



Student Handbook
2024-2025

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ABOUT US

Vision:

To provide a school in Northwest Austin that is distinctively Christian, honors God and partners with parents, teaches critical thinking, and persuasion skills, leadership development, and promotes a lifelong pursuit of wisdom and truth, in a college preparatory setting that encourages academic excellence.

Mission:

To accomplish the above Vision Sterling will employ the following tools:

A distinctive Christian worldview, that teaches all subjects from the perspective of biblical truth in a non-denominational setting.

A Classical Model which organizes the stages of education into the classical trivium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. These stages roughly correspond to elementary school, middle school, and high school respectively. This model is liberal arts based and will promote well rounded students who write, speak, and think well.

Charlotte Mason strategies promoting hands-on learning will be combined with a classical model at varying degrees of complexity as students develop and mature.

A solid College Preparatory Curriculum K-12 combined with a university model that enables students to maturely handle and manage both the rigor of college academics and an independent, unsupervised learning environment.

Educational Approach

“The idea that vivifies teaching is that ‘Education is a Science of Relations’, by which phrase we mean that children come into the world with a natural [appetite] for, and affinity with, all the material of knowledge; for interest in the heroic past and in the age of myths; for a desire to know about everything that moves and lives; about strange places and strange peoples; for a wish to handle material and to make; a desire to run and ride and row and do whatever the law of gravitation permits. Therefore, we endeavor that he shall have relations of pleasure and intimacy established with as many possible of the interests proper to him; not learning a slight or incomplete smattering about this or that subject, but plunging into vital knowledge, with a great field before him which in all his life he will not be able to explore. In this conception we get that ‘touch of emotion’ which vivifies knowledge, for it is probably that we feel only as we are brought into our proper vital relations.”

~ Charlotte Mason

Charlotte Mason

Sterling Classical School embraces the philosophy of Charlotte Mason in the presentation of a classical curriculum.

Classical education depends on a three-part process of training the mind. The early years (Grammar stage) of school focus on facts, systematically laying the foundation for advanced study. In the middle grades (Logic stage), students learn to think through arguments. In the high school (Rhetoric stage) years, they learn to express themselves. This classical pattern is called the trivium.

Charlotte Mason was a pioneer in education whose thought-provoking ideas were broad and far-reaching. It took six volumes to contain her writings on just the topic of education alone. Therefore, it is challenging to summarize her philosophy. In general, she promoted the following: gaining knowledge from the reading of living and whole books, narration, short lessons, nature walks, nature notebooks, art appreciation, journaling, copy work, dictation, free-time handicrafts, and the development of good habits.

Sterling intertwines the classical trivium with the Charlotte Mason philosophy in the following manner. We promote the use of living and whole books in all subjects as a fundamental way to acquire knowledge. We also support the tool of narration. While we believe the acquisition of facts is an important building block, we think narration is more effective at encouraging knowledge retention through active thinking and not “parroting”. Solid narration skills transition nicely into oral and written composition. SCS promotes writing across the curriculum and not solely taught in isolation. SCS carefully chose a limited curriculum rich in information and knowledge that promotes a love of learning. Charlotte Mason valued the exploration of nature and God’s creation and she found that possible through the gift of time.

FOCUS

Foundation

To develop a school that goes beyond academics to reach students, families and the community with the foundational truth of Jesus Christ and His word.

To partner with parents in equipping the next generation of leader and disciples of Christ.

To support parents in their roles of raising and training children according to God’s word.

To be a resource for seekers and Christian families in their daily-walk and spiritual growth.

To be good stewards of all our resources and faithfully give God a honor and glory through our obedience to His call.

Facts

To provide students with a classical education, in which Grammar (the fundamental facts and rules of each subject), Logic (the ordered relationship of particulars in each subject) and Rhetoric (the expression in speech and writing of the ideas of a subject) are emphasized in all subject areas.

To inspire students to develop a love for learning and to achieve their academic potential. To teach all subjects from a Biblical worldview.

To utilize the vehicle of an advanced academic format as a means of prompting students to develop self-discipline, responsibility and reasoning skills from a Biblical perspective.

To teach students to understand and use the fundamental processes in communicating and dealing with others (reading, writing, speaking, and listening).

FAITH

What we believe

We believe that the books of the Old and New Testament, making-up the Holy Bible, are the inspired word of God. We believe it is complete and the final authority for belief and behavior. (II Tim 3:16, II Peter 1:21, John 17:17)

We believe that there is one, and only one, true and living God. We believe that in the unity of the Godhead, there are three eternal and coequal persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Mark 12:29, John 4:24, Matthew 28:19)

We believe that Jesus Christ is the pre-existent and eternal son of God. We believe He was supernaturally conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. We believe Christ died on the cross as a substitute for sinful man, was buried, arose bodily from the tomb, ascended into heaven where He ministers to Saints, and will someday come again for His own. (John 1:18, 8:58, Matthew 1:23, Colossians 1:15-17)

We believe the Holy Spirit has an active ministry to the world in general which includes the restraining of evil, convicting of the unsaved, and bestowing God's goodness on all mankind. We also believe He has a ministry to every Christian that consists of regenerating, seeing, indwelling, and baptizing into the Body of Christ, and the giving of Spiritual gifts. (Acts 5:3-4, II Thes. 2:3-9, John 16:7-11)

We believe that salvation from sin is provided only through the blood of Jesus Christ. We believe there is nothing man can do to attain this salvation through good works, moral achievement or religious status. We believe the only condition for salvation is personal faith in Jesus Christ as one's own substitute for and Savior from sin. (I Peter 1:18-19, 2:24, II Cor.5:21, Eph. 2:8-9, 4:32)

We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. (I Cor. 12:13)

Non-denominational Stance

Sterling's Statement of Faith is fundamental to basic Christian tenets and contains those doctrines to which we unreservedly adhere and teach. It is our desire to maintain this position and to do so in all fairness to each family. It is not our intention to replace the local church or to take its place in teaching doctrine and the details of following Christ; rather we exist as a service to the body of Christ. There shall be no attempt made by parents, students, or staff to promote or disparage any doctrinal or

denominational beliefs, practices, or positions regarding issues upon which the ministry itself has assumed no official stance. We desire to remain united in the salvation and love of Christ, avoiding the dissension which may be caused by denominational distinctness.

Classroom discussion of secondary doctrine shall be on an informative, nonpartisan level. In their instruction and conversation, teachers will demonstrate respect toward individual family's Christian beliefs and practices with the goal of building unity within the body of Christ.

The Evangelical approach to Christian schools

Sterling is an evangelical model school and not a discipleship model school. As an evangelical school, Sterling does not require families to all align in the same denomination or doctrine. They must, however, sign the school's statement of faith/doctrinal belief and be willing to submit to that as the foundation of the school teaching and discipline without argument or contrary discussion inside the classroom or school functions.

Seven Pillars of Faith

We believe God has shown us the following critical initiatives to promote overall excellence and future development of our school:

- Prayer and Faith: Sterling Classical School is founded upon faith in God, and we will rely on Him to meet all our needs. Prayerlessness is powerlessness.
- "God is": Submitting to God's truth in all things, Sterling Classical School will promote and teach a biblical worldview.
- Strengthening Families: Sterling Classical School will affirm and support parents in their God-given responsibility to disciple their children.
- Communication: Sterling Classical School believes communication should be based in truth, Christ-honoring, aimed in sharing information that is helpful and relevant to walking alongside each other in making decisions, putting feet to our faith and honoring our commitments.
- Servanthood: Sterling Classical School leadership, administrative staff, and teaching staff are called by God to faithfully serve our families through Christian education. In the same way, we believe that our families and students are called to servanthood as well and should seek opportunities and calling to serve each other, the Sterling family and our community.
- Excellence: Sterling Classical School will pursue excellence through Christian character in all things.
- Use of the Tongue: We expect each other to use the tongue in a manner that praises God, encourages and heals, speaks the truth, is sensitive to all faiths, and seeks to build and not destroy.

