



## **Student Handbook**

### **GULF COAST SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST SCHOOL**

*A Seventh-day Adventist K-8 School*

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Christian Education **IS** Higher Education



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**Welcome** to Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School, a K-8 Christian School.

The School Board and the faculty are dedicated to promoting Seventh-day Adventist Christian values. Our mission is to provide a Christian environment in which students may mature and develop spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially. Gulfcoast provides an education of the head, heart, and hand in which service to God and our fellowmen is central.

## **Accreditation**

The program of Gulfcoast is in harmony with the Seventh-day Adventist Church and we are fully accredited by the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. In addition, Gulfcoast is accredited by the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and approved accrediting association of the Florida Association of Academic Non-Public Schools (FAANS); FAANS is an affiliate member of the Council for American Private Education (CAPE) and is recognized by The State of Florida.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School is to provide excellence in Christian Education for students from Kindergarten through Eighth Grade. It is our desire to see children grow and mature spiritually, academically, physically, and collectively in a Christ-centered learning program.

## **Philosophy**

Mastering the basics of education enhances all aspects of life. For success, in academics and in daily living, students need to read well, write correctly, and have thoroughly mastered the fundamentals of mathematics.

Beyond this foundation, students need to develop skills in creative and critical thinking, competence in a wide variety of academic subjects, an appreciation for the arts, and a sense of the importance of exercising the body as well as the mind.

Excellence in education embraces more than just a strong academic program. It also upholds the Bible as God's Word, recognizes the dignity of every person, and provides an environment where Christian principles are both taught and modeled – in the classroom, school office, and boardroom.

All students deserve to be challenged to achieve their full potential. The school's combination of academic excellence and Christian emphasis is designed to develop well-educated and morally responsible citizens.

## Objectives

- Provide opportunities for each student to grow in the love of God, to strengthen his/her relationship with Jesus through study of the Bible and nature, and to realize that the most satisfying life is one of service to God, and our fellow men/women.
- Aspire to excellence in all aspects of the school program, recognizing that Christian education is a cooperative effort that must include the home, the church, and the school.
- Uphold the dignity of every person – irrespective of race, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, appearance, age, personality, physical or mental ability – creating a safe haven where no one will be subjected to ridicule or put-downs.
- Teach the integral relationship between the spiritual, social, mental, and physical aspects of a Christian life.
- Employ committed, effective teachers who are given appropriate tools and the necessary professional enrichment opportunities to ensure educational excellence.
- Ensure that each student receives quality instruction and has opportunity to develop to his/her full educational potential.
- Equip students with the skills necessary to find, critically evaluate, organize, and apply information.
- Instruct concerning effective oral and written communication, including the use of correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Ensure that each student has mastered basic math skills.
- Use the study of science, geography, and history to develop an interest in, an appreciation for, and an understanding of the world in which we live.
- Involve all students in a physical education program that provides instruction and training conducive to lifelong enjoyment of physical activity resulting in improved health and a more satisfying life.
- Conduct the education process in a manner that fosters a love of learning and inspires a desire to make learning a lifelong activity.
- Provide opportunity for art and music instruction.
- Create a pleasant and disciplined environment that is conducive to learning and is physically, emotionally, and morally safe.
- Maintain regular communication between the classroom, the home, the church, recognizing that effective communication is a critical component of the educational process.

# General Information

## Admission Guidelines

**Admission Agreement.** Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School welcomes any student and their parents seeking admission who agree to support the school's principles, programs, requirements, and philosophies. The School Board reserves the right to refuse admittance to any student who does not exhibit behavior in harmony with the school's principles. (See Admissions Policy on page 7)

**Non-Discrimination Policy.** The Seventh-day Adventist K-12 School System (of which Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School is a part) admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin. Each student is entitled to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded and made available to students at Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School.

**Constituent Students.** As the constituent church school for St. Petersburg First Seventh-day Adventist Church and a member of the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School gives entrance preference to its members if facility or classroom limitations necessitate.

**Application Procedure.** New and returning students must complete and return all documents as required by the application process.

**New Student Registration.** All new students must submit a copy of their birth certificate, social security card, current report card, recommendation forms and an updated immunization form from the Florida State Health Department. New students will need a school physical completed in the state of Florida, unless they had a physical in another state within the past year. All forms and information must be submitted before the student can attend class. **Testing is also required of all new students.** A testing date will be assigned after all the forms are completed.

- Registration is not complete for students in grades 3-8 until a general assessment of the student's knowledge in reading, language, and mathematics has been made. Students new to kindergarten and first grade will be given individual age appropriate assessments. This applies to students making application either before or after the school year begins. Testing dates and times will be established upon the completion of the registration packet.

**Entrance Age Requirements.** Students must be five (5) years old by September 1 of the year they wish to enter kindergarten or six (6) years old by September 1 if they wish to enter first grade. A copy of the child's birth certificate should be on file upon initial entrance to the school program.

- Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Florida Conference of Education. The Office of Education may waive the entrance age policy for a student transferring from a state with different entrance age requirements and admit them to first grade upon proof of successful completion of kindergarten and a high score on a reading readiness test.

**School Board.** The School Board will determine acceptance and school staff reserve the right to refuse admissions based upon:

1. Failure of parents and/or students to support Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School's Mission, Philosophy, Objectives, and *Student Conduct Agreement*.
2. Behavioral record.
3. Academic record.
4. Attendance record.
5. Special needs exceeding Gulfcoast's services.
6. Outstanding school account with Gulfcoast or previous school. Financial clearance and approval is necessary.

**Withdrawal.** Students who are enrolled in the regular program (K-8) shall not be withdrawn from school without prior notification to their parent(s) or legal guardian. Withdrawal of all students must be processed through the school office. To withdraw, prior written notification is needed to give time to secure progress or final grades from the teacher, turn in textbooks, and receive financial clearance from the treasurer. Records will not be released until these steps are completed and there is no outstanding balance on the student's account. **An exit interview is to be conducted by the principal or an assigned school board member.** The student's cumulative record is forwarded to the new school upon written request from the school and with parent's permission.

**Yearly Re-Enrollment.** A re-enrollment date is established annually. Completion of the registration form and meeting with the admissions committee will secure a position for the next school year. Re-enrollment will be guaranteed upon School Board approval, receipt of completed applications, and payment of required fees, and fulfillment of any existing acceptance conditions. Previous accounts must be paid in full or appropriate arrangements completed before the acceptance is finalized.

