approach allows for a more precise evaluation of a student's strengths and weaknesses and provides them with specific feedback on what they need to improve. As of the 2023-2024 school year, Norwalk Christian Academy will use standards-based grading for its K-7 students. The scale used can be seen below.

Academic Performance Level for 4-3-2-1 Scores								
	<u>Exceeding</u> <u>the</u> <u>Standard</u>	-	<u>Meets</u> <u>the</u> <u>Standard</u>	-	Progressing toward the Standard	-	<u>Beginning</u>	<u>Not Assessed</u> <u>this term</u>
<u>Score</u>	4	3.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	1	Ν

Inspection of Educational Materials

Parents and members of the school district community may view the instructional materials used by students. Please reach out to the director to set up a time to do so in person.

Internet Access

At Norwalk Christian Academy, we provide our students with internet access during school hours. Classroom teachers have the discretion to permit internet access solely to enhance subject knowledge, when appropriate.

Internet access provides students access to many different types of resources, including digital libraries, databases, and classroom curricula. Norwalk Christian Academy expects its teachers to thoughtfully incorporate online and internet use into the curriculum while guiding students on is use. Students will have access to internet resources that have been reviewed and evaluated by staff.

Technology

**We offer 1- to 1 devices for our students; these devices will be left at school and never taken home. This will be re-evaluated for the 2024-2025 school year.

Students are offered access to Chromebooks and/or iPads during the school day for educational purposes. Our technology policy aims to provide a safe and positive learning environment for students while ensuring responsible and appropriate use of technology.

- 1. *Acceptable Use:* Students can only use technology for educational purposes and must comply with school rules regarding online behavior and content.
- 2. *Cyberbullying*: The school has a zero-tolerance policy towards cyberbullying, and any instances of cyberbullying will be reported to the appropriate authorities.
- 3. *Data Protection*: Students must not share personal information, passwords, or login details with anyone and should notify a teacher if they suspect their account has been compromised.
- 4. *Internet Access*: Students will only have access to approved websites and apps and must not attempt to access inappropriate content or websites.
- 5. *Personal Devices*: The use of personal devices, including smartphones, tablets, and laptops, is not permitted during school hours.
- 6. *Supervision*: All use of technology will be supervised by a teacher, and students must immediately report any misuse or inappropriate behavior to a teacher.
- 7. *Consequences*: Any violations of the technology policy may result in disciplinary action, including loss of technology privileges, detention, suspension, or expulsion. Students who damage technology property will be subject to a \$350.00 fine per device for replacement.



Transportation

Transportation to and from Norwalk Christian Academy relies solely upon the parent or caregiver. Parents and caregivers are required to transport students both to school at from school. If a parent or caregiver's work schedule interferes with 3:00PM pick up, a child may be registered for Clubhouse aftercare for a fee. Aftercare hours end at 5:30PM.

Field Trips

Throughout the academic year, Norwalk Christian Academy plans to organize multiple field trips for their students to enhance their learning experience. These excursions may involve activities such as visiting pumpkin patches, attending theatrical performances, and exploring the zoo, among others. To streamline the process, at the start of the 2023-2024 school year, parents and guardians will be requested to sign a single form that will authorize their children to participate in all field trips. Should a parent or guardian decide not to allow their child to partake in any field trips, they can indicate their preference on the form at the time of signing. The school staff will notify parents at least two weeks prior to each field trip to ensure ample time for preparation.

<u>Weather</u>

Weather occasionally poses safety risks for our students, faculty, and staff. Weather events could be extremely hot or cold temperatures, high winds/tornado activity, winter conditions that include accumulations of snow, sleet or ice. When the weather is deemed to hazardous to safely have school, families will be contacted by 6:00AM through ProCare and email. In the event of a 2 hour latestart, the school day will begin at 10:00AM. Daycare will open at 8.

