

Trinitas Classical School
Preparing students for lives well-lived

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PARENT HANDBOOK
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Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. (Philippians 4:8)

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INTRODUCTION

Handbook Intent and Use

It is expected that both parents or guardians have read the contents of this handbook and discussed its policies with their child(ren) and that together they consent to and will submit to all governing policies of the school. Any changes made to the handbook will be formally communicated to families in a timely manner.

While this handbook provides guidelines in regard to the general policies, operations, and guiding philosophy of the school, Trinitas Classical School reserves the right to modify its policies without notice as circumstances and prudence require.

Mission

Trinitas Classical School joins with parents to provide the very best in Christian classical education--teaching students to discover, discern, and desire truth; nurturing mind, body, and spirit within an ecumenical Christian community.

We believe that it is our calling to promote fidelity to Jesus Christ, encourage greater Christian unity, and communicate classical Christian doctrines and moral teachings. Accordingly, we serve Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christians who come together on the basis of shared belief in the fundamental doctrines of the faith as revealed in Holy Scripture and summarized in the ancient creeds of the Church.

Statement of Faith

As an intentionally ecumenical community, Trinitas Classical School finds its unity in the beliefs articulated in the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*that is, "universal"

Additional Beliefs

In addition to the teachings concerning the Holy Trinity, creation, the incarnation and virgin birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and bodily resurrection confessed in the above creed, we also hold those truths believed by Christians of every time and place, which are also most closely aligned with the mission of

the school (e.g., Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and doctrinally conservative Protestant denominations). Among these, we mention specifically the following:

There is no salvation apart from Christ Jesus who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)

The Holy Scriptures are "given by inspiration of God, and [are] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Concerning the teaching of origins, Trinitas Classical School affirms that God created everything out of nothing and that He created it good. From the earliest times, Christians have differed as to the age of the earth based upon the Genesis 1 account of creation; therefore, Trinitas teaches *that* God has created all things without speaking dogmatically about *how* He has done so (beyond the two affirmations identified above).

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

Trinitas Classical School adheres to Christian teaching on marriage and sexuality which is firmly grounded in the Christian scriptures and witnessed to by two millennia of Christian faith and practice, which holds that marriage consists in the union of a man and a woman, and that authentic marriage reflects the sacred unity that exists between Christ and His Bride, the Church (Ephesians 5).

We believe that God created human beings for his glory and in his image, and that his good purposes for us include our personal and physical design as male and female (Psalm 100:3, Genesis 1:27). Because we believe that human identity as male and female is part of God's beautiful plan and not an expression of an individual's autonomous preferences, we believe we are called to live out our lives in ways consistent with how we have been created.

The term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has prohibited intimate sexual activity outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

Practicing any form of sexual immorality or advocating sexual immorality, is sinful and offensive to God and damages human community. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

Every person is the image of God and must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any person should be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the policy of this school.

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Christian scriptures, as the inspired and infallible revelation of God, serve as the supreme source of truth and morality and are the standard

of our teaching and code of conduct. For purposes of the school's doctrine, practice, and discipline, our board of trustees is responsible for determining and developing the school's policies and evaluating their implementation.

We believe that in order to preserve the mission and integrity of the school as an ecumenical community of Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants, and to provide a biblical role model to the students, parents, and the community, parents must acknowledge that the Statement of Faith and Additional Beliefs are adopted by Trinitas and either affirm them or agree to support them.

Because we are deliberately ecumenical, the forms of prayer, the songs, and the Bible translations that we use reflect beliefs common to Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christians. Different devotional traditions (lifting the hands, bowing the head, making the sign of the cross, etc.) are respected, and we encourage teachers and students to pray as they are accustomed to do at home and in church.

We believe that beliefs specific to particular Christian denominations are most appropriately taught in the homes and the churches. When diverging beliefs and practices are appropriately discussed in the course of usual academic study, our teachers will answer from the viewpoint consistent with traditional, classic Christianity and the school's mission and belief statements and aim to cultivate among our students an understanding and appreciation of both the variations within and the fundamental unity of the Christian faith.

About Trinitas

Trinitas Classical School was founded by a group of parents passionate about Christian classical education. We believe children flourish in a joyful community dedicated to both a common Christian vision and to academic excellence. The Trinitas faculty and staff are comprised of experienced and enthusiastic individuals who are dedicated to this vision.

Our approach to education is distinctive because it is multi-directional. It looks to the past and the present to prepare students for the future. On the one hand, we employ what Dorothy Sayers calls "the lost tools of learning." This includes providing our students with a firm foundation in grammar and logic, which itself includes the teaching of classical languages. In providing these skills, we equip students with the very best tools to think clearly and creatively.

On the other hand, we take seriously the best contemporary tools of education. This means, for example, that we teach creative writing as well as inquiry-based science.

Moreover, we believe that education has an unmistakable moral and spiritual component. We want our students not only to learn grammar and logic, but also to be lovers of what is good. We do this by teaching them about the virtues and vices, as explored throughout Scripture and in the great figures of Christianity. Focusing our attention on a specific virtue each month, participating in communal charitable activities, and regularly praying for our local and national leaders are practical ways we apply biblical virtues.

In uniting the best of the past and present tools of learning, Trinitas prepares its students for a future in which they are faithful stewards of God's world.

Christian

Trinitas is a school committed to the historic Christian faith — a faith that affirms that God is a trinity of three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This faith informs all of what we teach and do. The ability to learn about God's creation — and to delight in such learning — are among the greatest blessings God has bestowed on us. Our goal is to produce students who view learning in this way.

The school's founders come from a variety of Christian traditions, including Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox. Therefore, we strive to offer an ecumenical environment where children can celebrate the commonalities of the Christian faith, as well as provide a place where we are able to learn from each other.

Classical

Trinitas employs the Trivium with its emphasis on developing skills in grammar and logic in the early stages of education. Classic texts and classical languages are studied through a variety of methods such as chants, songs, memorization, debate, and writing exercises. We are also enthusiastic about math and the sciences and endeavor to produce students who are equipped with excellent reasoning and quantitative skills. We view learning as a creative process that engages the imagination. We are committed to including activities such as creative writing, art, and music in our curriculum. Children learn basic skills in each of these areas in a way that enables them to further develop their sense of wonder and imagination. Finally, in the spirit of true classical education, we wish to train both the mind and body. At Trinitas, neither sort of education is approached haphazardly. Our physical education time, then, is not simply for unstructured exercise, but we use this time for our children to develop their bodies and have fun while learning basketball, soccer, kickball, etc.

Community

We believe that each student is a beloved child of God and desire to create an environment in which each student's individual gifts and character are appreciated and nurtured. Each morning we pray together as a school. We encourage parents to participate in the life of the school, thereby bringing their gifts to the entire community. We also enjoy opportunities to get together as a community outside of school. We desire to be a joyful community in which each student, parent, teacher, and staff-member can celebrate his or her place in a community of learners dedicated to the project of Christian education.

The Trivium

At Trinitas Classical School, we believe that a classical education is one of the best ways to cultivate a student's God-given desire to learn. A classical education follows the *Trivium* (Latin for "the three ways"). At each of the stages of the Trivium, the student's natural inclination to pursue knowledge is celebrated and guided in appropriate and highly effective ways.

In the **Grammar** stage (grades K-4), students' abounding curiosity equips them to absorb and be able to recall astounding amounts of information. Through chants, songs, stories, recitations, oral presentations, and hands-on inquiry, they *discover* the truths about the world around them. Grammar students learn the rules of phonics, spelling, English and Latin grammar; how to compose a paragraph; the stories and events of the Bible, history, and classic literature; math facts and reasoning; descriptions of plants, animals, human beings, and the earth.

In the **Logic** stage (grades 5-8), students' natural inclination to argue is directed toward productive and good ends. Through such things as the Socratic method, debate, and the study of logic, students are taught to *discern* truth. Logic students continue their study of Latin and may begin Greek. They learn how to write essays, construct and evaluate arguments, compare and contrast events in the Bible and history or works of literature, employ mathematical reasoning, recognize the relations of cause and effect, and think scientifically.

Finally, in the **Rhetoric** stage (grade 7-high school), students' natural desire for self-expression is directed in an even deeper way toward those things which are noble, right, pure, and lovely. Ample opportunities for essay writing and oratory help students learn not just to express themselves, but to express themselves well. Interaction with the finest and most beautiful of thought leads them not only to discern but also to *desire* truth. Rhetoric students continue Latin and Greek; read many of the great books often reserved for college-level students; discuss theology, politics, and ethics; write and defend theses; develop higher level mathematical reasoning; and design and report the findings of some of their own scientific experiments.