## ***Admission Procedure***

The Admissions Committee is a subcommittee of the school board and will meet regularly to review student applications. The committee members will include school administration and may include board representation of individuals with an education background.

An academic placement test will be administered to all students in grades 3-8. If a student scores more than one year below grade level in core subject area, additional curriculum-based testing will be done to confirm results. For kindergarten, first grade and second grade, informal curriculum-based assessment in reading, writing, and math will be administered to obtain the necessary information on the student's academic status.

The admissions committee will review academic placement recommendation and grades obtained from a previous school through a report card or school transcript. They will also review behavioral information received through a letter or recommendation or through a reference form completed by a non-family member who knows the prospective student.

Once all paperwork has been received the admissions committee will review to determine if the student's educational needs can be met by the school. If the student is performing more than one year below grade level, the committee must identify the support systems the school must put in place to move the student forward academically or behaviorally. If it is deemed the school lacks the resources to provide appropriate academic or behavior intervention the student will not be accepted.

All new students will be admitted on a three month probationary period, and parents will be made aware of this once approval for admissions has been granted. For students with academic or behavioral concerns, a review may occur at any time during the probationary period and must occur at the end of the first grading period or at the end of the three month period. At this time a review will occur to see if the plan is working appropriately, revise it, or make a different decision to benefit the student.

If a student seeks admission to our school after the first quarter, the Admissions Committee will request an explanation of the parent's reason for the change in school program. While not required, it may also be best for the student to visit the classroom as a guest for a couple of days prior to an admission decision. This will give the teacher an opportunity to assess behavior and academic readiness for grade level placement.



## Student Health and Safety

Student safety is of primary importance; therefore, for safety reasons:

- There is no playground activity allowed before or after school hours.
- All playground activities during the school day are supervised by a teacher or volunteer.
- Any damage to school environment/property is to be reported immediately.
- Students are taught safe use of equipment.

To promote a safe and efficient school program, students are asked to:

- Walk and talk quietly when inside the school building. Running is reserved for supervised play/sport activities.
- Obtain their teachers permission before bringing pets, toys or special projects to school.
- Reserve the school telephone for school use. Neither teachers nor students should be called during school hours except for an emergency. Student telephone use is by permission only.
- Refrain from chewing gum on school property.

**Safety Drills.** Safety drills are conducted monthly. Students are asked to walk silently to designated positions on the basketball court and wait for instruction from school staff.

**School Delays or Closings.** If there is a question as to whether the school is to be delayed or closed, parents and students should tune in to the local radio or TV station for instructions on delays or closings of Pinellas County schools. Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School will follow the Pinellas County Advisory. (We will monitor WPLP - 570 AM radio and Channel 8 TV).

**Closed Campus.** By School Board policy, Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School operates a closed campus. Students are not permitted to leave the school at any time without permission from the school staff. This policy covers the time from when a student first enters the campus, and ends when they leave after dismissal in the afternoon. Any unauthorized leaves may result in disciplinary action.

**Bicycles.** Students riding bicycles to school are to register them with the principal. Students are not to be near their bicycles except for arrival or departure from school. They are not to be used or taken off campus during school hours. Another student may not borrow a bike. Students riding bicycles to school are to:

1. Obey all safety rules and regulations.
2. Wear a helmet (Florida State law).
3. Park and lock their bikes in the bike rack.
4. Be responsible for the manner in which they represent the school on or near the school grounds.
5. Lock combination or keys are to be accessible to the Principal.

Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School is not liable for any loss or damage to bicycles not owned by the school.

**School Lunches.** The Seventh-day Adventist Church recommends a healthful, vegetarian diet. However, if you choose to use meat, we ask you to follow the Biblical standard. (See Leviticus 11 or Deuteronomy 14). Parents are requested not to send caffeinated beverages. A hot lunch program is available one day of the week. The student's teacher can provide more information.

**Student Illness.** Parents should not send their child to school if the student has been vomiting, has a temperature above normal (98.6 F) is suspected of having a contagious condition (impetigo, ringworm, chicken pox, pinkeye, lice, flu, etc.) or has not sufficiently recovered from an illness. If your child has been sick, do not send them to school until they have been fever-free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing agents.

If a student becomes ill or has an accident at school, immediate action will be taken to ensure the child's safety and well being. The student's parents will be asked to take them home. If we are unable to reach a parent, the individual listed as the emergency contact on the registration form will be notified.

**Head Lice.** Head Lice (Pediculosis Capitis) occasionally occurs in our community. Lice are highly communicable and difficult to prevent. If every parent routinely checks their children and reports an outbreak, we can minimize and control this pest.

Should lice be noticed or nits found in the hair, the child is not to come to school until treated and all nits removed. The child must be cleared by the school office for re-admittance to school.

The health department advises that bedding, articles of clothing, and play areas be treated. Lice shampoo is to be used and child is to be retreated 7-10 days later. See the Pinellas County Health Department for further instructions. **Most importantly, the child cannot be readmitted to school until lice are gone and all nits removed.**

**Medication Policy.** Florida law does not allow school personnel to administer medication without explicit written instructions. This includes prescription as well as nonprescription medication. The following medication procedure will allow school personnel to administer non-prescription and prescription medication:

1. A form, available from the office, providing the child's name, medication, dosage, times to be administered and parent's signature, must be filled out.
2. The medication must come to school in the prescription bottle or manufacturer's package. The student's name and written instructions must be on the label.
3. The medication must be sent or carried directly to the principal. Medication may not be kept in the student's lunch box, backpack, or on his/her person. This is a violation of Florida State law.
4. Medication records become a part of the student's record.

**Insurance.** The school purchases school accident insurance coverage for each student. The cost of this insurance is included in the registration fee. The school is responsible for only the amount covered by its insurance. Parents are urged to carry additional insurance to supplement the amount covered by the school.

## Parent Involvement

The School Board recognizes that education of children is a process that involves a partnership between the child's parents, teacher, principal, and other school and school board personnel. The School Board recognizes that parental participation in their child's educational process through parent/teacher conferences, classroom visitation, serving as a school volunteer, serving as a field trip chaperone, Home and School participant, and other such services is critical to a child's educational process. For that reason, the School Board welcomes and encourages parental participation in their child's school activities.

**Mandatory Parent Volunteer Hours.** At Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist Elementary School, parents are partners and are needed to take an active and meaningful role to insure the success of our school. **There is a mandatory 20 hours of Volunteer Service or \$250 donation to the school.** It is the parents' responsibility to log in the volunteer hours on the designated volunteer time sheet.