Admissions Process

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Sterling Classical School admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial assistance, athletics, or any other school administered programs.

ENROLLMENT

Sterling has an open enrollment policy for any qualified student whose family follows the Admissions Process. Sterling adheres to the policy that a student must be five years of age by September 1st to register for Kindergarten. New students are allowed to enroll at the school and register for courses prior to the commencement of the school semester.

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

1) Attend an Informational Meeting.

Parents are required to attend an Informational Meeting about the school. These meetings are held at scheduled times, and families will receive their Application Packet at this meeting. Application Packets may only be attained at this meeting.

2) Read/Pray/Complete Forms.

Read required books/literature on classical, Christian and Charlotte Mason education, all of which may be obtained at the Informational Meeting

(Classical & Christian Education by Gregg Strawbridge & recommended Charlotte Mason readings.)

3) Prayerfully consider your family's needs for education and whether those needs would be best met by Sterling Classical School. If, after reviewing the school material and praying about your decision, you still want to proceed forward, then please complete all the forms enclosed in the Application Packet.

Please note that the actual date when you formally apply for admission may be used to help determine course registration priority relative to other new students. Enclose the requisite fees and notify references to expect a call from the school's admissions team. Please mail the completed admission packet to the following address:

Sterling Classical School, 12800 Angel Side Drive, Leander, TX 78641.

4) Once completed application forms and application fee are received, you will be contacted to schedule a Parent Interview. This interview is for the purpose of discussing the compatibility of the family's goals with the school's methods and philosophy. Parents will need to have read the required reading prior to the scheduling of a Parent Interview.

5) Placement Testing. Students entering 1st grade and above will be given a placement test. Bring your child to Placement Testing which will be scheduled at the time of the Parent Interview or shortly thereafter. If your child has been tested recently you may submit those scores for review. It will be at the school's discretion if additional testing is required.

6) Acceptance. After completion of the Parent Interview and Student Assessment, if all parties believe that Sterling will successfully serve the needs of your family and student, you will receive an Acceptance Packet including your Course Registration form, other mandatory forms that are required to be on file, and an invoice for the required registration fees.

7) Return Acceptance Packet forms, Course Registration form, and all fees within 10 calendar days to secure your student's admission. When SCS receives your fees and Course Registration form, you will receive a registration confirmation including the tuition total based on classes chosen. Tuition must be paid in full, or a tuition plan must be set up with FACTS, within 10 days in order for your child's registration to be processed. Acceptance and registration does not automatically confirm a requested course schedule. Campus Day spots are limited for each grade and may not be available to late enrollments.

8) Finalize Schedule. Before the first week of classes, you will receive a Course Schedule Confirmation with your child's course schedule and room teacher assignments.

Conditions for Continued Enrollment

Students register at Sterling Classical School on an annual basis. Families wanting to enroll after the start of a semester will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Continued enrollment at Sterling depends upon compliance in the following areas:

1. Attendance: A student must not have more than four unexcused absences in any semester.
2. Behavior: A student may be expelled for serious breaches of conduct as stated in the "Student Code of Conduct."
3. Tuition payments: A student whose tuition installment is more than thirty days overdue, without arrangements for future payment, will be dismissed
4. Academic progress: If a student's semester grades reflect failure in any core subject, that student is subject to dismissal.

Finances

Tuition Payment Options

Option 1: Pay ENTIRE school year tuition by the first week in April. (This option can be paid for with either a check or money order.)

Option 2: Pay each semester's tuition by the following dates:

*1st Semester: April

*2nd Semester: October

(This option must be paid through enrollment in FACTS)

Option 3: Automatic withdrawal through FACTS, deducting an equal payment each month, on the assigned day of the month, from your bank account or credit card starting in April through February (for a total of eleven installments).

*FACTS charges a set up fee each school year.

Refund Policies

Application fees: Application fee is refundable within 24 hours after the family interview.

*All other fees are non-refundable.

Delinquent Accounts

Student records will not be released to any accounts that are not current. This applies to those that are delinquent in tuition, service hours/payment or those that cancel payments on their account without notification and do not honor their tuition contract.

Tuition

In order for Sterling Classical School to be able to offer an academic program of excellent stature, we rely on tuition funds as our primary financial resource as we select teachers, staff and a building source. This is done carefully and with the assumption that every Sterling family has prayed through the admission process and understands the significance of their commitment. Therefore, tuition is non-refundable. It is imperative that families read their tuition contract and understand the commitment they are making for the entire school year. Sterling issues contracts to our faculty based on signed tuition contracts and in order to fulfill our commitments made to faculty, parents must honor their contract as well.

School Policies

Parent and Student Roles

Sterling Classical School makes no attempt to replace or displace parents as the primary providers of character training for their sons and daughters. The faculty and staff do, however, make every effort to provide opportunities for character development. Classroom time is too short and the scope of supervision too large for teachers to even think of being effective “character developers” if parents are not the primary instigators. The goal of training students to always speak and act in a way that exemplifies Christ-like character is integrated throughout the academic, ministry, and athletic programs.

Parental Conduct

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all and in all.” Eph. 4:2-6

Scripture should guide our behavior toward each other. Just as students are held accountable for their words and actions, so, too, are the parents of those students. Parents should model humility, gentleness, and spiritual maturity to their students by treating the Sterling faculty, staff, other students and families with respect, both publicly and privately.

Our communication to and about one another must be seasoned with grace, edifying to others and glorifying to God. If a parent (or student) acts or speaks in an unkind or disrespectful manner to or about any faculty, staff member, student or family at Sterling, the matter will be taken up by an Administrator, who according to biblical instruction will give the offending party an opportunity to

reconcile differences with the offended party, thus encouraging unity and grace. If the offending party is unwilling to comply with these guidelines, the student(s) of that parent or parents may be withdrawn from Sterling, or barred from admission to Sterling for the following semester.

In severe cases of slander, disrespect or the creation of factions or sowing seeds of discord within the school community or community at large, a recommendation can be made by Sterling Classical School for immediate expulsion of the student(s) whose parents have created a combative or adversarial dimension to their relationship with Sterling Classical School faculty and staff members as well as other Sterling families.

Alcohol or illegal drugs are never permitted on school campus, or at any school related function that involves students. Examples where no alcohol is allowed are: school parties, Christmas parties, dances, dinners, field trips, or during a student-oriented event in the use of parents' homes, etc.

Parent Expectations

Sterling is a Christian academic institution and it is a partnership between professional educators and parents. Sterling is providing a comprehensive approach to education. The success of this model requires parents to fulfill their role in providing the support for their child as stated below:

- Parents will adhere to Parent Conduct Code in Student Handbook.
- Parents will monitor Christ-like behavior and apparel of their students on and off campus in compliance with the Student Handbook.
- Parent hosted or chaperoned activities and events that take place on or off campus must not possess any alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs at any time.
- Parents will purchase all required text materials and supplies for each class.
- Parents will reinforce and may need to re-teach concepts taught at Sterling Classical School or hire a tutor if their student demonstrates an academic need for such support.
- Parents will review homework before it's due to ensure completion.
- Parents can use mistakes from graded assignments as an opportunity to review concepts taught.
- Parents will monitor homework assignments, attendance, and behavior through RenWeb, Google Classroom, and Canvas as it applies to each class.
- Parents must be in agreement with the school's purpose and spiritual objectives, and be willing to abide by the school's rules and regulations.
- Parents must be committed to the parental responsibility for providing a quality, Christian education for their children in accordance with existing law.
- Parents are encouraged to be active members of a local Christian church.
- Parents must be willing to provide Sterling with a completed application form for each child applying for admission, along with transcripts and transfer credit requests from previous schools or home school.
- Parents must be in agreement with, and supportive of, the school's procedures for handling student discipline and respect the process, timeline and outcomes.