<u>Tornado</u>

If outside, students will move with their supervising teacher/adult towards the nearest building entrance. Once inside, staff and students will move away from windows towards the inner part of the building or classroom.

If students are in the lunchroom during a tornadic event, they will be alerted to move to their designated safety area. Students will go single file quickly and quietly to assigned area on in the lower level of the building and away from windows, doors, or glass.

If students are outside during an alerted tornadic event, students will move with their supervising teacher/adult towards the nearest building entrance. Once inside, all students will move to their interior designated safety zone. Students will sit and cover their heads. All students should remain quiet so they can hear directions.

Emergency Procedures

E-Day

NCA follows a structured protocol in the case of a building emergency that would warrant a lock down. In the case of an E-Day, parents/guardians/caregivers will be notified as quickly and efficiently as possible. All classroom doors are equipped with remote locks that lock classroom doors with the push of a button. Students may be transported to 3 alternate locations in an emergency situation.

Fire/Evacuation

Fire drills and evacuations are practiced with all students and staff several times a year to ensure understanding of proper procedures. When practicing a fire drill or in the event of a real emergency, everyone must evacuate the building by way of the safest and closest exit and/or stairway. The use of elevators is prohibited when a fire alarm sounds. Once students are outside of the building, they will go to their designated evacuation spot across from the building in the church parking lot. When exiting the building students will:

- 1. Follow their teacher's directions.
- 2. Walk single file quickly and quietly to assigned exit.
- 3. Once outside, move to designated meet-up spot in the parking lot outside of the academy doors and line up.
- 4. Teachers will take attendance and report to designated building official.

Designated building official will give the all clear signal when staff and students can re-enter the building.

Norwalk Christian Academy Conduct Policies

We desire our students to use Philippians 4:8 as their guide concerning their conduct and choices: "whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things." Christian conduct is expected of students at all times. It is important for our students to remember they are representing Jesus Christ at Norwalk Christian Academy, both on and off campus.

Dress Code

Students will wear a NCA tee-shirt with jeans, khakis, or skirts. Clothing should not cause any distractions in the classroom. Students dressed appropriately are in a better frame of mind to learn. We ask that the students dress appropriately for weather conditions.

Student Conduct

In order to best fulfill the goal of the discipline process, NCA has defined expected student behavior and established the procedure and process for addressing discipline matters. There are four key areas of conduct under which all offenses fall:

- 1. Respect Students are expected to treat others with honor and dignity, putting others first (Matthew 22:39). Students are courteous and respectful of all, peers, teachers, and other school staff.
- 2. Integrity Students are expected to demonstrate Christian character by being honest, reliable, and trustworthy. "Integrity is doing the right thing, even when no one is watching." -C.S. Lewis
- Speech Students are expected to use words to encourage and support one another. Students refrain from inappropriate language, bullying and other verbal communications that tear down one another (Psalms 19:14; 1 Johon 3:18; 1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Corinthians 8:7)
- 4. Bullying Refers to the act of mistreating someone by being cruel, insulting, threatening or aggressive towards them whether through verbal, social, digital, or physical means.

Students who engage in such behavior will have disciplinary action. These may include documentation of behavior, conference with parents and/or administrator, implementation of a behavior plan, revocation of privileges, suspension and in sever cases expulsion.

Communication and Reconciliation

At our school, we prioritize relationships that promote health and honor God. We value honesty, love and kindness in all of our interactions. In the event that a relationship becomes strained, we're committed to repairing it through repentance and forgiveness. Our goal is to foster a positive environment where home and school can work together seamlessly. To achieve this, we have established a process that focuses on:

• Swift and fair reconciliation that avoids retaliation.

- Improved communication and mutual understanding between parties involved.
- A supportive and positive school community.
- A mechanism that instills confidence in the decisions made by our teachers and principals.

Attendance Policy

Our elementary school has an attendance policy designed to ensure that all students receive the best possible education and support for their learning and success.