Research shows that parent involvement in children's learning positively impacts student achievement levels. We believe that your participation at Gulfcoast School will really make a difference and will positively impact your child's academic progress.

We encourage all parents, legal guardians, and adult family members to become actively involved at Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist Elementary School by serving as a parent volunteer. Your time, talent, and enthusiasm are an integral part of the day-to-day functioning of the school and the overall academic development of your child.

There are a number of ways you can volunteer and demonstrate your commitment at Gulfcoast School. Possible volunteer activities to support the school include:

- Office support
- Fundraising activities
- Field trip assistance and supervision
- Special events assistance
- Take-home assignments
- Assisting with grounds maintenance
- Serving as room parents to help with activities
- Sharing your occupational skills with classes
- Providing refreshments for school events
- Volunteer at work bee days

## **PARENT VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

### **Parent Volunteer Commitment – 20 Hours**

- Each family is expected to volunteer 20 hours per school year.
- Any adult family member may contribute towards one half of the family's required hours. A parent must complete at least 10 of the hours.
- All volunteer hours need to be fulfilled prior to the last day of school.
- Parents are expected to attend two Home and School meetings, which will count towards the 20 hour service commitment.
- Attending parent/teacher conferences is mandatory and cannot be applied to your parent volunteer commitment of 20 hours.
- No more than 10 hours may be logged for one event.

### **How to Volunteer**

- Review the descriptions of possible volunteer activities and sign-up for a specific volunteer activity at the parent orientation.
- Once a month, the parent volunteer schedule will be sent home with students and will be posted in the parent center or school bulletin board.
- Feel free to call the school at the beginning of the school year or any time thereafter and arrange to volunteer at the school.
- Notify the school at least 24 hours in advance, if you need to reschedule.

- Please do not show up at the school ready to volunteer if you have not been scheduled to work.
- To volunteer at a meeting or special training for parents, please refer to the schedule of Home and School meetings for the year.

## **Volunteering at the School**

- All volunteers must sign in and sign out with one of the teachers.
- Please respect classroom activities and the privacy of faculty and staff when volunteering.
- Please do not engage your child's teacher in personal matters, instead schedule regular conferences through the year.

***Home and School Association.*** The Home and School Association is organized to unite the home and school in their endeavor to provide Christian education for the children of the church, and to provide an agency by which cooperation may exist between school and the parents and/or guardians of the students. Any adult member of the church or patron of the school who is willing to support the objectives of the Association may become a member.

A primary objective of the Home and School Association is to develop and improve relationships between parents and teachers. The Association may enhance the relationship by activities such as the following:

1. Providing instructional resources.
2. Encouraging frequent communication between home and school.
3. Encouraging parents to visit the school.
4. Encouraging teachers to visit the homes of students.
5. Appointing room parents.
6. Providing volunteer services as requested by the school.

The Home and School Association meets with school staff and the board chair at the beginning of the school year to formulate plans and annual goals. Home and School Association sponsored events include parent education programs and fund-raising activities. All activities and projects of the Home and School are approved by the Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School Board. The school does not endorse or support door-to-door solicitation. We encourage our students and parents to use other solicitation methods to raise funds for our approved school projects. Notices of events and meetings, held approximately ten times a year, will be sent home with the students and published in church bulletins.

## Communication

**Classroom Interaction.** Parents are welcome to observe in the classroom by appointment, but please do not require the attention of your child during school hours.

**Personal Calls.** Parents should not contact students by phone. If necessary, the student's teacher will deliver a message to the student.

**Visitors.** Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School welcomes and encourages parents and other adults to visit our classrooms. Non-students may visit the school with advanced teacher approval. Student visitors who have been approved must follow all school regulations. All visits are cleared in the office with the principal. You may attend your child's activities and observe his/her progress throughout the year. This is best done by appointment. Please allow teachers and students four weeks, at the beginning of the school year, to establish the classroom routine before visiting. When visiting, quietly be seated in the room and observe as long as desired. If the students want to visit with you, encourage them to return to their desks to continue their work. The teacher is on duty with the children, but will be glad to arrange a time to talk with you after school.

**Parent/Teacher Conferences.** Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first and third nine-week periods. All parents are required to meet with the classroom teacher at both parent/teacher conferences. Parents or teachers may arrange additional conferences as needed.

**Student Grades for Parents/Guardians.** A copy of the student's grades will be provided to the parents/guardians of each student. Where separation or divorce is involved, grade reports will be routinely given to both parents in joint custody arrangements. However, in an instance where the custody of a child rests with one parent, grades will be provided to the custodial parent, unless otherwise directed by the custodial parent.

Notification restrictions imposed by the custodial parent on the noncustodial parent should be registered with the principal upon the registration of the student. Such notification is the responsibility of the custodial parent.

**Special Programs.** Informative notes will be sent home prior to any music or Home and School function. Teachers will send home notes about special activities and events.

## School Hours and Attendance Guidelines

All students enrolled in school are expected to be punctual and regular in attendance. The school year consists of one hundred-eighty (180) school days. We encourage parents not to take students out of school for vacation or for other reasons. It is recommended that medical appointments be scheduled after school or during school breaks.

**School Hours.** School hours are 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. on Friday.

**Arrival/Dismissal Procedures.** Students must not arrive at school before 7:30 a.m. Supervision is not provided until that time. Upon arrival, students are to report to their classroom. They are not to play on the school grounds before or after school hours. To establish punctual habits, students should be at school five to ten minutes early and in their seats at 8:00 a.m. Students are not to leave the school grounds without permission.

The student's method of transportation is to be indicated during registration. Parents are to notify the principal or teacher of any changes.

**After School Care.** After School Care is available this school year. Information will be available at registration or from the principal. Students who are still on school grounds after dismissal will automatically be placed in After School Care. Standard After School Care charges apply.

**Early Student Pick Up.** All parents picking up students during school hours are to come directly to the teacher and sign out their student. Except in emergencies, students leaving school early will bring a parent's written note stating the reason for early departure to the teacher before the school day begins. This courtesy allows the teacher to plan his or her day.

### Attendance

- **Tardies.** Students are expected to be in their seats and ready to begin class at 8:00 a.m. Students who are not in their class at 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy. It is necessary to sign in your child if they arrive after 8:00 a.m. Two or more un-excused violations per month shall be cause for detention and/or other disciplinary action. After two disciplinary actions parents will be required to appear before the school board.