- Parents must be in agreement with and support the school's belief in restitution and restoration with grace with boundaries and applicable consequences. Safety is always a priority in this response.
- Parents must be willing to adhere to the financial policies laid out in the Student Handbook.
- Parents must be committed to providing partnership instruction in the satellite classroom on the days that the child is not on campus as Applicable (primarily in Grammar School). Parents are responsible for providing regular structure for completing home assignments, checking assignments and monitoring the student's completion of these assignments, and helping the student as needed. Parents agree to submit to the school's authority in curriculum selection and coursework assignments.
- One parent must be actively involved in the educational process with the student during the at-home class days. Sterling recommends that at least one parent be at home and available during at-home school days, since the advanced academic format often requires support of a parent at some level to encourage or facilitate completion of and engagement with student assignments.
- Parents must complete mandatory service hours designated for the school year or pay the established service charge. Parents are an integral part of Sterling's culture and success in establishing community and growth.
- Parents will encourage students to ask questions and communicate with their teachers.
- Parents will attend scheduled meetings and training to support their academic journey at Sterling.
- Parents will attend any grade level parent meeting or a parent/teacher conference that is offered or provided.
- Parents will communicate with the teacher about their child's progress and issues first in following Sterling's communication protocol.

Parent Mandatory Service Hours

Our parents play a vital role in the total program offered at Sterling Classical School. This model is designed for us to journey together both at home and on the campus of Sterling. We desire to keep our unique program available to as many families as possible who are seeking a classical, Christian, college-preparatory education. In order to maintain our tuition rates and be effective stewards of all our resources, then it is imperative that we have as much hands-on assistance from parents as possible through a minimum of 10 mandatory service hours per school year.

These service hours can be obtained by participating on a PTF committee, serving as a Room Parent or through other volunteer opportunities identified by the school. A Volunteer Log Book will be kept in the school office. In this log book you will find a sheet with your family name for you to fill in every time you volunteer.

Families who are unable to provide the mandatory service hours will be required to pay a \$250 fee which will waive their required hours. This fee will go towards costs associated with needed services for the school not provided through parent volunteers.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to follow the behaviors below as well as the conduct policy. Parents are expected to guide their students within the policies and Christ-like behavior.

- Students are expected to attend class when present on campus and follow attendance guidelines pertaining to tardies and absences.
- Students are expected to come to class fully prepared with textbooks and supplies needed for the class, including their completed assignments to turn in each day.
- Students are expected to follow all policies in the Student Code of Conduct on and off campus.
- Students are expected to complete each assignment with academic integrity.
- Students are expected to follow the uniform dress code on campus and modest dress at school events.
- Secondary students are expected to perform 20 hours of community service per year, on or off campus.

Student Service Hours

1 Peter 4:10 “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace:”

Sterling students in grades 9th through 12th are expected to complete 20 community service hours per year. Logic students are encouraged to start tracking service hours to support NJHS applications. These hours can be acquired through service to the school, to the local church, or throughout the community by volunteering in activities serving the needs of people throughout our community outside of the academic school day. Service hours where students receive any type of compensation will not be counted as qualified service hours. Rhetoric (9th-12th) students will submit their hours to the registrar each year so they are tracked on their individual transcripts.

Student Code of Conduct

The purpose of Sterling’s Code of Conduct is to promote a Christ-like attitude in its learning environment and to encourage the development of positive Christian relationships among its students.

Sterling deeply desires that our staff and students would adorn the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ by rejecting the anti-authoritarian, selfish, and unloving attitudes that surround us, preferring instead to speak and act with love, grace, and respect, flowing from a grateful and joyous heart. In order that students might have tangible ways to see and then model these intangible ideas, we have listed some guidelines to help them. They are expectations we desire that our parents share as well. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, but representative. At Sterling, they are to be cheerfully manifested at all times, in every situation.

This Code of Conduct is applicable to students while on the campus of Sterling either inside or outside, while at any Sterling event located on another school campus or location, or while at any event where the student might be seen as a representative of Sterling Classical School.

There may also be times when a student's behavior affects other Sterling students to the extent that it is brought to the attention of the Sterling Administration at which time it will be evaluated for possible discipline or consequences at the school level.

1. Students are expected to exemplify basic Christian standards of behavior, conversation, and attitude. This includes keeping speech edifying to Christ, talking in groups as opposed to isolated pairs of individuals, and restraining from any activity that could be construed as bullying. This includes communication both orally, written, and through technology via text, social media and/or, but not limited to, email correspondence. In addition, this includes moral and ethical behavior that is Biblical and responsible.
2. Students should show respect to adults at all times. This includes responding every time to an adult's request for either a verbal or attentive response. A title (Mr., Mrs., Sir) along with the adult's last name shall be used when addressing an adult.
3. Students should treat each other with respect, kindness, and compassion just as God commands us in Ephesians 4:32, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving." Students should ask and allow forgiveness and opportunity to make restitution. Students should actively seek ways to build each other up, daily acknowledging each other's individual gifts and talents. "When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up." 1 Corinthians 14:26
4. There will be no talking back or arguing with teachers or staff which would include facial expressions, rolling eyes, etc. Prompt, cheerful communication both oral and nonverbal should be reflective of first-time obedience.
5. Students should be good stewards of the facility and grounds by keeping it clean and orderly. Destruction of property, in any way, is prohibited. This applies to the inside and outside of the school grounds as well as other properties Sterling is attending.
6. Students are responsible for returning any equipment or furniture to the original location should it need to be moved for any reason. Students should keep their belongings clear of traffic areas or restrooms where items could be lost or damaged.
7. There will be no horseplay, running, or rough play during or between classes.
8. Use of profanity is not permitted, and this shall apply to both oral and written communication.
9. There will be no communication that is threatening, sexual, slanderous, immoral, or in promotion of a social justice agenda outside of what is Christ-honoring and Biblical in nature either orally or in written form.

10. Public displays of affection such as hand holding, kissing, etc. are not permitted. Students will also not be allowed to pair off away from groups of students. Inappropriate communication, pictures, etc. that are shared either verbally or electronically, on campus or off campus, as indicated above, will be handled as a discipline issue when carried over on campus or brought to the attention of a faculty member or administration. While on the campus of Sterling, it is the goal to encourage strong, Christ-honoring friendships that are inclusive and not exclusive, so as to support a dynamic that is more indicative of a family atmosphere.

In regards to inappropriate communication that is shared off campus being handled as a discipline issue at Sterling: This would occur only when that information via text, email, social media, verbal communication, or otherwise is brought on to the campus, or carried over in any form by a student(s) during school hours or at a school event, to the point that it is brought to the attention of a faculty member or administration, and is noted as a violation of the pursuit of Christ-like character, or is viewed as any form of bullying.

1. Tobacco products, illicit drugs, alcohol, or weapons are not allowed on campus or at any Sterling sponsored event.
2. Students are expected to be aware of and avoid the off-limits areas of buildings or grounds.
3. A student's clothing, personal property, electronic equipment, method of transportation, or school property used by the student (such as a desk) may be searched when there is reasonable cause to believe the search will reveal articles or materials prohibited by Sterling Classical School or would cause harm or injury to the said student or other students and faculty. Regarding a student's clothing or personal property being searched, as indicated, this would only occur when there is an imminent concern for the safety of the student or Sterling student/faculty population as a whole. This would be done in the presence of two or more administration/faculty members and the parent would be notified immediately. There would be NO request for removal of clothing (except jackets or sweater) and/or search of a student's physical body. Search of electronic devices or a student desk would be done only if there was identified concern or threat that the student had something dangerous or inappropriate in their possession.

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Policy

It should be the goal of any Christian school to be a light in the darkness, providing perspective and understanding where there is confusion and ignorance. It is equally important that a school stay within its parameters. Although Sterling is a Christian organization, we are not a church, although we provide some counseling, we are not therapists, and perhaps most importantly, although we care deeply about our students, we are their teachers, not their parents.