Curriculum

"When love and skill mingle, expect a masterpiece." --John Ruskin

The entire curriculum at Trinitas fits beautifully within the classical model. We have worked hard to create a program of study which equips students with the essential tools of learning, familiarizes them with classic works and important events, and is highly engaging. As teachers and parents, we are committed to helping students cultivate a life-long love of learning, to helping them *discover, discern, and desire truth*.

Daily Prayer, Bible, and Character Education

Each morning, Trinitas students and teachers gather for Morning Prayer. Parents and siblings are always welcome to attend. Our Bible curriculum teaches students salvation history and inspires them with stories of heroes of the faith. Each week, younger students memorize scripture passages which accompany the stories being told while older students learn a portion of a large scripture passage that will be cumulatively memorized over the course of the year.

At Trinitas, we seek to educate not only the mind but also the heart. We work to cultivate Christian character through an intentional curriculum and culture designed to develop habits of virtue (our headmaster likes to refer to these skills as the "the lost tools of living"). While virtues like self-discipline, compassion, friendship, and responsibility can make us well-liked and successful, this is not the primary motivation for virtue education at Trinitas. The foundation for our program is the belief that we are children of God, called to love Him and others. We demonstrate and cultivate that love in exercising virtue. It is with these habits of mind and heart that we flourish as human beings.

We have chosen a program of character education which employs examples from scripture, history, and literature, because we think it essential to capture the imagination when training the mind and heart to love God and others. Alternative views of the good life abound, and they can be very attractive. Secular culture bombards us with images and ideals that fill our imaginations, engage our minds, and draw our hearts. The Christian vision of virtue should outshine them all. As Antoine de Saint-Exupery observed,

“If you want to build a ship, don’t drum up people to collect wood and don’t assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.” While education needs rules and assignments (and ship-building needs people to collect wood and perform assigned tasks), it needs more: motivation of the heart is central. Our character education is designed to inspire the hearts of our students.

The examples chosen from scripture and history and literature are intended to prompt a desire for imitation. Imitation may have received a bad rap in a culture that prizes individuality, but we are constantly imitating others (our family members, friends, teachers, coaches, mentors, role-models, and heroes). If our models are good, it should be no insult for someone to say we resemble them. Just imagine: “You swim like Michael Phelps” or “You sing like Pavarotti” or “You remind me of St. Francis.” We would be pleased if each student’s response to stories of persons of virtue is, “I want to be like that!” And, imitation is at the heart of the Christian life, for it should be the desire and effort of every Christian to become more like our Lord. It is our hope that character education at Trinitas helps each of us in this quest.

Such education is woven through our community in a variety of ways. We focus on one virtue each month, and this is the subject of several of our chapels which include Biblical examples, guest speakers, and discussions. Students and teachers have opportunities throughout the week, in and out of the classroom, to focus on these virtues as well. We partner with Altus Adventures to create outdoor experiences to set the tone for each school year with our 7th and 8th grade fall backpacking trip. We also seek to foster a strong school/home connection with newsletter updates, student journals, “try this” activities, shared readings for families, a parent/staff book club, and other resources. As with all other curriculum choices at Trinitas, one of our guiding principles can be found in Philippians 4:8, “Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”

Language Arts

At Trinitas, we desire that our students not only read well but also that they be well-read. To this end, we employ an excellent phonics-based reading program in Kindergarten through 2nd grade and a literature-based reading program in grades two through eight. Literature selections, both those assigned in class and read aloud by the teachers, are made from a list of classic texts and are often integrated into the history curriculum.

Trinitas is committed to helping children engage and enjoy good literature, music, art, etc. Therefore, we will use only materials that reflect truth, goodness, and beauty, and that spark the moral imagination. Curriculum choices and instruction will not confuse good and evil, truth and falsehood.

Most of our reading selections, for example, are "Whole Stories" where good is good, and evil is evil, and good wins (example: the original *Cinderella*) or “Healing Stories” where good is good, and evil is evil, and good wins, but the character experiences a disappointment that causes growth (example: the original *Where the Red Fern Grows*).

For older children (7/8th grade), we add a few "Broken Stories" where good is good, and evil is evil, but the character is a mixture of both forces, losing his fight against evil. However, the character accepts his

moral failings and accepts responsibility for his mistakes but still ends in a worse position than he began, having learned a TRUE important moral lesson (example: *Jekyll and Hyde* or *Macbeth*).

We intentionally avoid "Twisted Stories" where good is not always good, and evil is not always evil, or good characters use evil means to obtain good. Twisted stories may also have the reader sympathize or cheer for evil characters to escape justice. These stories may also contain historical Christian symbols of evil (i.e. snakes or dragons) in a positive or redemptive light. *Frankenstein* is an example of a twisted story because readers feel pity for the monster and desire him to escape punishment. Tragically, his evil is not blamed on poor moral choices but rather his hostile environment. The monster never accepts responsibility for his actions.

One mark of a well-educated person is the ability to write well. The only way to learn to write well is to practice, practice, practice. Trinitas students begin an intensive study of English grammar in the first grade combined with frequent writing exercises, both expository and creative. Outside reading and writing are encouraged through voluntary participation in the Trinitas Thoughtful Reader Book Club and our Young Authors' Festival.

History

"Most of all, perhaps, we need intimate knowledge of the past." –C.S. Lewis

Tell a child a story and he will be able to retell it in astonishing detail. Because stories naturally capture the imagination of the child, Trinitas students don't simply memorize lists of dates and events; they read a well-written and engaging narrative of world history together with historical fiction and select primary sources. Giving oral review presentations, creating timelines, writing and illustrating their own set of history cards, and participating in engaging field trips are just some additional ways students at Trinitas gain an intimate knowledge of the past.

Geography

Students at Trinitas become adept at situating important events, people, and ideas not only in time but also in space. Geography is integrated into the curriculum wherever possible. So, for example, students will be asked to locate places studied in Bible, history, literature, and even science on a large wall map or other relevant maps. Students also cover important lessons in geography in separate units; so, for example, Kindergarteners learn to sing the names of and locate the seven continents; older students learn the countries of the world, the fifty states, and the state capitals.

Latin and Greek

"I will say at once, quite firmly, that the best grounding for education is the Latin grammar. I say this not because Latin is traditional and medieval, but simply because even a rudimentary knowledge of Latin cuts down the labor and pains of learning almost any other subject by at least fifty percent."

--Dorothy Sayers

Trinitas students are introduced to Latin songs and vocabulary in grades one and two. They begin a more intensive study of Latin grammar in grade 3 using a curriculum that is integrated with our English grammar curriculum. Trinitas 6th-8th graders use a high school-level Latin text; 7th graders begin their study of classical Greek.

Math, Science, and Logic

Trinitas uses the Primary Mathematics series (otherwise known as Singapore math). This curriculum not only teaches students math, but also teaches them to think mathematically. It prepares grammar students well for the next stages of the Trivium. Singapore Math has received international acclaim: Singapore's 4th and 8th grade students scored top place for mathematics in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 1995, 1999, and 2003. These students were using the Primary Mathematics series. Singapore math has also received rave reviews from teachers, parents, and students: pilot studies have shown significant improvement in math performance as well as in student attitudes toward math; students were markedly more enthusiastic and confident about math.

Our science curriculum (FOSS) is one of three recommended by the National Science Resources Center, the National Academy of Sciences, and the Smithsonian Institution as meeting their criteria for "an exemplary elementary science program." Trinitas students don't just learn about science, they do it. FOSS is not a piece-meal approach to a science program; it is a coherent, well-thought out curriculum carefully designed to fit the development of the students as they progress through the grade levels. We think it works nicely with the stages of the Trivium.

Critical thinking is taught beginning in grade three. The students move to a more formal study of the structure of arguments and the identification of fallacies in grades five through eight. Trinitas students find the material very engaging and are eager to try to put their skills to use at home!

Music, Art, and Physical Education

In addition to singing each morning during Morning Prayer, Trinitas students have weekly music classes where they are taught to read music, practice choral song, explore instruments, and study music history. Trinitas students have the opportunity to perform in various programs throughout the year and to enjoy field trips to the Grand Rapids Symphony.