- **Absences.** It is usual practice that a student may be absent from, or tardy to school only when he/she is sick, at a medical appointment, or attending the funeral of a relative. A written excuse from a parent or guardian is required for each absence, and the specific reason for the absence should be stated. Unless the work is satisfactorily made up, a student absent more than 20 percent of the school days (including excused absences) in any grading period may forfeit their grade and receive an “F” for that period.
- **Excused Absences.** School work may be made up for excused absences with no grade penalty. Students will be given one day (from the day of return) for each day of absence to make up work. In order to receive an excused absence, students should bring a note from home explaining the absence. In the case of illness or a doctor’s appointment, a doctor’s note is preferred.
- **Pre-Arranged Absences.** To receive an excused absence for essential family trips, church outings, or any other extended absences, parents must notify their child’s teacher at least two (2) days prior to the scheduled absence. Teachers will provide basic daily assignments prior to absence. For an excused absence, work may be made up with no grade penalty. Students will be given one day (from the return) for each day of absence to complete work. The following reasons are considered valid excuses for school absence: Illness of student, death in the family, medical appointments, educational, family and church trips, unforeseen circumstances (car trouble, accidents, etc.) This list should not be considered all-inclusive.
- **Truancy.** Accurate and prompt reports of irregular attendance and truancy are required by law. Florida law defines “habitual truant” as a student who has 15 or more unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the student’s parent or guardian, and who is subject to compulsory school attendance.

**Transportation.** Parents are expected to arrange for transportation to and from school for their children. The school does not have a bus transport system. The school requests a written record of persons authorized to pick up your child, and must be notified by the parent/legal guardian of any change. To insure safety, students will not be allowed to leave school premises with any unauthorized person.



## School Attire

**General Expectations.** All Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School students must wear school approved uniforms every day. All clothing and accessories must meet our Christian standard. Modesty in dress is the goal of our uniform. Modesty is a matter of length, tightness and appearance. Uniforms are to be clean and neat (free of holes, tears, rips, and excessive stains), appropriately sized, and worn as they were designed. All shirts must be embroidered with the school logo and be tucked in. If pants or shorts have belt loops, a belt of appropriate length is required. The principal must approve any exceptions to the uniform policy in advance. The uniform should reflect a positive attitude of pride in one's self and school. Parents are expected to support the school's efforts by not allowing exceptions to the uniform policy. Good personal hygiene is expected. Administration has the final word on questions of appropriate uniforms.

### Girls

Tops: Polos with the Gulfcoast logo are required at all grade levels.

- Approved colors are burgundy, dark green, and white.
- Must be purchased from Lands' End.
- Any shirt worn under the approved school uniform must be tucked in.
- All shirts must be tucked in.
- Students are allowed to wear school sponsored t-shirts on Fridays only with permission.

Bottoms:

- Must be purchased in the uniform section of any retail store. Example: Target, JCPenney, Kohl's, Walmart, Lands' End, etc. If there are belt loops, a belt must be worn.
- Approved colors are khaki and navy blue.
- Modest length and loose fitting.
- Approved styles include: pleated or flat-front shorts or skorts (that come within two inches of the knee when kneeling down), pants, or capris. Uniform bottoms will be available through Lands' End, but do not have to be purchased from them unless violations occur.
- Tights/leggings must meet appropriate Christian standards.
- No jeans, skinny jeans, or any jean material on non-jean days.
- No cargo shorts/pants or elastic cuffed pants.
- PE shorts will be available through Lands' End only.

### Boys

Tops: Polos with the Gulfcoast logo are required at all grade levels.

- Approved colors are burgundy, dark green, and white.
- Must be from Lands' End .
- Any shirt worn under the approved school uniform must be tucked in.
- All shirts must be tucked in.
- Students are allowed to wear school sponsored t-shirts on Fridays only with permission.

#### Bottoms:

- Must be purchased in the uniform section of any retail store. Example: Target, JCPenney, Kohl's, Walmart, Lands' End, etc. If there are belt loops, a belt must be worn.
- Approved colors are khaki and navy blue.
- Appropriate fit, no oversized wear, no underwear showing.
- Approved styles include shorts and pants. Uniform bottoms will be available through Lands' End, but do not have to be purchased from them unless violations occur.
- No jeans, skinny jeans, or any jean material on non-jean days.
- No cargo shorts/pants or elastic cuffed pants.
- PE shorts will be available through Lands' End only.

*In addition to the above, the following standards are expected to be followed:*

#### **Shoes**

##### *Acceptable:*

- Closed-toe, strapped, or closed heel shoes.
- Shoes must have a strap on the heel.
- Tennis shoes for physical education classes.

##### *Not Acceptable:*

- Flip flops, sandals, or open-toe shoes.
- Shoe heels or soles should not be over two inches high.
- Shoes that have wheels.

**Hair** Boy's and girl's hair should be clean, well-managed, natural color, not-distracting and not an extreme cut. It should not cover the eyes in normal wear position.

**Jewelry** Bracelets (except medical alert), earrings, rings, necklaces, chains, or studs for initial stage of ear piercing are not to be worn at school or at any school functions. Students who pierce their ears while school is in session will not be allowed to wear their earrings under their hair or bandages.

**Hats** Head coverings of any kind including hats, caps, bandanas, or forehead bands are not to be worn in the school building.

**Make-up** Make-up and nail color must be natural shades.

**Performance Attire** All students must have a white embroidered shirt and navy bottoms (pants for boys, skirts for girls) for special trips or performances.

**School T-Shirts** The school will designate certain days as t-shirt day, when students have the option of wearing a school sponsored t-shirt. School t-shirts are available through the school office.

**Outer Garments** The required school attire does not prohibit students from wearing coats, jackets, sweaters, or other appropriate outer garments when necessary. These garments shall be consistent with the dress code. **Only the approved school sweater/jacket/sweatshirt purchased from Land's End may be worn inside.**

**Consequences for Uniform Violation per Quarter.**

1. A note will be sent home to the parent(s). Students will also lose their Friday dress down privilege for one week.
2. Students will be asked to arrange for suitable clothing and a conference with a parent, student, teacher, or principal will be scheduled. Friday dress down will be lost for two weeks.
3. Parent will be called to pick up student. Friday dress down is lost for the rest of the quarter.

**Friday Dress Down.** Students are allowed to wear jeans/PE shorts and the school t-shirt on Friday. Shoes should be in accordance with the general dress code guidelines.