As a Christian institution, founded on biblical truth, we accept that people are born as male or female and that gender is principally determined by this fact. There may be additional determinants of gender, which some of the contemporary sources conclude, but this may be the result of other factors. With all of this in mind Sterling Classical School has employed the following policy as sexual orientation and gender issues are concerned. Sterling is a partner with parents, but we are not the parent. At Sterling, the parents have the ultimate responsibility over their children, regarding issues related to gender or sexual orientation. These issues are meant to be handled, worked through, and thought through primarily by parents and family. We will compassionately partner with you, but you are the parents, and we will not usurp the parental role. Sterling is here to provide a classical Christian education from a Christian worldview that follows the belief that gender is primarily determined by our biology at birth. This will guide any of our instruction on gender. Anything beyond this is in the parental arena. We are not here to promote any sexual orientation, although our default assumption is that students are predominantly heterosexual. It is also our guiding thought that a boy is a boy, and a girl is a girl. If students are enrolled as girls, they will be referred to as girls and if enrolled as boys they will be referred to as boys. We will only refer to the students using the names

on their enrollment paperwork. It is impossible to completely prevent these issues of gender and sexual orientation from coming up at school, especially in high school, but it is easy to diplomatically direct them back to you as parents, when the issues do come up. The students are attending Sterling to get an education, learn to think, and apply truth, not to focus on theirs or anybody else's sexual orientation. Any activities of exclusion involving students is prohibited during the school day on the Sterling campus. Violations of this policy will result in immediate disciplinary action. If the incidents persist, it will lead to detention, suspension, or expulsion.

Transportation

Students who provide their own method of transportation shall abide by all the same laws applicable by the State of Texas for the level of Driver's License the student holds. Student drivers will park their vehicles in the designated parking lot and will carefully yield to all pedestrians on the campus as well as other drivers who are making their way through the carpool line or to a parking lot. If a student driver demonstrates an unsafe driving pattern while on the campus of Sterling Classical School, the administration may ask that the student driver not be allowed to provide their own method of transportation.

Sterling is a closed campus so only junior and senior level students are allowed to drive off campus during the school day and that is with written parent permission only. They must sign out at the front office and once they leave, they are considered checked out for the day so Sterling staff will not look for their return even if they have classes after they check out.

Electronic Usage Policy

Grammar students may have no cell phones, smart watches, or other electronics in their backpacks or on their person on the school campus. The only exception is for 3rd/4th grades that are registered for a Typing elective and it must be stored until the start of the elective.

Logic students may ONLY bring an electronic tablet or notebook computer to school when requested by the faculty for school work, research, etc. Smart phones or Smart watches are not permitted on campus for Logic students at any time. Students are welcome to use classroom phones or the office phone if they need to communicate with a parent during the school day. Logic students may not have Smart phones in their backpacks or on their person during school hours.

Rhetoric students may have a smart phone on campus but the device must remain in their backpack during the entire school day. Smart watches are not permitted on campus. Smart phones may not be used in place of laptops at the School of Rhetoric.

If at any time the staff or faculty feels that a laptop or tablet is being used in an inappropriate manner, or in a way that is distracting to others, it may either be taken up immediately and taken to the office for the student to pick up at the end of the day, or the student will be asked to put it away immediately. Multiple offenses will result in permanent loss of electronic usage and will be noted as a disciplinary event referred to the Dean of the Grammar, Logic, or Rhetoric School as is appropriate.

Daily and Chapel Dress Code

Sterling Classical School has established a dress code as a means of discipleship and academic preparation. Cultivating an awareness and appreciation of the importance of dressing for the occasion, our dress code seeks to properly honor the rigor and pleasure of the educational experience. It creates a common set of expectations in considering others' needs while building our school community through an aesthetic unity. It prepares each student to be more effective and ready each school day for learning.

Ultimately, the dress code forms an integral part of preparing for a life of service and faithfulness through a use of clothing to complement our calling as disciples—as students—of Christ. Called to reflect God's image in our mind, spirit, and body, we desire to train our students to not distract others, or themselves, through clothing choices. Promoting propriety and modesty, readiness and service, selflessness vs. selfishness, Sterling's dress code is an integral part of promoting community, service, and a deepening understanding of our responsibility to God and each other. This helps fulfill Paul's call to be mindful of our witness of the Gospel as recorded in Romans 12:1-2:v "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

As such, uniforms are not optional for Sterling students. Students will adhere to the Dress Code as outlined in the Student Handbook and this requires appropriate, conservative dress of the school uniform or Spirit Day attire. It is our intent that students and parents follow the dress code requirements with respect and joy, "as doing all things unto the Lord" (Colossians 3:23).

Dress Code: All uniform tops and bottoms MUST come from our Dennis Uniform supplier.

Policy on Uniform Violations

- In an effort to teach compassion and understand, students will receive a written and verbal warning on their first dress code violation. Students not in uniform will first attempt to correct the violation and if necessary call home for the proper uniform requirements.
- Dress Code violations are considered Discipline Issues/Office Level and will follow the Discipline Policy and Procedures.

Discipline Policy and Procedures

Discipline is to be thoroughly Biblical, defined by the Scriptures, proceeding from a Biblical philosophy of discipline. Sterling believes parents should work in partnership to ensure Scripture is used when

addressing discipline administered to a child. (Under no circumstances does Sterling Classical School practice spanking or similar forms of corporal punishment).

The primary goal of the Sterling staff will be to practice “preventative” discipline through the use of good teaching techniques; as well, Sterling expects parents to instill in their children the importance of having respect for others and good manners. The school will control the impact of serious discipline by limiting or withdrawing the participation privileges of consistently uncooperative students. The mission is to focus students on the pursuit of Christ-like character in a healthy and safe environment. Thus, Sterling Classical School reserves the right to modify the discipline policy as needed to ensure every student is afforded this opportunity at all times.

Discipline will be administered in light of a student’s particular offense and attitude. There are two levels of offense at Sterling, each treated with a particular procedure:

1. Classroom level
2. Office Level

The vast majority of discipline is handled at the classroom level through the use of mild verbal rebuke for the purpose of sound classroom management.

It is Sterling’s desire that parents be supportive, active, and involved in their child’s training through the use of Godly discipline.

Classroom Level Procedure

Other school and/or classroom offenses that may not fall under the above enumerated “Office Visit” offenses are disciplined according to the following procedure. While teachers have the opportunity to exercise discretion with each occurrence of a behavioral/attitude infraction, they should normally and regularly apply the following procedure in order to maintain consistency within their own classrooms and with other teachers. This procedure is also to be followed by any teacher substitute and/or volunteer teacher or aide when they are acting with the delegated authority of a Sterling teacher.

First Offense:

Firm and loving rebuke that identifies inappropriate behavior and is done in a way that does not embarrass the student in front of the class.

Counsel students as to the appropriate manner in which they should behave, support with Biblical Scripture, and apply natural consequences to behavior.

Second Offense:

Repeat above steps 1 and 2.

The teacher notifies parents. (This second rebuke is really an additional, not just a repeated, rebuke—he is rebuked not only for the initial behavior, but also for his unwillingness to respond in wisdom to the first rebuke. Proverbs 29:1.)

Third Offense:

Repeat first offense steps 1 and 2.

The teacher will involve administration and if the behavior is disrupting learning students will be asked to do a reset in the office. Administration will request parent intervention at this point. Parents will be notified by administration if any offense results in a disciplinary office visit.

*Any behavior that is threatening, or violent in nature will result in an automatic office visit and parent phone call.

