

# PCA DISCIPLINE POLICY

## PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE

PCA believes that the Bible clearly teaches Christians to bring their children up in the “discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). Therefore, we seek to cooperate with parents in fulfilling this Biblical directive and to create true world-changers for Christ.

Discipline at PCA is intended to teach God’s commands, in love, to accomplish good for the person being disciplined. Our primary concern at PCA is the hearts of our students, as God has clearly revealed in His Word that behavior is a mirror of the heart (Luke 6:45). We strive to encourage our students’ commendable behaviors by using positive reinforcement, noting what is good and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8). When correcting inappropriate behaviors, correction will be applied, as often as possible, as natural consequences of the student’s conduct and attitude. And, just as Christ has reconciled us to God, our goal is that all discipline be restorative (Hebrews 12:11), offering grace to students when they make poor choices and teaching them how to choose differently in the future.

The majority of discipline will be handled in the classroom and teachers will always attempt to communicate with parents whenever possible, either in person or by telephone, when a student’s behavior disrupts learning or detracts from the teacher’s ability to effectively teach. In cases where disruption is persistent and/or correction in the classroom fails to produce a change in behavior, it may be necessary to refer the student to an administrator.

In order to maintain consistency between school and home, our desire is for parents to support teachers and administrators with the understanding that proper student behavior is instrumental in developing good character and establishing a positive learning environment.

**Informal Discipline** – PCA defines *informal discipline* as correction of minor and/or routine violations of school rules. These may include appearance and/or dress code, tardiness, disruption, and other minor offenses.

**Formal Discipline** – PCA defines *formal discipline* as a progressive response to misbehavior that would be categorized as intentional or willful misconduct that results in a teacher’s referral of the student to the administration. Formal discipline will be initiated only after prayer and counseling with the student, and when personal contact with parents does not result in a change of behavior.

Please note that extreme misconduct may result in immediate formal discipline when administration determines such action is in the best interest of the student, family, and/or school environment. In these cases, parents will be notified. PCA administration reserves the right to deviate from the progressive discipline process up to and including

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immediate expulsion when such actions are determined to be in the best interest of Pinewood Christian Academy.

### DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Students will be thoroughly instructed on school procedures and rules by their teachers at the beginning of the school year, and periodically throughout the year. When minor misconduct occurs, teachers and staff will address individual student's behavior through verbal correction, counseling, and/or contact of parents through personal interaction, or a phone call or email. Examples of these behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of self-discipline resulting in classroom disruption
- Disrespect for peers in word or deed
- Negative attitude and/or disrespect for and/or cooperation with authority
- Intentional damage to or lack of care for school property, or the property of others
- Writing, passing, or receiving notes during class

If, after repeated informal discipline, a student is unable/unwilling to correct his/her behavior, the teacher may refer the student to the administration. In such cases, the administration will speak to the student, contact parents, and may initiate the formal disciplinary process as follows:

- The Dean of Students will notify the parent of the initiation of a formal disciplinary process, and issue to the student a written notice to participate in an after-school anakainosis session. *Anakainosis* is the Greek word meaning "spirit of renewal" (as in Romans 12:2). The intent of *anakainosis* is to "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5), which will have a transforming effect upon the conduct and life of a PCA student. The student will bring this notice, signed by a parent, to the scheduled *anakainosis* session.
- The *anakainosis* session will typically consist of a one-on-one conference between the Dean of Students and the student, including counseling and prayer.
- A second referral to administration (for any offense) will result in another *anakainosis* session, and will include campus clean-up duties.
- Upon a third referral to administration (for any offense) within a school year, a conference will be scheduled with the parents and the student, the teacher, the Dean of Students and/or the Head of School at which a behavior contract will be drafted, clearly indicating that exclusionary consequences (e.g. suspension) will result upon future misconduct.
- Upon the fourth, and each subsequent referral to administration (for any offense), the student will progress from in-school to out-of-school suspensions. This will also include another parent conference to discuss how to avoid additional suspensions and/or expulsion.

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While *anakainosis* sessions are documented and kept on file in the office, suspensions and/or expulsion become part of the student's permanent record.