- 1. Reporting Absences: Parents or guardians should notify the school office by phone or email on the day of the absence to report it. The school office will keep a record of absences and inform the classroom teacher.
- 2. Excused Absences: The following reasons will be considered excused absences:
 - a. Illness of injury
 - b. Death in the family or attendance
 - c. Court appearance
- 3. Unexcused Absences: Any absence that does not fall under the categories above will be considered unexcused. This includes absences due to family trips, babysitting, or other personal reasons.
- 4. Make-up Work: Students who are absent from school are responsible for making up missed work. Teachers will provide students with assignments and a reasonable amount of time to complete them.
- 5. Truancy: Unexcused absences or tardiness will be considered truancy, and parents will be notified.
- 6. Chronic Absences: Students who have missed more than 10% of the school year (18 days) due to absences, whether excused or unexcused, will be considered chronically absent. The school will contact parents and work with them to create a plan to address the issue.
- 7. Arrival Time: Students should arrive at school on time to avoid disrupting the learning environment. Students who arrive after the designated start time will be considered tardy. Parent/legal guardian must sign student into the classroom.
- 8. Leaving before dismissal: All care should be taken to allow students to attend class until dismissal. If a student needs to leave early, parent/legal guardian must sign the student out of the classroom.

Health and Safety

We understand the importance of keeping our students healthy and are committed to working with parents and staff to create the best environment possible. In the interest of your child's safety, we request that medications, especially controlled substances, be brought to school by parents instead of being sent with the student. We appreciate your cooperation and thank you for taking the necessary steps to ensure the well-being of all our students. When bringing the medication to school, it must be in the original container which is labeled by the pharmacy or the manufacturer with the name of the student, name of the medication, time of day which it is to be given, dosage and duration. Over-thecounter medication as provided by the parents/guardian such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, cough drops, etc. requires parent/guardian's written permission and must be brought in an original labeled container with specific directions.

Medication Administration

If medication is to be administered at school, please contact Secretary, Kayla Swift, for the appropriate forms to fill out. While we do not have a nurse on staff, we do have several employees who are licensed in Medication Administration Skills.

Child Illness

In the event that a child is ill with any of the following:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Scabies
- Impetigo
- Poison Oak or Ivy
- Measles
- Chicken Pox

- 5.
- Ringworm Pink Eye
- Head Lice
- Whooping Cough
- Covid
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth
- Strep
- RSV

The school staff will contact the parent to pick up their child. Once the school has contacted the parents, we expect parents to promptly pick up their sick child. We encourage all parents to plan ahead for these circumstances.

Immunizations

All lowa students must receive state-required vaccinations and provide records before starting school. Norwalk Christian Academy will enforce this law, meaning incomplete immunization records will prevent attendance until completed or a medical/religious exemption form is provided. Immunizations requirements must be completed before the first day of school. For more information, refer to the State Immunization Requirements.

Video Recordings on School Premises

The Norwalk Christian Academy Board has given permission to use video cameras on school premises to ensure a secure and safe environment for everyone. These cameras are in the classroom and in the hallways. The cameras will monitor students' behavior, and it's important for students and parents to be aware that the footage may be used in disciplinary proceedings. The content of the tapes will be treated as confidential. The videotapes will only be retained if needed for disciplinary proceedings or as determined necessary by the board and administration. Parents have the right to request viewing of footage that involves their child, provided it's permitted by the law.

Acknowledgment

As a parent or guardian, I can confirm that my child and I have reviewed the latest student handbook for the 2023-2024 academic year and received a copy. By enrolling my child, I acknowledge and accept the policies outlined in the handbook. Furthermore, I commit to retaining a copy of the handbook for future reference.

		Teacher
Signature	Date	-
		Student
Signature	Date	
		Parent/Guardian
Signature	Date	
		Parent/Guardian
Signature	Date	
		Director
Signature	Date	

**I understand that the student handbook may be subject to change or revisions at any time. In the event of any such updates, I will be duly notified.