Office Level Procedure

There are five basic behaviors that will automatically necessitate discipline from administration. Those behaviors are:

1. Disrespect shown to any staff member or peer, whether in the form of a look, a response, or any other action. The staff member will be the judge of whether or not disrespect has been shown. (Exodus 20:12; Proverbs 6:16-17; Romans 13:1,7).
2. Dishonesty in any situation, including lying or otherwise deceiving, cheating, forgery, and stealing. (Exodus 20:15-16; Proverbs 6:16-17, 19).
3. Rebellion, i.e., outright disobedience (active or passive) in response to instructions. (Colossians 3:20; 1 Samuel 15:23).
4. Malicious or selfish physical harm or intent to harm another student, including fighting, shoving, tripping, etc. (James 4:1; 1 Corinthians 13:5).
5. Obscene, vulgar, profane, or malicious language or action, including swearing, taking the Lord's name in vain, name-calling, and dirty-joke telling. (Ex. 20:7; Ephesians 4:29-31; 5:4).

If a student is sent to the office, within either semester of the school year, the following accounting will be observed:

- The first time a student is sent to administration, the administrator will talk through the incident with the student and allow the opportunity for all necessary information to be gathered from all parties involved. The administrator will provide direction, spiritual training and needed consequences. The administrator will then contact the parents to allow them to follow through appropriately at home. Based on the behavior that dictated the Office Visit, the administrator may choose to contact the parent first before meeting with the student.
- The second Office Visit will be followed by a meeting with the student's parents and the administrator.
- A third Office Visit will result in a two-day campus suspension. The student will receive zero's for missed work.
- A fourth Office Visit will result in the student being expelled from the school.

If a student commits an act with such profound consequences that the Dean of the School of Logic or Rhetoric deems it necessary to suspend or expel them, the Office Visit process may be by-passed, and the student will be removed from school and sent home until it is determined whether expulsion

or suspension is warranted. Expulsion or suspension will be determined by the Council of Deans. Students may be removed from school until a decision is made by the Council of Deans. Examples of such serious misconduct could include: acts endangering the lives of other students or staff members, gross violence, vandalism of school property, violations of civil law, or any act in clear contradiction to scriptural commands. Should an expelled student desire to be readmitted to Sterling at a later date, the delegated Council of Deans will make a decision based on pertinent facts.

Suspension

This is a temporary dismissal from school that is imposed by the administration for non-compliance with school policies or standards for behavior. A set number of days will be imposed as a disciplinary action and to allow the student and parents time to work towards restitution and resolution of the behavior that led to the suspension. The student will still be responsible for all assignments and expected to submit them immediately upon their return. The established objective must be met by both the student and the parents with the approval of the administration prior to the return to school.

A student may not be suspended from Sterling, prior to an official meeting of the Council of Deans to fully analyze the circumstances and make a thoughtful decision. This action will not be taken without careful consideration of all the factors involved. The Deans reserve the right to impose a temporary leave from school for students involved for the protection of all students until the Council of Deans have a chance to meet and decide on the issue. In the event that a Dean's child is involved, said administrator will withdraw themselves from the decision and one of the teachers will act in their place.

Expulsion

A student may not be permanently expelled from Sterling, prior to an official meeting of the Council of Deans to fully analyze the circumstances and make a thoughtful decision. This action will not be taken without careful consideration of all the factors involved. The Deans reserve the right to impose a temporary leave from school for students involved for the protection of all students until the Council of Deans have a chance to meet and decide on the issue. In the event that a Dean's child is involved, said administrator will withdraw themselves from the decision and one of the teachers will act in their place.

The decision by the Council of Deans to expel a student must be unanimous.

Behavior Transition

Kindergarten through 2nd grade students will be allowed a "slow-start" first week in which teacher and students will focus on introducing, practicing, and reviewing specific types of behavior each day. Although the teacher will address any misbehavior, the goal will be to give students some time to develop heart and body habits before they are held accountable to the classroom-level policies.

Grievance Policies and Guidelines

It is important that institutions that purport to be Christian in their mission and relationships actually demonstrate a fidelity to Christian principles in their spheres of influence. To this end, Sterling has established Biblical guidelines for the resolution of disputes and grievances in the operation of Sterling Classical School. These guidelines are to be followed whenever there is a dispute or grievance concerning any aspect of Sterling's operations, between any two parties connected in a direct way to the school.

Students/Parents to Teachers

- All concerns about the classroom must first be presented to the teacher by the parents, or if the student is mature enough, by the student himself. A respectful, Christ-honoring demeanor is required at all times, by all parties involved.
- If the problem is not resolved, the parents or student may bring the concern to the appropriate administrator, Dean of Grammar, Logic, or Rhetoric School. If the student brings the concern, it is encouraged that they have permission from their parents to do so
- If the problem is still not resolved, the parents should appeal the decision to the Council of Deans.

Parents/Patrons to Deans (administration)

- If the parents or patrons have a grievance or dispute about the general operation of the school (apart from the operation of the classrooms), they should bring their concerns to the appropriate grade-level Dean first. A respectful, Christ-honoring demeanor is required at all times, by all parties involved.
- If the situation is not resolved, they should present their concerns to the Council of Deans where they can be heard from all Deans in administration.

Staff to Deans (administration) and Deans to Founders or mediator

Staff and Faculty will bring grievances to the grade level Dean or request the Council of Deans to hear concerns or grievance. Deans will bring their concerns or grievances to the Founders or request an outside mediator: Sterling will follow the recommendation of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) for resolving arbitration between all Staff, Instructors, students, and students' families. The parties to this agreement are Christians and believe that the Bible commands them to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian community in conformity with the Biblical injunctions of I Corinthians 6:1-8, Matthew 5:23-24, and Matthew 18:5-20.

Therefore, the parties agree that any claim or dispute arising out of, or related to, this agreement or to any aspect of the school relationship, including any claim or statutory claims, shall be settled by Biblically-based mediation. If resolution of the dispute and reconciliation do not result from such efforts, the matter shall then be submitted to a panel of three arbitrators for binding arbitration. The selection of the arbitrators and the arbitration process shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the Institute for Christian Conciliation as printed in the Guidelines for Christian Conciliation.

The parties agree that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of the school relationship or this agreement and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit against one another in any civil court for such disputes, except to enforce a legally binding arbitration decision.

Each party, regardless of the outcome of the matter, agrees to bear the cost of his/her/its own arbitrator and one-half of the fees and costs of the neutral arbitrator and any other arbitration expenses.

School—Home Communication

Communication between the school and the home are essential as we work together as a team. All members of the school community are encouraged and expected to make proper and ongoing use of any communication methods the school may devise. RenWeb will be the key tool of email communication.

5th-12th grade CLOSED CAMPUS POLICY

All students in 5th-10th grade will observe a “CLOSED CAMPUS POLICY.” During school hours, all these students are to remain on campus.

- Parents/Guardians needing to check their students out of school at any time throughout the day, must come to the Logic/Rhetoric office and sign their student(s) out before they can leave campus. If returning the same day, the parent/student must sign back in through the office. This includes leaving for lunch. ANY communication about picking up a student throughout a day, must be done through communication with the Logic/Rhetoric receptionist and not through texts or phone calls directly to your student as cell phone use is prohibited for students.
- Students in 5th-8th grade will eat lunch and have recess/outside time under the direct supervision of a faculty or approved volunteer.
- Students in 9th-10th grade will be allowed to have lunch in the student lounge, porch, or study tables in the Rhetoric hallway under the monitoring of a designated faculty member. This monitoring will not be direct supervision but rather a general oversight. Any 9th-10th grade students wanting to access the field activities like 9-square, GAGA pit, volleyball, or basketball, will have to obtain permission from the Rhetoric Dean to note leaving and returning. Accessing the porch and any field activities will only be allowed with a standing permission/waiver from their parent/guardian on file.
- Students in 11th and 12th grade will follow the same “Closed Campus Policy” while on campus meaning they will require the same permission/waiver to access any outside activities. The exception is that ONLY 11th and 12th graders can gain permission/waiver from their parent/guardian to LEAVE campus for lunch, appointments or other off-campus activities thus by-passing the “Closed Campus Policy” at that time. This permission/waiver must be on file in the Logic/Rhetoric office and students MUST sign out each time they leave and back in once they return. PLEASE note that once a student signs out even if they plan to return, Sterling considers them gone for the day and will not look for their return. It is extremely important that a parent/guardian has full confidence in their student to follow any and all safety protocols.
- NO student will be allowed to sit in their car for any reason unless they are accessing it to leave campus.
- Due to the implementation of this policy, parents assume full liability and responsibility for their student who leave campus. Students who have not followed one of the above listed exceptions and are found to be off campus during the school day will be subject to disciplinary action.