All grades have weekly art classes where they are taught technique as well as art appreciation and art history. Students are provided explicit instruction and guided in imitation as well as encouraged in the expression of their individual creativity. Much of the students' work is exhibited at the year-end Fine Arts Night. The results are impressive.

Trinitas students have physical education classes twice per week where they learn to play such games as soccer, basketball, and field hockey as well as practice other skills related to physical fitness and good sportsmanship. Students also participate in the Fifth Third Feelin' Good Mileage Club and an annual Trinitas Fun Run and 5K.

Classical Methods

Memorization and Rhetoric

There are many things that distinguish a classical school from other schools, and among them are a strong emphasis on memorization and rhetoric at each of the stages of the Trivium. Attention to memorization is something that has fallen out of fashion as of late, but students seem to possess an aptitude for memorization far beyond that of their parents (and even their teachers!). We believe that there should be significant opportunity for them to exercise and further develop this aptitude along with the skills of rhetoric by regularly memorizing and reciting passages from Scripture and literature. Whenever possible, program material (e.g., Christmas, Fine Arts Night, and Parent Information Night)

will also be memorized. This provides another opportunity for developing these skills and also makes for a more professional program. In addition to oral assessments for memory work, students will be provided opportunities for oral review and oral presentations. Our annual Speech Meet and Spelling Bee and extra-curricular opportunities such as Thoughtful Reader Book Club, Science Fair, Fine Arts Night, and Reader's Theater also allow students to develop their public poise. We believe that the earlier a student develops the habit of speaking well in front of others, the better.

Memory Aids

The following suggestions may help your child in his or her memory work: talk about the meaning of the passages (it's difficult to memorize something you don't understand), make up motions, draw pictures, set the passage to a familiar tune, turn it into a chant, or recite it while walking or jumping rope.

Songs, Chants, Sound-offs, Time-lines, etc.

If you were to enter a classical classroom, you would hear a lot of singing in the earlier grades. This is not only because we value music, but also because students learn well when material is put to song (or in a chant or sound-off). Another distinctive element of a classical education is its strong emphasis on history and the ability to situate important events, people, and ideas in both space and time. So, you would also notice student-made history cards, wall maps, and time-lines.

Morning Prayer and Ecumenism

Morning Prayer

We begin our day in prayer, which we believe is not only important for setting the tone for the day, but also our joy and privilege as Christians. Parents and siblings are always welcome to attend and may also volunteer to read or to lead/accompany us in song. The songs will be taken from a list of common songs; songs to be added to this list require approval by the headmaster. The weekly readings and prayers are taken from the ecumenical *Daily Devotional Guide* published by The Fellowship of St. James (www.fsj.org). Morning Prayer lasts around 15 minutes, though one day a week is set aside for an additional 15-minute chapel or classroom character-building discussion.

Several points are worth mentioning. First, while Morning Prayer has a definite structure, there is room for different things to occur within that structure. So, for example, during Advent, it is appropriate that we should sing Advent hymns. Or, somewhat differently, it is permissible on some occasions to say only the Lord's Prayer, rather than the Lord's Prayer and the Creed to keep things from getting overly repetitive. Finally, if a particular Psalm is very long, it is appropriate to abbreviate it when reading.

Also, older students may occasionally be assigned to read the Psalm(s) and litany. Student readers should be adequately prepared by the teacher so that they read loudly and clearly in order that everyone is able to understand what is being said.

Ecumenism

One of the distinctive features of Trinitas is its ecumenical character. This does not mean that we merely allow students of a variety of denominations to attend our school; it means, rather, that we are intentional about trying to create an education and a community in which Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox alike feel comfortable and welcome. This intentionality can be seen in our choice of curriculum, our morning prayers, our teacher training, and the friendships among Trinitas families. We

have a desire to cultivate and celebrate all that unites us as Christians, while at the same time learning from our differences. Many of us have found a deepening of our faith in dialogue with Christians from other traditions, and we want our children to be educated in an environment where this dialogue occurs.

Trinitas teaches and practices an interpretation of the sacred scriptures in keeping with classical Christianity. Occasionally, questions arise in class or in chapel concerning areas where Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christians may disagree. If teachers are familiar enough with the topic and the students are mature enough for further discussion, teachers may trace the history of the topic and even touch on the premises or principles which have led to the divergent conclusions. Teachers will also refer students to their parents for discussion on the matter and promptly inform parents of the discussion; the notice to parents will include a brief summary of the classroom discussion. If teachers are not familiar enough with the topic to have the discussion or teachers judge that the particular group of students is not ready for the discussion, the teacher will simply tell the students that different Christian traditions answer the question differently and will refer them back to their parents and/or pastor.

Questions may also arise about beliefs and practices of non-Christians or others who still identify themselves as Christian but whose beliefs and practices are expressly different from historic expressions of Christian faith and life. When teachers answer such questions, they will answer from the viewpoint consistent with traditional, classic Christianity and the school's mission and belief statements. Such an answer would take the form such as the following: "Traditionally, Christians have believed..., but there are some today who believe..." Where more definition and context can be appropriately provided, it will be. For example, certain beliefs and practices have been common to all Christians until certain points in time. Such an historical explanation often helps students contextualize divergent beliefs and practices.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

Because Trinitas does not offer child care before school at this time, students may not arrive before 7:40 a.m. without making a special arrangement with the office beforehand. If parents require an earlier drop off time due to their morning work commute, special arrangements must be made through the school office.

7:40-7:55 a.m. Students may enter the building. They should place their belongings in their lockers and proceed to their classroom. At 7:55 the entrance door is locked.

8:00-8:15 a.m. Classes join together for Morning Prayer. Either a chapel or a character-building conversation takes place once every week which ends at 8:30.

11:40 a.m. Students break for recess and at 12:05 break for lunch; Homeschool Partnership students are invited and encouraged to participate in this social time.

3:00 p.m. Students are dismissed. If pick up is not possible before 3:15, the office must be notified, and parents will have to sign out children from the office.

It is the responsibility of parents to supervise their children before they enter the school building in the morning and after their children have been dismissed to them.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Enrollment and Withdrawal

For a detailed explanation on the enrollment and reenrollment process, refer to the current Fee Schedule. All requests for enrollment and change of enrollment must be received in writing. Students withdrawing on or after September 1 will be charged full tuition through the end of the last month in which they were enrolled, plus a penalty of 10% the full annual tuition. No official records shall be released nor may a student reenroll until all financial obligations are met.

Attendance: Messages and Tardy Policy

All attendance messages should be called in to the main office at 855-6518 by 8:00 a.m. If someone is not available to answer your call personally, please leave a message to inform us of the reason for your student's absence or tardiness. Requests for a day's missed assignments should be made at the same time and should ordinarily be picked up between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m. the same day.

If you arrive later than 7:50, it is recommended that you accompany your child to his locker and assist him in unpacking his things. At 7:55 a.m. the Trinitas entrance is locked. If you arrive after the doors are locked, you must accompany your child to the school office to sign him in. Any student who is signed in after 8:00 a.m. or not in class by 8:00 a.m. is tardy.

Tardies and Absences

Along with all other districts within the Kent Intermediate School District, Trinitas Classical School recognizes the common definition of truancy as ten unexcused absences and chronic absenteeism as missing more than ten percent of scheduled school time within a single school year.

Chronic absenteeism, a relatively new designation, measures excessive excused absences as well as unexcused absences. Very few students are actually truant – meaning they have ten or more absences that are not excused by the school or their parents. Far more common is the number of students whose parents excuse their absences for various reasons – minor illnesses, family issues, missing a ride, sleeping late, watching a younger brother or sister.

Students who repeatedly miss school miss key concepts and conversations that cannot be reduplicated. Their progress suffers, and the performance gap between those who are present and those who are not grows wider as students progress through the grades.

As we prepare students for lives well-lived, it is important that students learn to manage their time wisely. In education, work, and most things in life, you must be present to succeed. Regular attendance, punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility are important educational goals that are directly related to human flourishing.

We recognize that illnesses, injuries and unusual circumstances occur in everyday life which may temporarily disrupt a child's ability to attend school. But we also keep an eye on the number of total absences for a student.

Students who are habitually absent and/or tardy must be reported to the Kent ISD Truancy Office by law.