## Code of Conduct

Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School is a community of Christian individuals bound together by trust and respect for God and for one another. The standard of conduct at Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School is based upon the belief that character and ethical standards must be both modeled and taught by the entire school community. Individuals must behave responsibly towards God, fellow students, faculty and staff, parents, and to themselves.

Each classroom establishes an effective and clear, age-appropriate classroom discipline policy. Teachers will explain these expectations to all students. At the beginning of the school year, teachers will communicate to parents the grade-level discipline policy.

Levels of offenses and consequences have been established to effectively manage behavior issues and consequences at the most appropriate level. All consequences are at the discretion of the teacher or principal at the proper level of the offense.

### **Level 1 Offenses**

- Academic Dishonesty
- Gum Chewing
- Dress code violations
- Not following the teacher's instruction
- Not following classroom procedure
- Minor disruption of teacher or instruction
- Name calling/teasing
- Inappropriate lunchroom behavior
- Inappropriate school assembly behavior
- Excessive noise
- Not following arrival/dismissal procedures

The classroom teacher handles Level 1 Offenses at their discretion. Teachers may use progressive consequences to handle these problems. Disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to the following: warnings, time-outs, temporary removal from class, missing recess, loss of special privileges, walking laps, cleaning, and detention (before or after school).

### **Level 2 Offenses**

- Academic Dishonesty
- Recurring dress code violations
- Excessive or on-going teasing/name calling
- Disrespect
- Inappropriate language
- Major disruption of teacher or instruction
- Excessive roughhousing
- Third Level 1 Offense

Level 2 Offenses are referred to the Principal for consequences, which may include parent conferences, in-school suspensions, suspension, depending upon the nature and severity of the offense.

### **Level 3 Offenses**

- Academic Dishonesty
- Fighting/Physical aggression/Confrontation
- Intimidation/Threat/Harassment
- Gross disrespect

- Insubordination
- Inappropriate Internet use
- Defacing or damaging property
- Theft
- Possession of Controlled substances
- Third Level 2 Offense

Level 3 Offenses are referred to the Principal and/or School Board for consequences, which may include possible suspension of the student. The number of days depends upon the nature and severity of the offense. Severe or continued Level 3 Offenses may result in conditional status or expulsion at the discretion of the Principal and/or School Board.

The following is an explanation of inappropriate Level 2 and Level 3 behaviors:

**Academic Dishonesty.** Students are expected to submit one's own work. Students should not violate Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School's Code of Conduct and shall avoid situations that would compromise academic dishonesty. Those who engage in academic dishonesty diminish the quality and value of their education and bring discredit to the school community. Students involved in cheating, plagiarizing, fabrication, multiple submissions, abuse of academic materials, deception, misrepresentations, electronic dishonesty, and other types of academic dishonesty, including production of materials for other students, are subject to a failing grade for that assignment and further disciplinary action as appropriate for the incident.

**Recurring Dress Code Violations.** Students are expected to follow the established guidelines at all times and respond immediately to needed corrections. Continued problems and refusal to immediately correct the problem will result in referral to the Principal for appropriate action, including removal from school until the violation is corrected.

**Excessive or On-going Teasing/Name Calling.** Students are expected to treat each other with respect. A pattern of negative actions or comments made to, or about, other students will not be tolerated.

**Disrespect.** Students are expected to respect the authority of all teachers and staff. Parent volunteers, visitors, or guests of Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School shall be afforded the same respect.

**Inappropriate Language.** The use of profane, obscene, abusive, or suggestive language, whether spoken, written, or gestured is unacceptable. The possession of materials containing such language is also unacceptable.

**Major Disruption.** Students are expected to not disrupt the teacher or instruction in the classroom. Such actions take away the learning opportunities of other students and will not be tolerated.

**Excessive Roughhousing.** Students are expected to follow fair rules of play and contact with each other. Roughhousing could result in injury and should be controlled.

**Fighting/Physical Aggression/Confrontation.** Fighting or striking another student is not an acceptable means of settling disputes. Physical aggression towards another student and the aggressive confrontation of a student are also included under this offense, even if there is not physical contact.

**Intimidation/Threat/Harassment.** A pattern of actions or statements directed at an individual or group that are intended to ridicule, put down, demean the individual or group, and/or actions that put an individual in fear or bodily harm will not be tolerated. Threats also include actions taken by a student towards the school building or facilities.

**Insubordination.** The refusal to follow the proper instructions of a Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School employee is considered a defiance of established authority.

**Inappropriate Internet Use.** Students may use school computers only for legitimate academic purposes. Students are prohibited from accessing or downloading information inappropriate or disruptive to the school setting. Internet use that results in disruption to the school setting will not be tolerated.

**Defacing Property.** Students must respect Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School campus and the property of others. Any student who defaces or destroys the property of others including, but not limited to desks, chairs, library books, and textbooks, will be held financially responsible for reparations in addition to the established consequences.

**Theft.** Students must respect the property of others and are not to take anything that does not belong to them.

**Possession of Controlled Substances.** Possession or use of alcohol, or the possession or use of illegal or unauthorized drugs and medications, on campus or at school functions, is considered an extremely serious violation. This includes the sharing of medication with others.

## Standards of Conduct

Certain behaviors are not in harmony with the Christian lifestyle and/or are contrary to the purposes of Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School. We desire our students to exhibit the Christian lifestyle on and off campus. Because we wish to provide an environment that is safe and stimulates academic and spiritual growth we will abide by the following standards:

**Respectful Behavior.** Each student is expected to maintain respect for teachers and staff, his or her classmates, and property. Classroom teachers will teach their students what respect for each person and property means. The basics included in this are treating each person as valued and needed members of our community and caring for property in a way that does not degrade it.

**Substances.** Use, possession or trafficking of tobacco in any form, alcoholic beverages, illicit drugs, or drug-related paraphernalia, narcotics or any substance used for narcotic effect will not be tolerated. This policy is in effect while a student is on school property, attending or participating in any school-sponsored activity, including any activity associated in any way with Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School (such as off-campus school parties).

**Weapons and Incendiary Devices.** Any weapon or device that may cause harm or injury to property or another person will not be permitted on campus. Students who bring these items, such as firecrackers, lighters, matches, knives, firearms, or any other weapons, will be dealt with immediately by the school staff and Fire Marshall or Sheriff, as appropriate to the situation.

**Cell Phones, Radios, Recorders, TV Sets, Video Games, and other electronic entertainment equipment.** These electronic devices are not allowed on the school groups or field trips or any school sponsored function on or off campus at any time. The only exceptions are on long school sponsored trips and with the permission of the teacher. Certain exceptions related to cell phones are provided in the "Cell Phone Agreement" that must be executed by each student and parent.