Curriculum Objectives

In Language we seek to:

use phonics as the primary building blocks for teaching students to read; encourage students to read correctly as soon as possible; introduce high quality children’s literature as soon as possible, through our literature program; carefully monitor reading abilities to ensure students are at their grade appropriate level, are comprehending adequately, and are reading fluently, both orally and silently; foster a life-long love of reading and high quality literature, after being taught to recognize the characteristics of such literature; integrate wherever possible, other subjects into reading, such as science and history; equip students with the skills necessary for excellent writing, including content, form, and correctness; emphasize skilled writing by requiring students to write often and correctly in each subject area; encourage clear thinking by requiring clear writing and speaking; introduce many styles of writing using high quality literature and poetry throughout the history of great literature.

In History we seek to:

cover the sweep of human history from creation, through ancient times until present; relate the physical geography of a country to its history, culture, and primary industries; broaden an understanding of history and geography, specifically by deepening the level of exposure and research into various topics; make history and geography “come alive” through the use of many forms of information and research, including biographies, illustrations, maps, music, art, foods, architecture, and class projects.

Sterling Classical School does not support or endorse Critical Race Theory or the 1619 Project. Critical Race Theory (CRT) is the practice of viewing all social and cultural issues through the lens of race and racial identity, and casting all human relations in terms of power structures related to that identity. It is pervading both private and public school classrooms across the country. At Sterling Classical School, we believe that all history should be looked at critically and honestly through the lens of a Christian World View, not a Marxist World View.

The 1619 Project is an attempt by the New York Times to revise American history. It recasts the country’s history by crossing out 1776 as America’s founding date and substituting 1619, the year 20 or so African slaves were brought to Jamestown, Va. The 1619 Project argues that all aspects of American life are seen through one lens, which is the lens of institutionalized slavery in America and its ultimate impact.

According to distinguished American Historians, Gordon Wood and James McPherson, the Project’s central claims about American history and American slavery were very wrong in numerous way and leave most of the history out.

At Sterling Classical School, we teach that that American history formally started in 1776 with the Declaration of Independence which stated clearly that, “We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” We believe these truths, and the Constitution they eventually inspired, are the primary reason slavery was eventually ended in America.

In addition, slavery is an institution that has existed for most of human history, up to the present, and was not simply an American phenomenon. The African slave trade was driven by England, Portugal, and Spain, and only a small percentage (around 300 thousand) of the 15 million slaves that were brought from Africa came to the American Colonies between 1600 and 1800. The phenomenon of

slavery as a practice or institution cannot be accurately or clearly understood outside of these larger contexts.

In Science we seek to:

show that because God made the universe, it has inherent order, which in turn makes it possible to hypothesize and experiment; encourage natural curiosity, teaching students how to ask good questions and design practical experiments to answer them; treat the study of science as a “means to an end,” not an end in itself, that is, curiosity, and the way of using science, as opposed to the study of facts; facts should be attained as the result of research and discovery vs. lecture; use many forms of instruction to teach scientific concepts and methods (a variety of experiments, demonstrations, research projects, etc.).

In Mathematics we seek to:

give students a working knowledge of the grammar (definitions, names, and symbols) associated with mathematical principles at each level; teach mastery of basic concepts at an early age through the use of manipulatives, games, and other visual aids; require memorization of basic mathematics facts at every level once a conceptual understanding has been attained through the use of practical problems, drill, and games; give students a thorough mastery of basic mathematical functions and tables; emphasize practical application of mathematics through the frequent use of story problems; teach students to express problems in correct mathematical notation and teach the application of mathematics in the sciences and other disciplines.

Academic Evaluation

We believe that grades are not a commentary on the relative worth and value of the individual, but rather an accurate reflection of the quality of his/her work in a given subject at a given time.

At Sterling Classical School, grades serve four basic purposes:

1. To help us teach, correct, and train
2. To help us in the ongoing placement of students at a level and in subjects responsive to their needs, background, and abilities
3. To provide us with an ongoing and widely understood means of communicating a student's progress and achievement to his parents and other parties, such as college entrance boards or other schools to which the student may transfer
4. To provide us with a just and legitimate means of holding students accountable for the quality of their work.

Definition of Credits

In general, Sterling Classical School students earn one credit for a full year of instruction in a particular course. There are some exceptions for upper level Rhetoric students who may gain one credit for a semester-long class only due to the nature of the class. Students will also earn one credit at Sterling for one year of involvement in a school-sponsored sport. Fall and Spring semesters at Sterling are scheduled for established weeks each of uninterrupted instruction to provide adequate time to master the course.

Promotion

Students must meet all the following basic criteria for promotion to the next successive course:

- Pass all coursework with at least a 70% average (2.0 GPA).
- In addition, when considering promotion of students currently enrolled, special emphasis should be given to the appropriate level of mastery of the following skills/subjects in the grades noted.
- All students, Lower School and Upper School, will be promoted to the next course in sequence when they achieve a passing grade (70%) in the current course. Student promotion is on a course-by-course basis. Students are not promoted on grade level in Logic and Rhetoric.

The Grading Scale

Kindergarten thru Second Grade

Met Objective = M

Good Progress =G

Working on Skill = W

Not Applicable = NA

Third through Twelfth Grade

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C =70-79

F = 69 and below

Academic Standing

The advanced academic education model at Sterling Classical School is designed as a fast-paced partnership between parents and educators to achieve high standards in academics for students who want to excel in life. As a result of this design, students are not “just moved through the system”. Students must continually perform at a satisfactory level of performance, or they will not be successful in the model. Each semester, students may receive a classification that outlines for the parents their past academic performance at Sterling.

Listed below are the student academic standings:

- Academic Good Standing: Achieving a 70%+ in all courses for the current school year.
- Academic Probation: Failing one or more classes in the past term. This student will be given the balance of the school semester to achieve a 70%+ grade in the courses. If the student is not successful in raising the grade in the courses to 70%+ and fails two terms, the student will be required to retake the course and will be a candidate for dismissal/expulsion from Sterling.

Students who are placed on academic probation, and their parents, will be required to attend a conference with the Dean of Students and Faculty within the first two weeks of the probation semester.

Attendance Requirements

A student enrolled in Sterling is expected to be present and on time in school every day that school is in session. The actual number of days school is in session will be determined by the yearly school calendar. Students are also expected to attend and complete all requirements for every course offered. Due to the limited number of in-class days, it is vitally important to each student's progress to attend each class day and period. Please use the ample time during the non-class days to schedule personal activities. (i.e. dentists, etc.)

Short-term absences: If a student needs to be absent from school for a day, for any reason, the parents should contact the school office by email or phone as soon as possible.

Long-term absences: If a student needs to be absent for two or more consecutive days, the parents should notify the school in writing explaining the circumstances. This will permit the office to inform the appropriate teacher(s) and to compile the necessary schoolwork, which the student would otherwise miss. Notification should be made as soon as possible to limit the amount of missed schoolwork.

Extended absences: We will cooperate with families taking their children from school for vacations, etc. However, when extended absences are voluntary (versus emergency or illness) we expect all schoolwork to be completed ahead of the absence. We require that prior to any planned, extended absence, the student's teachers and the school Administration be notified in writing 30 days in advance. This should be done through the Absence Permission Form obtained through the front office. It is the parent's responsibility for the student's work to be completed and turned in prior to leaving or upon return depending on the teacher's request/instruction.