Late arrivals (tardies), early departures, and midday absences are calculated as portions of a day. For example, up to half a class period or 25 minutes missed will equal 0.1 of lost learning time, one class period will equal 0.2 of lost learning time, a half day missed will equal 0.5, and so on.

Absences not counted for attendance intervention:

1. Snow days and other non-scheduled school closings
2. Medical absences. *These are absences ordered and documented, with signature, by a licensed professional health care practitioner. This also includes significant life trauma, such as an immediate family member's death, as confirmed and approved by the headmaster.*
3. Suspensions and expulsions
4. Preplanned absences that would not negatively affect the student's learning and educational performance as determined by the student's teacher(s) and headmaster in consultation. Generally, this would include assigned learning activities completed before and/or during the absence. *Partial lost learning time that cannot be reduplicated may be counted toward attendance intervention.*

If a student reaches the equivalent of five unexcused absences or ten absences excused by a parent or guardian, the school must make a referral to the Kent ISD Truancy Office for chronic absenteeism. Placement testing will be required before promotion to the next grade level can be considered. Re-enrollment cannot be guaranteed and will depend, in part, on whether or not attendance continues to be less than 90 percent for any period of two weeks after the Attendance Improvement meeting.

If attendance is less than 90 percent for any period of two weeks or more after the Attendance Improvement Agreement is signed OR if the student is missing or not attending at all, notice will be given to the Kent ISD truancy office. Parents have the option of withdrawing at any time; however, the tuition deposit may be forfeited. As with other circumstances, no records will be released until all financial obligations have been met.

Late Pick Up

All students have a defined dismissal time based on their enrollment and grade level, and they should be picked up within fifteen minutes of that dismissal time. If a parent or authorized adult cannot pick up their child(ren), it is their responsibility to notify the school office as soon as possible.

We understand that emergencies arise. We also understand that traffic and weather can be challenging, but both are reasonably predictable, and all children need to be picked up on time. When your child is picked up late, our staff members cannot attend to their regularly required duties.

Care for students not picked up within fifteen minutes of their dismissal time will be provided for as follows:

1st and 2nd occurrences – The student(s) will wait for a parent or other authorized adult in the school office, provided that pick-up will occur within a reasonable time. At the 2nd occurrence, parents will be asked to consider a contract for after-school care.

3rd occurrence – Parents will be required to complete a contract for after-school care which will take effect immediately and apply to any and all subsequent late pick-ups for the remainder of the school year.

4th and following occurrences – The school office will notify parents that the child(ren) are receiving after-school care that day until such time as the after-school care ends or the parent is able to pick up, whichever is earlier.

Standards of Conduct

The Faculty, Staff, and Students of Trinitas Classical School are expected to grow in Christian virtue and to display positive character traits. This is the overriding principle relative to all the rules for behavior. Every effort is made to guide the student to live each day in such a manner as to manifest both love for and faith in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as well as love for all others.

In accordance with the school's mission and statements concerning religious beliefs, such acts as cheating, stealing, using profanity, endangering or threatening another either physically or emotionally, practicing sexual immorality, as well as other behaviors which the Christian tradition has historically considered immoral are strictly prohibited.

Faculty and staff, by virtue of their employment, students, by virtue of their enrollment, and volunteers, by virtue of their service, agree to live within the framework of the school's standards of conduct. Agreeing to these standards obligates faculty, staff, students, and volunteers to assume responsibility for honorable adherence to them while employed by or enrolled in the school.

Any behavior, either on or off campus, which indicates that a faculty or staff member, a volunteer or a student is not striving to grow in Christian virtue, or any conduct that gives evidence of disregard for the spirit of the school standards, is sufficient cause for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Faculty, staff, volunteers, and students are expected to operate within the rules and policies of the school. While individual teachers may have additional classroom policies, no one has the authority to give students permission to violate the written rules and policies of the school. While rules and policies are occasionally changed for good reasons, everyone is expected to follow all rules and policies as long as they are in place.

The school generally follows the discipline procedures contained in its Handbook. However, there are circumstances in which the school administration may determine that it is appropriate not to follow progressive discipline steps. If a member of the faculty, staff, or student body or a volunteer has engaged in egregious, immoral, or other unacceptable behavior, the school reserves the right to suspend or expel the student, and, in the case of faculty, staff and volunteers, to terminate employment or service immediately.

It is the policy of Trinitas to involve parents when there is a continued difficulty at school or any of its related activities. Consistent support of the faculty and administration by parents, both publicly and in private, is greatly appreciated and is vital in the work of teaching and training children and young people.

School Culture/Discipline

The role of discipline at Trinitas is to create an environment that is conducive to learning and a community where mutual respect and Christian love are evident. As the school's primary purpose is to

educate, behavior which disrupts the learning environment is not allowable. Students are expected to follow general school rules as well as the rules specific to their classrooms. It is important to keep in mind that discipline in the classroom is an extension of discipline in the home, not a replacement. Consistent, firm, and loving discipline must be present in *both* environments for children to thrive.

We have implemented a program called *Discipline with Purpose*. The goal of the program is to teach children to wait, that is, to think, to restrain impulsiveness, to delay immediate gratification. Children need extrinsic motivation almost exclusively until they are developmentally five years old. Once they have reached that milestone, motivation should begin to become more and more intrinsic over time. The program itself distinguishes between discipline and skills. Discipline must be applied when someone cannot act appropriately, and the consequences may vary depending upon circumstances, motives, and intentions. At the same time, skills must be learned and habits formed to help people act appropriately.

While classroom rules may vary slightly and will be communicated in writing by each respective teacher, three rules apply to everyone at all times:

1. Respect yourself, others, and things.
2. Contribute to the learning environment.
3. Follow school and classroom procedures.

Greeting

Students should rise and greet parents and guests (by name, if possible) when they enter the classroom. Students should also be encouraged to greet people by name in the hallways.

Snack, Lunch, and Recess

Before snack and lunch, students will pray in their classrooms. They will have the opportunity to clean their hands. Then, they will eat together as a school in the common room. Recess will be held outdoors unless the most inclement conditions prevent this. We believe children need regular breaks for physical activity and relatively unstructured playtime with friends. All children are expected to participate unless there is a health concern that would prevent a child from participating. Parents should contact the student's teacher if there is a need for concession. Various balls, jump-ropes, sidewalk chalk, and other play equipment will be available for students to use. While teachers and volunteer recess supervisors may keep their direct involvement in recess activities to a minimum, they will encourage organized games and individual activities (and they may even join in a game if they like!). Teachers and recess supervisors will help children cooperate and ensure that respect and good sportsmanship are shown.

Discipline Policy and Cycle

The first time correction is needed, the supervising adult gives the student a cue (verbal or non-verbal, but clear to student and known ahead of time). If the student does not respond positively to the above, the supervising adult gives the student a face-to-face reminder and redirects the behavior. If the student does not respond positively to the above redirection, he or she will be removed from the classroom. If possible, the adult who removes the child will work quickly to help the student regain self-control. If this happens, the two parties can continue to work together to redirect inappropriate behavior. This will be recorded in the classroom notebook. A pattern of such redirections (i.e., three incident records in the classroom notebook within a two-month period) requires notification of the parent and completion of the Office Referral Form.

If the student is unable or unwilling to regain self-control, the student will be sent to the headmaster and the Discipline Cycle that follows will be set in motion. This is necessary when:

- a student is in physical or psychological danger or puts another in danger,
- a student is irrational or unreasonable (this includes temper tantrums),
- a student pushes beyond the limits of respect in speech or actions, or
- repeated correction from an adult does not help the student gain self-control (e.g., four incident records in the classroom notebook within a two-month period).

Step One: The student will be sent to the headmaster with a Student Disciplinary Action form.

- A) The form will be completed by the adult who is sending the child to the headmaster.
- B) The student will meet with the headmaster, and together they will review the form.
- C) The student will inform a parent of the incident by phone or note.
- D) The student will be held accountable for the plan developed.
- E) The headmaster will speak with the referring adult.

Step Two: If a student is sent to the headmaster a second time within a two-month period, all of the above steps will be executed, and additionally:

- A) A conference with the teacher, parent, student, and headmaster will be scheduled.
- B) A contract will be drawn up listing actions that will be taken by each participant in the conference.
- C) A date to review the contract will be determined.
- D) The Discipline Cycle will be reviewed with the parent.