### Consequences

1. Teacher will collect cell phone or other electronic device until a parent is notified and comes in to claim it. At that time, the parent(s) will be asked to sign an acknowledgement that the phone or device will be held at the school if the student continues not to follow the policy.

2. The cell phone will be collected and held by the school until the end of quarter. Other electronic devices will be held until the end of the school year.

**Other Items.** Skateboards, scooters, in-line skates, televisions, radios, electronic games, personal handheld devices, pornographic or inappropriate magazines, or other such material will not be allowed on campus.

**Property Rights.** Areas used by students to store their books and belongings are school property and may be searched by the faculty at any time. Where there exists reasonable suspicion that students possess prohibited material, their belongings may be searched.

**Civil Authority.** It is important to know that should a student choose to participate in any act which is in violation of civil law, that act will be reported to the proper authorities in addition to being handled internally by the school staff.

## **Sexual/Racial Harassment**

Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School is committed to providing a school environment free from sexual/racial harassment for all students. Incidents of harassment should be reported to the principal and appropriate actions will be taken.

- **Sexual harassment** consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other inappropriate verbal, nonverbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when such conduct substantially interferes with a student's academic performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment. Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include but is not limited to the following:
  1. Verbal, graphic and written harassment or abuse.
  2. Pressure for sexual activity.
  3. Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications.
  4. Unwelcome or inappropriate touching.
- **Racial harassment** is verbal, nonverbal, written, or physical conduct that denigrate or shows hostility or aversion toward any student based upon race when such conduct substantially interferes with a student's academic performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment. Racial harassment, as defined above, may include but is not limited to the following conduct which is based upon race:



1. Epithets (name-calling) and slurs.
  2. Negative stereotyping.
  3. Threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts.
  4. Written or graphic material that shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group.
- **Specific Restriction.** It is sexual/racial harassment for a student to subject another student, employee or non-employee volunteer to, or be subject of any unwelcome conduct of a sexual/racial nature from another student, employee, or non-employee volunteer. All complaints will be investigated and resolved. A substantiated charge against a student shall subject that student to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion.
  - **Reporting Procedure.** Students must clearly understand that conduct believed by them to constitute harassment must be reported to the principal. Staff must clearly understand that if a student complains to them regarding alleged harassment, they must immediately refer that student to the principal to investigate their complaint. Students must clearly understand that they and others supporting them will not suffer any retaliation or recrimination on account of their reporting of any alleged harassment or on account of participating in an investigation of any alleged harassment.

## Academic Information

**Curriculum.** The curriculum at all levels reflects the philosophy and objectives of Seventh-day Adventist Education. It incorporates an awareness of the principles of human growth and development, encouraging, guiding, and sustaining the students as they seek to understand themselves and to relate to their fellow human beings and to their Creator. The textbooks and course materials used throughout the school are in compliance with the recommendations of the Office of Education for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which is the central coordinating office for all schools operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church throughout the world.

**Instruction.** The instruction offered at Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School in the academic areas includes math, reading, language arts, science and social studies. Other areas of study include Bible/religion, communication skills, physical and life sciences, computers, foreign language, health and safety, physical education, practical applied arts and fine arts. These are taught with the objective of developing

character, witness and service abilities, physical and social skills, and career and work responsibility.

**Library.** All students have access to the library to check out books and do research. Damaged or lost books are the responsibility of the student and his/her family.

**Textbooks.** Textbooks are furnished to your child by the school on a loan basis and should be treated as borrowed property. NO highlighting or writing will be accepted, unless the student's parent wishes to purchase the material. Students are expected to use their textbooks in a responsible manner. Therefore, the student must make restitution for any damage or loss of a textbook.

**Music.** All students in grades K-8 are offered classroom music instruction. Students will develop musical skills and an appreciation for many different styles of music.

**Physical Education.** All students in grades K-8 have regularly scheduled physical education classes.

## Testing

**Standardized Tests.** The Measures of Academic Progress (MAPs) is given to all students in grades K-8 three times a year. This test is used to help identify each student's relative strengths and weaknesses in order to meet individual student needs. Testing results provide important information for tracking individual student growth and progress through school. A copy of the results will be given to parents. Testing dates will be printed in the school calendar. All students should be in school during these times.

**Placement Test.** Prior to admittance a reading, mathematics, and nonverbal reasoning test is given to all new students in grades 3-8.

## Miscellaneous

**Dual Enrollment.** Students will not be permitted to dual enroll at Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School, except by recommendation of a school psychologist and special needs testing has been completed.

**Lost and Found.** Lost and found items are located in the school office. At the end of every nine-week period unclaimed items are taken to a local charity. Please check frequently for lost items. Please label all of your child's belongings to prevent loss.

**After School Visits.** After school visits shall be arranged by the parent or guardian prior to the start of the school day. All arrangements for after school visits should be made from home. Validation of the visit shall be provided in writing to the student’s teacher at the start of the school day.

**Student Trading and /or Selling.** Students are not to trade CDs, DVDs, video games, movies, etc. Parents are to be responsible for this activity, not the school. School administration must approve selling for civic, church, or school benefit. No selling of produce or products for direct personal benefit is permitted

## Student Activities

**Assemblies.** All programs and guest speakers chosen for an assembly are scheduled and approved by the School Board. All approved programs and guests are selected for the educational value they provide for our students.

**Field Trips.** Teachers are encouraged to plan student field trips each year to enrich the educational experience and provide valuable learning resources. These trips are a required part of the curriculum and are considered as regular school days. Parents are notified in advance of all field trips and parental participation is encouraged. The school is automatically granted parental permission for students to attend off-campus excursions. When on field trips, students are to conduct themselves according to Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School standards and policies. Unless otherwise stated, students should wear appropriate school attire.

## Information

**Grading Scale.** The different age groupings use the following grading scales:

K Skills Checklist

Grades 1-2	E	Excellent
	S	Satisfactory
	N	Needs Improvement

Grades 3-8

A	100-93	C	77-72
A-	92-90	C-	71-70
B+	89-88	D+	69-68
B	87-82	D	67-62

B-	81-80	D-	61-60
C+	79-78	F	59-below

**Schoolwork.** Schoolwork is assignments, research, and/or projects to be completed during the school day. Students not absent from school should complete schoolwork within a reasonable amount of time. This will help the student to avoid the maximum one letter grade penalty.