Maximum absences: In the event the total number of planned (that is, parent-approved) absences exceeds four days for the semester, the student may not receive credit for that time period. In the event the total number of absences, whether planned or unplanned, exceeds ten days in one semester, the student may not receive credit for that semester if all assignments and work for the course are not turned in the week following the absence.

This does not apply to documented medical issues.

Tardy Policy

In general, a tardy will be treated as a discipline problem. Students are expected to be in class at the designated starting time any time after that they will be considered tardy and required to check in with the Sterling front office. In addition, from 2nd period and following, students will receive a tardy if they are not present at the start of class. The student must obtain a tardy slip from the front office receptionist and will take that slip with them to allow entrance into their class.

A student will be allowed ONE unexcused tardy in any given semester. For each unexcused tardy thereafter, the tardy will be transferred to a discipline slip and referred to the Dean of Grammar, Logic, or Rhetoric. The front office receptionist and the Dean of Grammar, Logic, or Rhetoric will make the determination when a student is tardy.

Any missed work or directions will be the responsibility of the student and/or parent to obtain on their own time and not upon their entrance into class. In order to be excused, a student must supply a note signed by a parent or guardian to the front office receptionist. Only those tardies beyond the immediate control of the student or his or her parents or guardians will be considered excused.

Arriving late to school contributes to an anxious and difficult start to the morning and impacts learning. For the students and teacher, it disrupts learning as the teacher will need to stop her instruction to greet and help the student catch up.

Three tardies will result in an absence which will be recorded on the student's record and will go against the maximum of four unexcused absences allowed in a semester (there are exceptions to absences when prior approval is received). Students that exceed these absences risk being able to proceed to the next grade level and will be placed on delayed re-enrollment, meaning their re-enrollment will not be accepted until all others have been processed.

Absence and Tardy Definitions

A full-time student who arrives five minutes after the start of the first class and before 10:00 A.M. is considered tardy.*

A full-time student who arrives at school any time after 10:00 A.M. will receive a half-day absence.

* Each tardy occurrence will be compiled. Three tardies will be compiled to equal one absence.

Arrival Procedures

Kinder-4th Grade Morning Drop Off: Please feel free to walk your child to their classroom the first day of school. Beginning the second day of school, students will need to be dropped off in the carpool line. The only exception to this policy is for preschool students whose parents may walk inside to the school lobby.

If you would like to meet with the teacher, please schedule a time for a parent conference with the teacher. If you need to get a message to the teacher, please give the message to the receptionist in the front office and we will see that it gets delivered. There will be administration and teachers watching students walk down the hall to ensure everyone gets to their classroom.

Every teacher will be at their door beginning at 7:45 to greet each student and help them get settled for their day.

Security Screening

All doors on campus will remain locked at all times. When a parent visits campus they will need to use the intercom located outside the front door to communicate with the receptionist. Please identify your name and student and present your ID to the camera to confirm when requested. Sterling is a closed, secure campus. All visitors to campus, that are not enrolled parents, must have a confirmed appointment or reason for being on our campus.

We use a system that scans a Driver's License and runs a background check on every person that enters the campus. Once the license has been scanned it will print out a visitor's label. This will eliminate the need to run a manual background check on volunteers before they can be on campus as everyone will be background checked anytime they enter the campus. It is important to be able to identify every person on our campus by their visitor tag.

Classroom Parties and Birthday Celebrations

Parents of Grammar School students will be notified by the classroom teacher about classroom parties such as Christmas and Valentine's Day parties.

Logic and Rhetoric students celebrate special holidays and events within their Houses.

Birthdays may be celebrated at lunch. Parents may bring treats to the teacher on duty in the cafeteria. Treats need to include enough for all members of the class. Parents need to be aware of peanut allergies and not include treats with peanut products. Parents must check in at the Grammar School to receive a visitor's tag before entering the Logic/Rhetoric Building.

Student Transfer Procedure

In order for Sterling Classical School to transfer student records to another school, the family requesting such records must fill out a record request form from the school the student is transferring to. Sterling is not able to make copies of student records unless the receiving school has submitted a written request form. Parents of SCS are not allowed to take student records off campus to make copies.

Eligibility Requirements for Co-Curricular Activities

All students who desire to participate in co-curricular activities must meet the following requirements to remain eligible for participation. Participation in these activities requires additional time and effort that does not supersede the student's responsibilities to:

- represent the school and their fellow students with excellence
- not jeopardize academic preparation and success
- pass all classes with a 70 or above
- be of good character standing

Co-curricular activities do not, at any time, take precedence over the academic program. Students who turn 19 years of age by September 1st of their senior year are not eligible to participate in co-curricular activities as part of Sterling.

Books and Materials

Sterling will provide complete book lists and recommended sources with contact information upon acceptance and registration. Parents must acquire all curricular materials by orientation for students to begin coursework. Except for late enrollment who have not had an opportunity to gather all of the required books, students who do not have books needed for an assignment will be given a zero for assignments they are unable to complete. Book lists are made available at the beginning of June and it is the expectation that each student will have all needed books by the first day of school.

Miscellaneous

SCS Parent Committees

We will utilize Parent Volunteer Committees to organize and execute volunteer opportunities in and out of the classroom. The Marketing and Student Life Coordinators will organize and ask for volunteers to:

- Develop and sponsor creative events to promote SCS.
- Host special school events such as school picnics, SCS Community Dinner, Fine Arts night and others to support the school program and strengthen the SCS Community.
- Oversee and coordinate teacher appreciation.

Lunch

Students should bring their own lunch to school. Microwaves are available at both schools to warm up lunches. Parents will not be able to bring in food for students, other than their own, without prior written permission from that parent. We ask that parents think very carefully about the snacks and lunches they send to school with their children. Whole foods, as opposed to processed, pre-packaged ones, are always best. Foods with high levels of sugar invariably lead to poorer classroom performance. In addition, students should have clear or light-colored drinks, due to the likelihood of spills, particularly with the younger children.

Student/Teacher Ratio

Sterling strives to maintain a small, dynamic student/teacher ratio. Class size allows for the hands-on, interactive, Socratic platform to unfold within the classrooms across the grades. Below are the max target ratios for the grades. There are times when classes will be smaller due to enrollment.*

Within the School of Logic and Rhetoric, there will be times when a class may be allowed to go to 17 or 18, and in such times, the classrooms have been established with seating and physical arrangement to naturally bring in the additional student(s). Such inclusion enhances the dynamics of the class and still keeps Sterling at a low student/teacher ratio overall where classical, Charlotte Mason, college-preparatory learning evolves at the hands of our highly experienced and degreed faculty and teaching staff.

Preschool	10:1
Kindergarten	15:1
Grades 1st-4th	16:1
Grades 5th-8th	16:1*
Grades 9th-12th	16:1*

Use of Outside Vendors/Businesses

While the vision of the school is to encourage a community of service and volunteerism, there will be times that necessitate payment for services through outside vendors or businesses. With the realization that many Sterling families own or are facilitated with businesses in various fields, there will be an established process for the use, hiring and payment for such services. The need will be communicated to the school/community and those interested may submit a bid. The business with the lowest bid for the outlined needed services will be the one utilized for the school. This will help to create a level of fairness and administration approval, especially for businesses that will create a product that in turn requires payment from Sterling parents.

Choice of Literature/Library Books

To borrow from Sonlight, "We believe a book should be judged on the positive value it offers, rather than the negative attributes it omits. We envision the literary experience as a joint parent-child effort that sparks quality discussion of the values you hold and the truth you espouse; it's a process of discovery, explanation and teaching, a process that helps to unlock the real treasures contained in

excellent literary work. If you only want books with overt Christian themes in your home—to the exclusion of “literary masterpieces” or cultural essentials—then you will probably have difficulty with some of the classic literature offered.”