Step Three: If a student is sent to the headmaster a third time within a two-month period, or in extreme cases where the headmaster determines the seriousness of the action warrants starting at Step Three:

- A) The student will meet with the headmaster.
- B) The student will notify the parent that a suspension of up to three days has been earned. The length, type, in-school or out-of-school, will be determined by the headmaster.
- C) A conference will be held with the teacher, parent, student, and the headmaster to write a plan with a measurement for progress to assist the student in developing self-control.
- D) A recommendation may be made to have the family visit with a counselor or other specialist.
- E) All school work missed during the period of suspension is due when the student returns to class following the suspension.
- F) A probationary time period to monitor and review progress will be set once the student is ready to return to class.

NOTE: Step Three may be repeated as long as a student is able to demonstrate that progress is being made and is willing to contribute to a positive learning environment. When little or no change is evident, the student will move to Step Four of the cycle.

Step Four: The student will be expelled.

- A) The decision to expel a student rests with the headmaster and the Board of Trustees.
- B) If expulsion is the decision, the student's parent will be notified in writing, the reasons for the dismissal will be given, and the right to request a hearing will be explained.
- C) The expulsion may be reconsidered by the headmaster and the Board of Trustees when a written request for a special hearing is made by the parent.

Serious infractions such as possession of drugs or weapons or severe physical or moral misconduct could result in an immediate move to Step Four of this cycle.

Comprehensive Grievance Policy

It is understood that if any disputes arise which are not specifically covered by this policy, the general pattern of procedures established by this policy will be followed.

Students or Parents about the Class or Teacher:

1. All concerns about the classroom must first be presented to the teacher by the parents, or the student. If the concern is about another student, both sets of parents involved should first make an effort to resolve the matter themselves.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the parents or student may bring the concern to the headmaster.
3. If there is still no resolution, the parents should request in writing a hearing from the Board. The request will be passed through the headmaster.

Parents or Staff about the School:

1. If parents or staff have a concern about the general operation of the school (apart from the operation of the classrooms), they should bring their concerns to the headmaster.
2. If there is still no resolution, they should request in writing a hearing from the Board. The request will be passed through the headmaster.
3. This procedure applies to Board members who are acting in their capacity as parents/patrons and not as representatives of the Board.

Acceptable Use Policy for School and Personal Technology

The following applies to all technology and social media sites such as, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Flickr.

Faculty, Parents, Students, and all other members of the Trinitas community will not:

- Use technology to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, or annoy any individual.
- Post, publish, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, or profane material. Members of the community must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude or threatening language. Members of the community must not knowingly or recklessly post false information about any persons, students, staff or any other organization.

- Use a photograph, image, video or likeness of any student or employee without express permission of that individual and of the headmaster.
- Create any site, post any photo, image, or video of another except with express permission of that individual and the headmaster.
- Harm the goodwill and reputation of the school in the community.
- Transmit any material in violation of any local, federal, and state laws. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, licensed material, and threatening or obscene material.

In addition to the above, faculty members will not:

- Deliberately direct students to a site known for unacceptable material or any material that is not in support of educational objectives. This includes social networking sites or gaming sites.
- Use the school network or computers for any illegal activity. Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.
- Breach confidentiality obligations of school employees.
- “Friend” current or former students under the age of 18 on the faculty member’s personal social networking site.

Administrative Rights

The school has the right to monitor both student and employee use of school computers and content accessed using the school network.

Policy Violations

Violation of the above rules will be dealt with by the headmaster and, when appropriate, the Board of Trustees. Violation of these rules may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension, dismissal and/or legal action by the school, civil authorities, or other involved parties.

Health Requirements: Immunizations

Michigan State Law requires that kindergarten students, students entering 7th grade, and all new students have their immunization records current and verified. Before students are allowed to attend class, one of the following must be on file in the office: 1) a present certificate of immunization, 2) a statement of exemption based on a physician's recommendation, or 3) a statement of exemption based on religious conviction. Students entering kindergarten must submit evidence of a preschool vision screening test prior to enrollment unless the parents or guardians submit a statement that the test is contrary to their religious convictions.

Health Requirements: Illness

Stay home when sick. Students who exhibit any symptoms of illness (fever of more than 100°F, headache, fatigue, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea) should not be sent to school until their condition has been monitored for a minimum of 24 hours. Before they may return to class, students must be without fever (100°F) or signs of a fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicines. They should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs.

Teach basic prevention. Emphasize at home the importance of illness prevention: wash hands frequently with soap and water (always before snack and lunch and after recesses), use alcohol-based hand sanitizer at other times, do not share personal items (i.e., food, drink, utensils), and cover noses and mouths with

a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or a shirt sleeve or elbow if no tissue is available).

We will do our part. Common surfaces are disinfected on a regularly scheduled basis. Students who exhibit any signs of illness while at school may be sent home unless a written explanation of their symptoms and a confirmation that they have been monitored for 24 hours is provided.

Inclement Weather School Cancellation Policy

In the event that roads are deemed to be too dangerous to travel on because of heavy snow or ice accumulation, school will be cancelled or delayed for a specified amount of time. You will be informed of this through regular television and radio news broadcasts. You should look for **Trinitas Classical School** to appear on the television screen for local TV news (channels 3, 8, 13), or to be named on a local radio station. You can also sign up at www.woodtv.com to be notified by email, pager, or cell phone in the event of delay or closing. Usually, when Grand Rapids Christian schools are closed, Trinitas is too, but check to be sure.

Severe Weather (Tornado)

In the event that a tornado warning is issued while students are at school, the students will be kept at school until the warning period has expired.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Grades and Grading

We believe that children do well when standards are rigorous. They will often even surprise us with what they can accomplish. We think it is important that expectations are laid out clearly from the beginning and that children are warmly encouraged, at school and at home, as they learn to meet them.

Students will receive quarterly report cards. If a student is failing or working significantly below his or her abilities in a subject midway through the quarter, the teacher will contact the parents. Also, if a student fails to turn in an assignment, the teacher will communicate this to the parent through the assignment log.

Grades for K-2

Students in grades K-2 will receive numbers on their report cards (1-4). They may receive letter grades on some assignments, quizzes, and tests.

Grades for 3-8

Students in grades 3-8 will receive letter grades on their daily work and quarterly report cards according to the following grading scale.

Grading Scale

A	94-100	(4.0)
A-	90-93	(3.7)
B+	87-89	(3.3)
B	83-86	(3.0)
B-	80-82	(2.7)
C+	77-79	(2.3)
C	73-76	(2.0)

C-	70-72	(1.7)
D+	67-69	(1.3)
D	63-66	(1.0)
D-	60-62	(0.7)
F	0-59	(0.0)

Latin Honors

Summa cum laude	94% - 100% average
Magna cum laude	90% - 93.99% average
Cum laude	87% - 89.99% average

Latin honors will be awarded each semester. An award ceremony will be held at the end of the school year.

Grading

For grades 3-8, all work will be graded on content, spelling, grammar, and handwriting. Students in grades 3 and 4 may receive up to 3% points off for errors in spelling, grammar, and handwriting. Students in grades 5 through 8 may receive up to 6% points off. K-2 students will have mistakes marked and be asked to correct them.

Extra Credit

Extra Credit may be given for correct answers to *challenging* questions on some quizzes and tests up to a maximum of 4% points. No other extra credit will be given.

Late Work Policy

Work must be ready to hand in at the start of the class on the date it is due. 10% will be taken off the grade for each school day the work is late. The parent will be notified by the teacher when a student regularly fails to turn in his or her work on time.

Making Up Work Due to Absences

Excused absences due to sickness: the student has two days to make up his or her work for each day the student was absent--up to a maximum of one week to turn in the missed work. If a student misses a test because of an excused absence for illness, he or she must set an alternative testing time with the teacher. If the student fails to take the test at the time agreed upon, the student will receive a zero for that test.

Excused absences due to vacation, suspension, etc.: Trinitas discourages vacations while classes are in session. In the case of excused absences, the student must obtain his or her assignments before leaving on a trip or during suspension and turn in his or her work upon returning to school and take any tests scheduled for that day. If the student does not take the test on the date of his or her return to school, the student will receive a zero on that test. An exception may be made if the student will miss three or more tests while on vacation. In this case, the student may avoid a zero if he or she makes arrangements with the teacher prior to leaving on vacation to take the test on a different date.

Unexcused absences: A student who misses a test due to an unexcused absence will receive a zero for that test.