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Students may be excused from an *anakainosis* session (and reschedule the session on a different date) for the following reasons:

- Field trips scheduled beyond school hours that day
- Previously scheduled medical or dental appointments, music or other scheduled lessons requiring payment for absence, and confirmed in writing by the parent
- A family situation which has administration approval

**Suspension and Expulsion** – For more serious misconduct the student may be assigned an in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, forced withdrawal from PCA, or expulsion. These offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Continual disruption in the classroom and/or disrespect of teachers
- When multiple *anakainosis* sessions prove ineffective in changing the student's actions and attitude
- Stealing
- Cheating / Plagiarism
- Lying
- Forgery
- Bullying (intent to intimidate or harm)
- Fighting, hitting, and other forms of physical assault
- Deliberately failing to attend class
- Endangering the safety of others
- Ringing the fire alarm without justifiable cause (a reportable misdemeanor subjecting student to arrest)
- Racial discrimination of any sort
- Blatant and continue disruption of the classroom rendering classroom management impossible without the removal of student. (In these rare cases, the disruptive student will be sent directly to the principal's office)
- Inappropriate displays of affection (seriousness to be determined by the administration)
- Use or possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco
- Use or possession of knives, firearms, and/or weapons
- Vandalism or other mischievous acts
- Any inappropriate use of technology (school or privately owned) including but not limited to cyber-bullying, impersonating another individual (whether real or

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imagined), and sexting. Any student who is aware of such activity is to immediately report them to a teacher or school administrator.

**In-school suspensions** may be half or full day. Full credit will be given if a student completes any assigned work during in-school suspension. Students may also be assigned campus clean-up detail or some other consequence as determined by the Dean of Students.

**Out-of-school suspensions** may be from one day up to five days. Suspended students will be given assignments to be completed the days they are suspended. It will be the students' responsibility to turn in assignments on the day the student returns to school. ALL work completed during an out-of-school suspension will not receive more than a maximum of 70% for each assignment. A zero will be given for all assignments not turned in on the day the student returns to school. Tests missed as a result of suspension may be made up at the teacher's discretion. Students who have been suspended from school may not participate in any extra-curricular school activities or events on the days they are suspended.

**Illegal Activity Policy** – Students who engage in any illegal activity will be reported to the civil authorities.

**Appeals** – Parents may appeal formal discipline decisions to the Dean of Students first, then the Head of School. The last stage of appeal is the Pinewood Christian Academy Ministry Team, who will make a final determination.

**Repentance** – When a student's choices/behavior have risen to the level of suspension or expulsion, the student has an opportunity to seek clemency through repentance. Since we cannot presume to know who is truly repentant and who is not, for the purposes of determining clemency, a student is considered repentant by confessing wrongdoing before being called to the office or when called upon by an administrator to account for his/her behavior. A student's confession must be made to the Dean of Students or Head of School with or without an accompanying teacher, staff member, or parent (telling a teacher, staff member, or parent alone does not qualify).

**Forced Withdrawal / Expulsion** – When the administration determines that the discipline process has failed to satisfactorily alter the heart and subsequent behavior of the student, or if a parent or student fails to support school policies and programs, parents may be asked to withdraw their student from PCA. If parents refuse to voluntarily withdraw their student, the Head of School will declare that the student is expelled. Expulsion is noted in a student's permanent academic record which is transferred to the student's new school. Students who have been required to withdraw or have been expelled cannot be on campus for any reason without direct parental supervision and approval from Administration.

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**Restoration Policy** – In the case of withdrawal/expulsion, re-admission may be considered at the beginning of each new school year (with the exception of re-admission to the sixth grade). Requests for reconsideration must show evidence of repentance, restitution, counseling, and/or letters of recommendation.

### MISCONDUCT OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS

PCA believes that the primary responsibility for children's behavior outside of school-sponsored activities rests solely with the parents. Therefore, the school administration will defer consequences for reported student misconduct outside of school-sponsored activities or events to the student's parents or guardians unless the misconduct is illegal, is potentially damaging to PCA's testimony and/or reputation, or would normally result in automatic expulsion as outlined above. If the Head of School concludes the reported misconduct should result in expulsion, he will immediately initiate, with appropriate parental involvement, an inquiry to determine the severity of the misconduct and the appropriate disciplinary action.