In regards to the Sterling library, we are unable to read every book and remove every possible book that may be offensive to someone. We believe it is the responsibility of the parent to guide your child prior to a trip to the library and follow up to see the books being brought home. We also believe that one’s Christianity or spiritual walk is not based on the books they read or allow their children to read, so we are prayerful that literature does not become a source for the enemy to use in dividing believers. If there are certain series you do not wish for your child to check out or read then you must communicate that to your child and/or child’s teacher.

Secured Campus

Sterling is a secured campus. All visitors, including parents, must check in at the Grammar School Office. Classroom visits must be scheduled in advance and approved by the Dean.

School and Office Hours

Please have your student to school in time to attend Daily Devotion which begins at 8:00 a.m. Ending times vary based on electives chosen by your student. When classes are in session, the Sterling office is open from 8:00 A.M. to 4:15 P.M (Mon-Thurs)

Arrival and Dismissal

Please drop your children off at school no more than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time. Please call the school office if you will be more than 5 minutes late to pick up a child, or if there are any unusual car pool changes. Students may not stay on campus unattended.

At 10 minutes after designated pick-up time, there will be \$1 per minute charge billed. After three late student pick-up days, the amount will increase to \$5 per minute accrued charge.

Lost and Found

Due to limited storage space, lost and found items are only kept for ten days. At the end of ten days the items will be given to charity. Parents should carefully mark their children’s supplies and clothes so that, in the event they are misplaced, they may quickly find their way home.

Inclement Weather

The school will close for inclement weather when Leander and Round Rock Independent Schools close, or based on the decision of Sterling Administration, as to ensure the utmost safety for each student and family. The Inclement Weather Schedule will be posted on the website when the need arises.

Medical Policy

Please report all contagious diseases to the school. This is of great help when other students in the class develop symptoms.

Please do not send a child to school until they are symptom-free for at least twenty-four hours.

Parents are required to complete a medication authorization form prior to any prescription or nonprescription medication being dispensed.

Proof of immunizations are required to be provided, updated, and in compliance with the State of Texas, which also allows for a waiver of exemption.

Illness Policy

We ask that families follow the procedures below when deciding whether or not to send a student to school with certain symptoms.

- Intestinal viruses: Students suffering from intestinal viruses are permitted back in the classroom once the symptoms of nausea are gone, assuming there is no fever associated with the illness.
- Fever: Students running a fever are not permitted in class. If a student becomes ill at school with a fever, the parents will be contacted to come pick him/her up.
- Illnesses, which require antibiotics: Students should follow their physician's recommendations regarding when they can be exposed to other children. For example, students with strep throat are typically told not to be around others for at least 24 to 48 hours after the first antibiotic treatment.
- Common colds: Students are permitted in class with colds. However, if flu-like symptoms appear, such as a fever, parents will be contacted to pick up their child.

Medical/Allergy/Special Needs

Sterling Classical School is not equipped to meet the needs of students with severe medical, emotional, allergy-related or similar conditions. We are not a peanut-free campus, but students who have peanut allergies will have a class that follows a "peanut awareness" protocol.

In addition, we do not have a registered nurse on staff. Any student who is prescribed an Epi-pen must provide the school office with an Epi-pen and a doctor's note to be kept during the school year. Epi-pens will be stored in a container that is clearly labeled with the student's name. The staff has been trained on how to administer an Epi-pen.

The school policy states that no food is allowed to be shared, and only the lunch monitor can distribute snacks or food of any kind. The campus maintains a roster of key staff members who are certified in CPR and are accessible to the students on the campus. We are only able to provide basic first aid and then Emergency Medical Personnel will be called to the campus should the staff deem it is a situation that exceeds the level of care provided at Sterling. Students will be evaluated on an individual basis prior to admission to determine if Sterling can provide a safe environment for the child and will best meet their needs.

Late Work Policy: The School of Logic and Rhetoric

- Students and parents may access homework assignments on Google Classroom (5th-12th) by Sunday at 5:00 of the preceding week.
- Students are responsible for staying current with assignments and communicating with their teacher about missed assignments.
- Late assignments which are not due to a missed class or absence will be collected for a 30-point deduction for the first late day. The same late assignment will receive a zero if not collected by the second day but will still be due according to the teacher's discretion.
- Teachers will communicate with parents of students who repeatedly turn in assignments late.
- Students who are absent due to an excused illness will be given one day per absence to turn work in up to three days until the 30-point deduction of late work is enacted.
- Work, tests, or projects that were assigned prior to an absence which fall due the date of the absence or the day the student returns to class will be due and collected the day of the student's return.

Chapel Program

Sterling will have regular Chapel programs throughout the year. This time is established to create a corporate time of worship and fellowship that we are here to glorify God in truth, unity, inspiration and encouragement. Chapel is an interdenominational program.

"... for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ." Ephesians 4:12-13

All students enrolled at Sterling Classical School accept the responsibility of participating in the Sterling Chapel program. Students are to engage in Chapel as a part of the experience in their whole person development while attending Sterling. All Sterling students are required to attend Chapel in the Chapel Uniform.

Transcript Request

Students requesting a copy of their transcript should consult the school office or Registrar. Processing of a transcript may take 1-2 weeks. If there is an outstanding balance (tuition, sports equipment, library, textbooks, fees, etc.), the transcript will be unavailable until billing is current.

Official transcripts with the school logo, seal, signature and supporting documentation will only be released to requesting school entities. Official transcripts will not be released to parents.

Grammar School Homework Policy

Sterling is not a part-time school, and in order to fulfill the learning objectives for each grade, students must complete assignments on the home days as well as at school. In the event that assignments assigned on home days are not completed and returned to school as required, Sterling reserves the right to retain a student for failure to complete the assignments for that grade. In addition, a student may not be eligible to re-enroll if they did not complete the coursework for their grade. This model can only be effective if there is a partnership between home and school.

Grammar School Retention Policy

Due to Sterling's advanced academic format, there may be times where the teacher and administration determine that a student is not academically ready for the next grade. If there are concerns regarding a student, the teacher will request a parent conference and will share his/her recommendations. Sterling reserves the right to refuse promotion to the next grade if faculty and administration believe that it is in the student's best interest. If a parent chooses to go against the school recommendation for their child and place them in the next grade, Sterling has the right to move the student to their previous grade if they are unable to function at grade level in a class of their peers and/or they are causing the class to fall behind. Each student in a class is expected to function at an independent level appropriate for their age group and grade.

Academic and Behavior Identification and Referrals

There will be times when a student is identified with certain academic and/or behavioral issues that require outside assessment and intervention. When Sterling teachers and administration come alongside parents to share the noted concerns, identified behavior, academic struggles or deficits that are preventing a student from being successful in the classroom and/or in moving forward, it is essential that the parents respond in kind. Specific recommendations will be made and compliance to the recommendation may affect re-enrollment options.

Communication of Issues/Events That Occur Off Campus

Sterling administration will address items that come to our attention wherein they have an immediate effect on the students while on campus. This is addressed in more detail in the Student Code of Conduct section. Sterling administration will not engage in issues that occur at outside events or gatherings including text or social media communication during the summer, breaks, or after school where parental involvement should be paramount in addressing behavior, safety, moral and spiritual growth. Parents should be communicating with each other and following Matthew 18 in conflict resolution.

Class and Teacher Requests

Sterling hires degreed, experienced and passionate instructors who believe in the mission and vision of Sterling Classical School. Each instructor brings a high skill level and unique approach to the classroom. Because of the caliber of every Sterling instructor, we do not take teacher requests.



**2024-2025
STERLING CLASSICAL SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK
PARENT SIGNATURE PAGE**

Parents, please sign this page acknowledging that you have received and understand the policies as outlined in the Sterling Classical School 2024-2025 Student Handbook.

STUDENT(S): _____ **GRADE(S):** _____

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____