Homework and Testing

Homework

The curriculum at Trinitas is challenging and designed to make good use of the students' time in school. Homework should provide extra practice and review where necessary, enhance learning, and give the student an opportunity to cultivate self-discipline and responsibility. It also provides parents an opportunity to be involved in their child(ren)'s education. However, we are also committed to allowing enough time for students to enjoy their families, to have sufficient time for leisure, and to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Trinitas observes the following homework guidelines for each school night:

K	10-15 min
1-2	20-30 min
3-4	40-50 min
5-6	60-75 min
7-8	80-105 min

Only one night (i.e., Friday) is counted as a school night for homework purposes over weekends and school breaks. Major projects in grades 5-8 assigned over weekends are the only exception; though infrequent, these may require counting Saturday and Sunday nights as "school nights." (E.g., a science project and presentation prepared over the weekend in Grades 5-8 may require up to three hours of homework time spread over Friday-Sunday in combination with other homework assigned over the weekend.)

If a student regularly spends so much time on homework that it unreasonably impinges on family life, the teacher who assigned the homework should be informed so that parents and teacher together can assess the situation and make any necessary alterations. Occasionally a student may make an honest effort at home (i.e., work in a focused and disciplined manner) and still have little hope of completing an assignment in a satisfactory manner. When this happens, the parent should help the student find a reasonable stopping point and then attach a note to the homework detailing the effort spent on the incomplete assignment. The teacher may then contact the parent to review the circumstances, the nature of which may excuse the student from the usual penalty for late work. If any of the above situations are not resolved to the satisfaction of parent or teacher, the headmaster should next be consulted.

Guidelines for Homework

K: materials/activities to be completed during the week

Grades 1-2:

- 1) daily review of spelling, memory, history
- 2) any unfinished work
- 3) math problems/facts (1-2 times/week)
- 4) reading: a book of student's choice, a SSRW book, or a book off the master literature list (10-20 minutes a few times/week)
- 5) review for additional quizzes/tests

Grades 3-4:

- 1) daily review of spelling, Bible memory, history, and Latin vocabulary/chants
- 2) any unfinished work
- 3) any Latin translating not completed in class
- 4) math problems/facts (1-2 time/week)
- 5) occasional reading from literature class and writing assignments
- 6) review for additional quizzes/tests

Grades 5-8:

- 1) daily review of spelling, Bible memory, history chapter, and Latin/Greek
- 2) any unfinished work
- 3) Latin/Greek translating (if not completed in class)
- 4) math problems/facts (1-2 times/week)
- 5) Typing of composition assignments
- 6) review for additional quizzes/tests

Art, Music, and PE

Students may occasionally be assigned homework for art and music classes, for example: sketchbook exercises, choral music practice, or readings about the life and work of important artists and composers. Students may also have training goals for PE, for example: to run/walk a certain number of miles as part of the Fifth Third Feelin' Good Mileage Club.

Testing and Test Review

The skills required in reviewing and taking quizzes and tests play an important role in a student's mastery of a subject. Furthermore, regular quizzes and tests help to ensure that the student develops the habit of disciplined review.

Kindergarten students will have weekly Bible memory quizzes. Other assessments will occur as the teacher sees fit. They may have weekly short spelling quizzes during the last quarter.

Students in grades 1-2 will have weekly tests in memorization, spelling, and sometimes history. Students in grades 3-8 will have weekly Latin/Greek, spelling, history, and grammar tests. Additional tests and quizzes in Bible, science, literature, math, and logic will occur at the end of each unit or at other appropriate places.

Communication from Teachers

Trinitas believes that student success depends on cooperation between parents and teachers. In order to further this goal, we would like to do all we can to facilitate communication between parents and teachers. Parents should feel welcome to contact their child's teacher by phone, email, or in person. Please be considerate of the teacher's schedule if it is during school hours (e.g., before school or near the end of a recess). Parents are always welcome in the classroom, although scheduling this ahead of time would be appreciated.

Newsletters

Teachers will supply weekly newsletters containing information about what the students will be studying, test and quiz dates, and other updates. The newsletter may also contain the spelling list and memory work for the week.

Art, Music, and PE teachers will provide a newsletter before the beginning of the year with information about what the children will be learning in those classes.

The office will send out a bi-weekly newsletter containing reports on recent events, reminders of upcoming events, and other matters of significance for the Trinitas community. It is important that parents regularly read the classroom and all school newsletters.

Home Folders

A home folder will be used in grades K-4 for the students to bring papers to and from school each day and for completed work at the end of the week. Older students will be responsible for keeping their own work organized.

Assignment Logs

The assignment log is an important tool for cultivating self-discipline in the students and for teacher/parent communication. In Grades 1-6, each student's log will be signed daily by the teacher before the student leaves school. Parents should sign the log when work is completed at home. Although there is less teacher involvement with the older students' logs, they are still required and ought to be filled out and referenced daily by the student.

Special Events, Extra-curriculars, and Field Trips

Special Events

Full-time Trinitas students will participate in the following events: Spelling Bee, Speech Meet, Christmas Lessons and Carols, Grandparents' Day, Parent Information Night, Young Authors', and Field Day. Homeschool Partnership students are welcome to participate in any of the above. Such events provide valuable opportunities for students to cultivate various skills, for us to enjoy a sense of community, and for others to learn more about our school.

Extra-curricular Offerings and Requirements

At Trinitas, we offer a variety of extra- and co-curricular activities and events which we believe complement our curriculum and help to build community and a culture in which students delight in learning, a culture in which they can "play amongst lovely things." (Please see our full list of extra-curricular activities on our website or on the office bulletin board.)

Many of our extra- and co-curricular activities take place during the last hour of the school day on select Fridays. All full-time Trinitas students participate in some of the activities (e.g., chess club), while on some Fridays, students may choose between activities (e.g. Thoughtful Reader Book Club, Art Club, Reader's Theater). Homeschool Partners are invited to participate.

Field Trips

Field trips to enhance learning are encouraged, and we are open to ideas you may have. Parent drivers/chaperones will usually be needed. In most cases, additional parents and siblings will be welcome to join us. Homeschool Partnership students are invited to participate in all field trips related to the course(s) in which they are enrolled.

The school will contract a commercial bus for school sponsored events whenever practical. For small events, parent drivers may be used. In the latter case, parent drivers will have to provide proof of current driver's license and insurance, and sign a waiver stating that their car has no known mechanical problems before they are approved to drive. At all times, seating restrictions (e.g., booster, front or back seat) as provided by law will be observed.

Awards

We believe it is a good thing to award excellence and that it can motivate students to do their best. We have tried to establish awards to cover a variety of accomplishments. In addition to diplomas and Latin awards, various medals will be awarded for such things as character, academic improvement, and outstanding achievement in specific areas like athletics and fine arts. Awards will be determined by Trinitas teachers, and, where helpful, other volunteers involved in extra-curricular activities, recess duty, etc. Awards are presented at a ceremony at the close of the school year. Because awards require evaluation in several subjects or events, students enrolled in the Homeschool Partnership are generally not eligible.

UNIFORM POLICY

Philosophy and Infractions

At Trinitas, we believe that uniforms for students and faculty are helpful for numerous reasons. In our experience, they contribute to a sense of community. It also helps minimize the perception of socio-economic differences among students. Finally, it helps convey to students that there is a difference between being at school and being at home or the neighborhood playground.

While parents may not be able to directly control whether or not their child's shirt stays tucked in over the course the day, they do have a significant amount of control over how the child is dressed when he or she arrives at school. Please make sure children are dressed in the proper uniform attire before they leave home. On PE days, please ensure that children have **all** the necessary parts of their school uniform; shoes and belts are the most commonly forgotten items.

In certain circumstances, if a student does not have the correct uniform attire, a parent may be contacted to bring what is necessary, or the student may be provided with items from the school's uniform closet.

Additionally, violations of the dress code will be dealt with according to the discipline cycle below for Grades 1-8. Missing a single uniform item or wearing the uniform inappropriately will count as a single infraction. Missing multiple uniform items (e.g., forgetting the regular uniform on a PE day) will count as two infractions.