**Homework.** Homework is anything given beyond schoolwork to reinforce skills and concepts learned in the classroom, or any schoolwork not completed during class time.

**Report Cards.** The school year is divided into four nine week periods. Report cards are given at the conclusion of the first, second, and third period. Fourth quarter grades are mailed when finances are cleared.

**Absences and Homework Assignments.** When the student returns to class, he/she will have the opportunity to get caught up. When your child is absent, contact the classroom teacher after dismissal to make arrangements for getting his/her assignments.

**Makeup Work (Grades 3-8).** It is the student's responsibility to obtain all missed assignments and to make arrangements with the teacher for makeup work and/or tests. Students should have at least one day for each school day missed to make up work and to take makeup tests unless other arrangements are made with the teacher.

**Promotion and Remediation (Grades 3-8).** A student not meeting a minimum level of performance during the school year may be required to do remedial summer work. A yearly grade shall constitute a minimum of a "C" or better. If students do not maintain the "C" they may be required to:

1. Make up full-year deficiencies with a grade of "C" or better in an approved summer school program.
2. Take a minimum-competency test for the subject in order to enroll the next year.

**Summer Work (Grades 3-8).** During the latter part of the school year, the teacher may recommend students for summer work. Summer work is designed to help individual students in their area(s) of academic need. A letter will be mailed to parents with the teacher's recommendations.

**Class Parties/Birthdays.** The Home & School Association will provide a birthday treat once a month for all students whose birthday falls within that month.

**Physical Education.** Physical Education is offered to students in grades K-8. Flexibility, cardiovascular fitness, and limited strength exercises are stressed. An effort is made to keep the activities enjoyable. Informal testing is used in the broad and varied range of activities pursued.

**Honor Roll (Grades 1-8).** Honor rolls may be attained each quarter and will be posted. Quarterly and yearly honor rolls are determined for each grade.

**Diplomas.** Students meeting the eighth grade and Conference academic requirements will receive certification of graduation. Those individuals not meeting these requirements will receive a certificate of completion. A student receiving a certificate of graduation must have a passing grade in all core subjects.

**Graduation.** The eighth grade and kindergarten classes participate in a formal graduation ceremony at the end of the school year. Parents/guardians of all graduates meet with the Principal and the Home & School leader to plan the reception. An additional fee may be charged to help cover expenses.

## **Eighth Grade Special days and Events**

During the final year at Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist Elementary School, eighth grade students are privileged to enjoy several special events. An additional fee may be charged to help fund these activities.

**Honors Recognition.** At the end of each nine-week grading period, students with grade averages of 87 percent or above are “honored” in some way. At graduation, students with at least a 90 percent average for the year are recognized as honor graduates, while those with a 95 percent or higher average are recognized as high-honor graduates.

**Class Trip.** During the last quarter of school, the eighth graders are permitted to take a three-day, two-night school approved trip.

## **Grievance Procedure**

The common goal of Christian teachers and parents can be more readily achieved when a friendly, open relationship exists between the home and the school. When on occasion problems arise between parents and teachers, the following conciliation procedures based on Matthew 18 and I Corinthians 6 should be used for resolving the problems.

**Step one.** The parent should first take with the teacher involved and attempt to resolve the problem on an informal basis.

**Step two.** If the problem is not resolved, the parent should ask the school principal or their designee to help resolve the problem on an informal basis.

**Step three.** If the problem is not resolved at the school level, the parent then contacts the school board chairperson who will attempt to resolve the problem on an informal basis.

**Step four.** If the problem is still not resolved, the school board chairperson will convene a formal meeting of the school board's executive committee or the school board. The Conference Superintendent of Education must be informed of a potential problem.

**Step five.** If the problem is still not resolved by the executive committee or the school board, the parent then contacts the Conference Superintendent of Education and provides a written explanation of the problem. The Superintendent of Education attempts to resolve the problem by meeting with the parent, teacher, principal, and school board chairman.

## **Student Discipline Guidelines**

The basic purpose of disciplining is the training of the student for self-government. True discipline is not punitive and it should result in mutual trust between student and teacher. Ideally, the attitude of what is best for the student and the school should be evident in every act of discipline.

***In-School Suspension.*** When a student is asked to serve an in-school suspension, they will be taken out of class and be placed in a predetermined area away from other students. Students will remain on campus for the time period determined by school administration. The student will be given their class assignments, which must be completed independently.

***Off Campus Suspension.*** A suspension is a significant disciplinary measure to let the student and his/her parents know that he/she is on the verge of expulsion unless a positive and consistent change in behavior is seen. Suspension from school is done only by the principal. Parents are to be notified immediately upon suspension. Suspension should not exceed three school days. All school work and tests missed due to suspension should be made up promptly. If a satisfactory basis for

readmission cannot be affected, the student should either be withdrawn or, as a last resort, be dismissed by action of the school board.

**Expulsion.** Chronic or serious misbehavior may result in expulsion. When the school feels that there is no significant progress in the behavior or attitude of a student, the last resort will be expulsion. The authority to expel a student is vested with a committee of teachers and the executive committee of the school board.

**Parental Concern.** Parents or other adults are not to approach students about grievances they may have. They are to communicate with the teacher or principal, which will, in turn, approach the student. It is *not* appropriate to discuss the issue with the student involved. This will *not* be permitted on school premises. Should a conference be needed a student must be represented by his/her parent.

## Tuition Payment Policy

Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School endeavors to keep the cost of Christian education as low as possible so that all Adventist young people can attend. The St. Petersburg Seventh-day Adventist Church subsidizes a portion of the costs. It is necessary that parents faithfully care for their share. The following statement outlines the general financial practices that are important to the parents and/or financial sponsor.

**Previous Balances.** The account for the previous year's expenses at Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School or other Seventh-day Adventist educational institution must be settled before a student is permitted to enroll for the current school year. Any delinquent accounts remaining from a brother or sister who attended Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School must be settled before another family member is admitted.

**Registration Fee.** The registration fee is charged each year for all students. It includes the cost of student accident and liability insurance, textbooks, library, testing, online programs, etc.

**Registration Refund.** Each student is charged and expected to pay the registration fee regardless of entrance date. This fee is non-refundable once the student enters school.

**Tuition.** The major expense for the school year is tuition. The annual tuition is broken down in ten payments with the first payment due, with the registration fee, at registration and the last payment is due by the last

day of school in May. A 5% discount will be given to families paying the full year's tuition at registration.