1 st and 2 nd infractions	<u>Grades 1-8:</u> Loss of “Oops” coupon
3 rd infraction in a semester	<u>Grades 1-4:</u> Loss of “Oops” coupon; Daily Checklist provided as a written warning <u>Grades 5-8:</u> Loss of “Oops” coupon; Daily Checklist copied by student and used as contract between parent, student, and teacher
4 th infraction in a semester	<u>Grades 1-4:</u> Loss of final “Oops” coupon; Daily Checklist copied by student and used as contract between parent, student, and teacher <u>Grades 5-8:</u> Loss of final “Oops” coupon; Conference with parents, service hours required of student

Further deliberate or careless violations, especially if they are detrimental to the learning environment, may be cause for suspension and/or expulsion.

Four “Oops” coupons are given to each student at the start of each semester, and each is labeled with the student’s name. Students themselves must be responsible for their coupons (teachers instruct students to place them in a pencil bag, folder, or binder). When the coupons are distributed, students in grades 3 and up are warned that being unable to find and produce the coupons is tantamount to losing them for a uniform infraction.

Near the semester’s end, students turn in their remaining coupons. Students who have not lost any coupons are rewarded with an extra Color Day. Additionally, teachers may offer students other small rewards for keeping even 1, 2, or 3 of their coupons.

Students who do not have the required gym clothes for physical education classes may be required to sit out at gym time.

Students in Kindergarten are learning how to get themselves ready for school and need to be more gradually coached toward greater responsibility. In order to help them mature in this way, notices will be sent home when they do not have the appropriate uniform attire. A copy of the Daily Checklist may also be sent home by the teacher for the student to complete in preparation for each day.

Dress Code for Full-Time Students

- Uniforms may be purchased from the Trinitas Uniform Closet, Educational Outfitters, or, Lands' End. If purchased from another source, items must be sufficiently comparable in style and color. (We strongly suggest parents check with the office before making non-returnable purchases from other sources.)
- Due to variation in color, yellow ("maize") items should be purchased from Lands' End only. For the same reason, khaki pants for the boys' dress uniform should come from Lands' End or be approved by the office.
- Khaki and gray bottoms in the "Optional" sections below may vary slightly only in color from Lands' End. Examples include the British Khaki from Dockers® and the Uniform Khaki pants from IZOD®, French Toast®, Old Navy®, and Dickies®. Small and discrete logos are permitted. External pockets and jeggings are not allowed.
- If the item has belt loops, a belt is required (see below for options).
- Shorts may not be worn from November through the day before the first day of spring **or** when temperatures are below freezing. Leggings may be worn under skirts and jumpers only from November through the day before the first day of spring **or** when daytime highs are below 60 degrees.

FOR GIRLS

Required for Girls in Grades 5-8 (Dress Uniform):

Navy blazer*

Navy and yellow school tie*

Plaid skirt (within a few inches of the knee)

White blouse (pointed plain collar; no ruffle, no button collar, no peter pan collar)

White socks (no visual stripes, bands, or logos)

Navy, black, or cordovan loafers or Mary Jane style shoes (solid colors only; no distracting details)

Required for Girls in Grades K-4 (Dress Uniform):

Plaid jumper (within a few inches of the knee)

White blouse (pointed plain or peter pan collar; no ruffle or button collar)

White socks or tights (no visual stripes, bands, or logos)

Navy or black Mary Jane style shoes (solid colors only; no distracting details)

Optional:

Navy, gray, or plaid, (no khaki) jumper, skirt, or skort (within a few inches of the knee)**

Khaki or gray chino pants or shorts (no jeggings)

White, yellow (maize), or light blue blouse with collar

White, yellow (maize), light blue, or navy polo

White, yellow (maize), light blue, or navy sweater (cardigan, crew, v-neck, or vest)

White, navy, tan, gray, or black socks (no visual stripes, bands, or logos)

White tights

Navy, brown, black, cordovan, tan or gray shoes (solid colors only; non-marking soles; no distracting details; no athletic shoes)

Navy, brown, black, cordovan, tan or gray belt (canvas or leather; plain, no distracting details)

Navy, gray, or black privacy shorts for under skirts and jumpers (recommended for K-4)

Navy or gray leggings (no black) may be worn under skirts and jumpers (see above for season)

Navy fleece

FOR BOYS

Required (Dress Uniform):

Navy blazer*
Navy and yellow school tie*
Khaki dress pants (Lands' End)
White Oxford button down shirt (long-sleeved)
Navy, tan, or black socks (no visual stripes, bands, or logos)
Black, brown, or cordovan Oxford shoes or loafers
Black, brown, or cordovan leather belt

Optional:

Khaki or gray chino pants or shorts
White or light blue Oxford button down shirt
White, yellow (maize), light blue, or navy polo shirt
Yellow (maize), light blue, or navy sweater (cardigan, crew, v-neck, or vest)
Navy, tan, gray, black, or white socks (no visual stripes, bands, or logos)
Navy, brown, black, cordovan, tan or gray shoes (solid colors only; non-marking soles; no distracting details; no athletic shoes)
Navy, brown, black, cordovan, tan, or gray belt (canvas or leather; plain, no distracting details)
Navy fleece

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS (Required for PE):

Navy, gray, or black PE short: Lands' End "Uniform Mesh Shorts" or must match Lands' End (plain solid of the same length and style, no stripes; a brand logo under 2x2" in a Trinitas color is allowed)
Navy, gray, or black athletic pant: Lands' End "Active Track Pant", "Uniform Sweatpants", or "French Terry Jogger Pant" or must match these (plain solid of the same style, no stripes); no leggings, yoga pants, or running tights; a brand logo under 2x2" in a Trinitas color is allowed
Trinitas t-shirt (via online apparel store)
White, navy, gray, or black athletic socks
Recess/gym shoes

*Blazers and ties may be rented from the school for the school year (\$25 and \$5, respectively). Orders will be taken at Parent Orientation Night and fittings done the first week of school.

**Khaki jumpers, skirts, and skorts are discontinued beginning 2018-2019. Khaki shorts and pants may still be worn.

Dress Code for Homeschool Partnership Students

Anything on the list for full-time students is fine. *Please note: If Homeschool Partnership students will be participating in special functions such as Speech Meet, Lessons and Carols, Fine Arts Night, Parent Information Nights, etc., they will need a dress uniform.*

Uniform Suppliers

Trinitas Uniform Closet

The school has a large inventory of items in excellent condition at very low prices!

Educational Outfitters

Address: 2055 28th Street, SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508
Phone: 616-245-4800
School Code: MI0745
Website: www.educationaloutfitters.com

Lands' End

Phone: 1-800-469-2222
Website: www.landsend.com/school
School Code: 9001-1572-6

Lands' End contributes three percent of the net sales back to the school. The school code must be provided at the time of order. Lands' End has our school logo and can put it on select items such as blazers, shirts, and fleece jackets.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Parental Involvement

Trinitas Classical School depends on and greatly appreciates parental involvement in the life of the school. We have a list of volunteer opportunities in the school office, and we would encourage other ideas parents have for helping the school, becoming involved in their child(ren)'s education, and building the Trinitas and wider communities.

If you would like to coordinate a new activity, please write up a brief description of the activity and what is required of volunteers. This should be submitted to the headmaster for approval and will be kept on file in the office to help future volunteers.

Parent Service Fellowship

Parent Service Fellowship is a service-oriented, parent-based organization seeking to promote the school both internally and externally by giving of their time, talent, gifts, service and contributions. The vision of the PSF is to undergird the school with fervent prayer and moral support.

The purpose of Parent Service Fellowship is to provide an organized means through which all parents can participate in activities that enhance the spiritual and physical learning environment of our children, fellowship with one another, and be a support to the administration, staff, and parents entering Trinitas for the first time.

This committee honors staff with birthday lunches, coordinates gifts for teachers at Christmas and end of year, is available to our new families who may have questions, and coordinates teacher needs in the classroom (Christmas craft, carpooling for field trips, etc.). A list of the current classroom parents may be found on our website. If you are new to a classroom or have a question, feel free to reach out to these parents!

Parents can sign up for various activities that fall under the PSF throughout the year. These activities require varying levels of commitment and time. Preferably we would like each family to choose two or more activities in which to volunteer.

Fundraising

Trinitas is deeply grateful to its families and friends for their generosity. We are very careful in our plans for fundraising and do not want to overburden those who are already contributing time and money. Therefore, Trinitas will not sponsor events like magazine or wrapping-paper sales. Instead, we encourage direct donations. We do, however, have a few opportunities for Trinitas to receive contributions as a result of purchases our families are already making (see below).

Our collective experience and that of the broader non-profit community cautions us against multiple fundraisers of a smaller scale. As a rule, these are ineffective, raising very little for what volunteers donate of their time and money. We also want to avoid pressuring people into benevolence, and such fundraisers are often community events where the request is immediate and in the company of one or more other people. These circumstances are not conducive to the thoughtful, prayerful, and cheerful giving we want to encourage. Finally, smaller and multiple fundraisers come with the added risk of making people less likely to give to the school's single annual fund drive because they have already "donated" by buying goods through students or student families. It is also worth noting that we expressly state in the annual letter that we will not bother people with other fundraisers throughout the year. Part of our stewardship is exercised by the sound budgeting and responsible spending that alleviates the need for multiple fundraisers.

We do, however, appreciate enthusiastic parents and students who would like to do something to benefit the school. There are many ways to do this, including, but certainly not limited to: praying for the school, giving to the single annual fund drive, volunteering, and recruiting prospective families. If, notwithstanding the school's stated fundraising policy, parents try to raise funds for the school, they need to be aware of the following:

1. Trinitas will not promote parent or student fundraisers through any of its streams of communication, and
2. Parents or students will have to add to all promotional materials and notices a disclaimer which states that theirs is not a school sanctioned event, and
3. Although the funds raised may be accompanied by a request to designate them for a specific use, such a request is subject to Board approval.

Lands' End

When you use the preferred school code (see Dress Code above) while ordering uniforms, Lands' End contributes 3% of the sale to Trinitas.

Amazon

When you purchase anything from Amazon using AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), Amazon gives a percentage to our school. Simply visit the AmazonSmile website, choose Trinitas Classical Association as your charitable organization, and shop for the same products at the same price that you would on Amazon.com.

Box Tops for Education

Find, clip, and turn in to the school any Box Tops for Education found on hundreds of products, and the school will receive ten cents per Box Top. Students decide how the money is spent with the approval of the headmaster; so, for example, they have purchased jump ropes, playground balls, sleds, and other recess equipment.

Lunch and Snacks

Students will provide their own lunches and snacks. They are encouraged to bring healthy options, high in protein and low in sugar. A microwave is available. Although Trinitas does not participate in a hot lunch program, parent volunteers may arrange occasional (e.g., monthly) community meals to be enjoyed during the students' and staff's lunch break. No food will be eaten during the school day except at designated lunch and snack times.

When the number of parent volunteers allows it, Trinitas hosts community meals in line with a vision which affirms the Christian teaching that our bodies are not our own but belong to God. Nourishing and maintaining our bodies, then, is part of our responsibility to be good stewards of God's creation. When it is economically feasible we choose organic, local, and seasonal items. We also try to support local businesses when we buy prepared foods. To accommodate all members of our community and to encourage healthful eating, we provide a vegetarian option when practicable. We seek to help children develop good life-long eating habits by offering nutrient-dense, low-fat, and low-sugar food choices whenever possible. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products are encouraged.

We also recognize that eating can itself be an educational opportunity and that what we eat can be related to our courses of study. Accordingly, we will periodically work with faculty to coordinate community meals with specific learning opportunities.

No food treats other than those for approved class parties (see below) will be handed out to students.

Food Allergies

When we have students with life-threatening food allergies to peanuts and tree nuts, families in their classrooms receive an informational letter at Back-to-School Night. Regardless of whether or not one of your child's classmates has such an allergy, you are asked to help create a safe environment by talking to your child at home about not sharing food at school; focus their attention on eating the food that you have packed for them.

Of course, the one and only practice that would go a long way to reducing risk for those who have life-threatening allergies would be to pack peanut-free and nut-free foods for your child's snack and lunches. Because of this, we ask parents to consider keeping these foods at home. If your child loves sandwiches with peanut butter, please consider substituting butters made from sunflower seed, pumpkin seed, flax seed, or another nut-free alternative for nut butters (peanut butter, almond butter, Nutella, etc.).

Trinitas Party Policy

In order to create a safer environment for those with life-threatening food allergies (students, parents, and guests alike), Trinitas has eliminated birthday food treats sent from home and replaced them with non-food items. We recognize student birthdays each month by singing to students at lunchtime. We also include “half birthdays” for students who have birthdays in the summer when school is not in session.

A student may still choose to bring a non-food treat (e.g., pencils, a birthday book for their classroom – see below) to celebrate his or her birthday. The treat may be just for his or her class or for the entire school. If a student donates a book to the school on his or her birthday, a note of dedication including the student’s name will be placed in the book, and the book may be presented to the school during the lunch period.

Any other celebrations/parties must be pre-approved by the headmaster.

We do not observe Halloween or Valentine’s Day at Trinitas with classroom parties. If students would like to bring cards for these or other occasions, they must bring them for the entire class. Cards will be distributed at the end of the school day.

Teachers may provide food for a classroom celebration or after school event as long as the following requirements are observed:

All nuts and nut products must be excluded from the preparation and/or purchase of food. Any products that are labeled “contains nuts” or “may contain nuts” are off-limits. If it is necessary to use products which are “processed in a facility (or “on equipment”) that processes nuts”, those foods need to be clearly identified since they are not safe for those with nut allergies to consume.

Food should be coordinated and distributed only by teachers, never parents or volunteers (unless those volunteers are otherwise trained and given permission).

Whenever food will be provided:

1. Give all parents and the office at least 48hrs notice.
2. Work with parents to find comparable alternatives for students with allergies.
3. Make sure that the quantity of food given to everyone is equal. (Those with allergies should get the same amount of food as those without.)

Personal Items Prohibited

Electronic items such as Gameboys, CD players, iPods, etc. are not permitted at school. Because of the risk they pose, skateboards, Heely shoes, rollerblades, and other like items may not be used at school. Such items will be confiscated and returned as arranged by teacher and parent.

Unless school phones are not working, all cell phones on the school grounds must be turned off from the time that students arrive to the time they are picked up by parents. Students bringing cell phones to school must keep them turned off and in their backpack or locker while they are on school grounds. Any violation of this rule will result in confiscation of the student phone, which a parent will have to recover from the school office. Teachers may use their cell phones during school hours for business only. If a teacher or volunteer anticipates an urgent call or is under an obligation to remain on-call (i.e., by

profession), the phone must be set to vibrate mode, and calls should be answered or returned only when students can be temporarily placed under the care of another teacher.

No alcoholic beverages or controlled substances are permitted. There shall be no “open carry” of firearms/weapons in the facility or on the property. A person with a Concealed Pistol License (CPL) may not carry a concealed pistol/weapon in the school or on school property, except for a parent or legal guardian who is dropping off or picking up a child provided that the pistol/weapon is kept in the vehicle.

Lost textbooks and other equipment

If a student loses or severely damages a non-consumable text or other permanent equipment owned by the school, the student shall be responsible for the cost of replacing the item.

Lost and Found

A lost and found box is kept in the school office. Items not claimed at the end of each semester will be discarded or donated to a charitable organization.

Directory Information

A school wide directory will be made available to every school family. School directories are for school related communication and should not be used for private purposes or shared with the general public.

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Parents: Please read the following statements carefully and sign below to indicate your agreement.

I hereby affirm that I have read the Parent Handbook and that I consent to and will submit to all governing policies of the school, including all applicable policies in the Parent Handbook.

I agree that in order to preserve the mission and integrity of the school as an ecumenical community of Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants, and to provide a biblical role model to the students and the community, parents must 1) acknowledge that the Statement of Faith and Additional Beliefs are adopted by Trinitas and either affirm them or agree to respect and defer to them, and 2) abide by the Standards of Conduct.

I understand that this Handbook does not contractually bind the school and is subject to change without notice by decision of the school's governing body. I understand that the services of the school are engaged by mutual consent, and that either the school or I reserve the right to terminate any or all services at any time. Admission to the school is a privilege, not a right, and admission for one school year does not guarantee automatic admission for future school years.

Signature of Father

Date

Signature of Mother

Date

Students transferring to Trinitas in Grades 5+: Please read the following statements carefully and sign below to indicate your agreement.

I hereby consent to and will submit to all governing policies of the school, including all applicable policies in the Parent Handbook.

I understand that this Handbook does not contractually bind the school and is subject to change without notice by decision of the school's governing body. I understand that admission to the school is a privilege, not a right, and that any behavior, either on or off campus, which is not consistent with the school's standards could result in the loss of that privilege.

Signature of Student

Date