**Please mail or deliver payments to:**

**Treasurer**  
**c/o Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School**  
**6001 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue South**  
**St. Petersburg, FL 33707**

**Tuition Rates.** Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School has St. Petersburg SDA constituent, SDA non-constituent, and non-Seventh-day Adventist tuition rates. The constituent rate is for students who are members or whose parents are members of St. Petersburg SDA Church. Other SDA's are considered Florida Conference constituent.

**Partial Month Tuition Charge.** When a student withdraws during the first half of a tuition month, there is a 50% refund. Later withdrawals receive no refund.

**Statements.** Statements are sent out the first of the month and are past due after the last day of the current month. Failure to keep an account current could result in dismissal.

**Account Status.** The financial sponsor is expected to keep the account current at all times. The student must obtain financial clearance in advance of graduation.

**Checks.** Checks being applied to a student's account should be made payable to Gulfcoast SDA School. The student's name should be written on the check to insure credit to the proper account. The school makes a charge of \$15.00 if the bank does not honor a check. After 2 occurrences cash payments will be required.

**Refunds.** When a student withdraws from school an adjustment will be made to the account. The tuition for the current month of withdrawal will be prorated based on days of enrollment for the month. Any unused days will be refunded. The date effective for the refund calculation is the date the student officially withdraws.

**Statement of Responsibility.** Each student is accepted at Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School with the understanding that his or her parents or legal guardian is/are responsible for the legal aspects of his or her attendance, regardless of age. These include, but are not limited to, the following: a) Payment of the account, b) Damage to property, c) Liability through altercation.



**Student Aid Scholarship.** Gulfcoast SDA School accepts the Step Up for Students scholarship, Gardiner Scholarship and the Family Empowerment Scholarship. Step Up For Students is an initiative of the Florida Tax Credit (FTC) Scholarship Program. The innovative program provides K-12 education scholarships for qualifying low-income students. Please visit [www.stepupforstudents.org](http://www.stepupforstudents.org) to apply and for more information. Families must apply for Step Up for Students program prior to applying to the school for additional Worthy Student funds.

**Transcripts of Diplomas.** Transcripts or diplomas cannot be issued unless the account for the student has been paid in full.

**Graduation Clearance.** Eighth grade students' tuition bills must be paid in full or arrangements must be made with the school treasurer to ensure that the student may participate in the graduation exercises.

## Internet Acceptable Use Policy

**Gulfcoast SDA School** will be offering Internet access for student use. This document contains the Acceptable Use Policy for student use of the Internet.

### Education Purpose

Use of the Internet has been established for a limited educational purpose. The term "educational purpose" includes classroom activities, and limited high-quality self-discovery activities. The Internet access has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. Gulfcoast SDA School has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material you access or post through the system. You are also expected to follow the rules set forth in this Acceptable Use Policy.

You may not use the Gulfcoast SDA School Internet connection for commercial purposes. This means you may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the Gulfcoast SDA School Internet connection.

### Student Internet Access

All students will have access to the internet for information resources through their classroom account. However, the Internet may only be accessed with permission of the teacher and when an adult is present in the room.

Students will have e-mail access only under their teacher's direct supervision using a classroom account.

The student and their parent must sign this Acceptable Use Agreement in order to be granted permission to use the Gulfcoast SDA School Internet connection. The parent or teacher can withdraw their approval at any time.

### **Appropriate Uses**

The following uses of the Gulfcoast SDA School Internet connection are considered unacceptable:

#### **Personal Safety**

- a. You will not post personal contact information about yourself or other people. Personal contact information includes your address, telephone, school address, work address, etc.
- b. You will not agree to meet with someone you have met online without your parent's approval. Your parent should accompany you to this meeting.
- c. You will promptly disclose to your teacher or other school employee any message you receive that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.

#### **Illegal Activities**

- a. You will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the Gulfcoast SDA School Internet account or to any other computer system through your authorized access. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing."
- b. You will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. These actions are illegal.

#### **System Security**

- a. Under no conditions should you provide your password to another person.
- b. You will immediately notify a teacher or other school employee if you have identified a possible security problem.

#### **Inappropriate Language**

- a. Restrictions against Inappropriate Language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on Web pages. You will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
- b. You will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- c. You will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If

you are told by a person to stop sending those messages, you must stop.

- d. You will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

### **Respect for Privacy**

- a. You will not re-post a message that was sent to you privately without permission of the person who sent you the message.
- b. You will not post private information about another person.

### **Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement**

- a. You will not plagiarize works that you find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours.
- b. You will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when you inappropriately reproduce a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, you should follow the expressed requirements. If you are unsure whether or not you can use a work, you should request permission from the copyright owner. Copyright law can be very confusing. If you have questions ask a teacher.

### **Inappropriate Access to Material**

- a. You will not use the Gulfcoast SDA School Internet connection to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature).
- b. If you mistakenly access inappropriate information, you should immediately tell your teacher or another school employee. This will protect you against a claim that you have intentionally violated this policy.
- c. Your parents should instruct you if there is additional material that they think would be inappropriate for you to access. The school fully expects that you will follow your parent's instructions in this matter.

### **Privacy**

You should expect only limited privacy in the contents of your personal files on the school's computers. Routine maintenance and monitoring of school's computers may lead to discovery that you have violated this policy. An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that you have violated this Policy or the law. Your teacher or parents have the right at any time to request to see the contents of your e-mail files or other computer files.

## **Personal Responsibility**

When you are using the Gulfcoast SDA School Internet connection, you may feel like you can more easily break a rule and not get caught. This is not true, because whenever you do something on a network you leave little “electronic footprints,” so the odds of getting caught are really about the same as in the real world.

But the fact that you can do something or think you can do something without being caught does not make it right to do so. Even if you don't get caught, there is always at least one person who will know whether you have done wrong – and that person is you. Your use of the Internet can be a mirror that will show you what kind of person you really are.

## Gulfcoast Seventh-day Adventist School

*A Seventh-day Adventist K-8 School*

6001 – 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue South

St. Petersburg, Florida 33707

Phone: (727) 345-2141 Fax: (727) 384-1611

[www.gulfcoastsda.org](http://www.gulfcoastsda.org)

Principal: Angela Peoples

### Constituent Church:

St. Petersburg Seventh-day Adventist Church

Pastor Jennifer Scott

1001 – 56<sup>th</sup> Street North

St. Petersburg, Florida 33710

Phone: (727) 345-1742