



## Grace Academy Faculty Development Program

The mission of Grace Academy: To glorify God by serving parents in providing their children a distinctly Christ-centered, academically excellent, classical education as a foundation for life-long learning.

Grace Academy recognizes the central and essential role that a quality faculty plays in the fulfillment of its mission. The ongoing professional development of the faculty is thus of utmost importance. The purpose of Grace Academy's faculty development program, as described below, is to nurture a community of scholar-teachers who embody the characteristics found on the Grace Faculty Profile.

The school commits to providing regular opportunities to the faculty for their professional development. Such opportunities may include:

- Faculty in-service days
- Books and/or articles for summer reading
- Training by experts and consultants from other classical Christian schools or organizations
- Funding to attend conferences put on by ACCS, SCL, or other relevant organizations
- Funding and professional leave to visit other classical Christian schools
- Professional leave for in-house professional development days\*
- Optional book clubs and discussion groups
- Tuition assistance for graduate classes\*\*
- A process of regular evaluation by the Grace Academy administration

\* Grace Academy encourages teachers to use professional development days, up to one each semester, to observe other classes, talk with other teachers, and work to improve their own classes. In order to request a professional development day, the teacher must submit a request in writing that outlines the proposed use of time for that day and the desired goals.

\*\* Grace Academy, at its sole discretion, will provide partial funding for the continuing education of its full-time faculty who have been employed by the school for at least one full year. In order to receive funding, the teacher must submit a letter to the Head of School describing the desired coursework or program of study, its relevance to the teacher's work at Grace Academy, the timeframe for completion, and the estimated cost. Such applications will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Head of School. Evaluation of the application will be based on multiple factors including, but not limited to, the needs of the school, the benefit of the

coursework or program being proposed, budgetary constraints, etc. Upon approval the teacher may be reimbursed for up to 50% of the cost of tuition, fees, and books, with a maximum of \$500, for three courses per year that are completed with a grade of “B” or higher. Receipts and documentation of final course grades must be submitted to the Head of School prior to reimbursement. If the teacher leaves Grace Academy for any reason, voluntarily or non-voluntarily, before the approved courses are completed, the school will have no obligation to reimburse the cost of those courses. If the teacher leaves Grace Academy for any reason, voluntarily or non-voluntarily, within twelve months after receiving reimbursement under this policy, the full amount of the reimbursement will be returned by the teacher to Grace Academy on or before the last day of the teacher’s employment.

In addition to making use of such opportunities provided by the school, Grace Academy faculty are expected to pursue their own professional development which includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Prior to the first year of employment

- Read Sayers, “The Lost Tools of Learning”
- Read Wilson, *The Case for Classical Christian Education*
- Read Gregory, *The Seven Laws of Teaching*

By the end of the first year of employment

- Read Perrin, *An Introduction to Classical Education*
- Read Littlejohn and Evans, *Wisdom and Eloquence*
- Read Gaebelien, *The Pattern of God’s Truth*
- Meet regularly with a designated faculty mentor.

By the end of the second year of employment

- Read Guroian, *Tending the Heart of Virtue*
- Read Lemov, *Teach Like a Champion* or Hightet, *The Art of Education*

By the end of the third year of employment

- Read selections totaling at least 200 pages from Gamble, *The Great Tradition*

Fourth year of employment and beyond

- Each year the teacher should read at least one book, approved by the administration, that relates either to classical Christian education in general or to the age level/discipline in which the teacher specializes.
- Teachers may propose an alternate professional development plan to the administration at the beginning of the school year. One component of such alternate plans will be a presentation to some or all faculty. The purpose of this presentation will be to convey what has been learned in a way that contributes to other teachers’ ongoing professional development as well.

Grace Academy views the regular evaluation of its faculty as part of its contribution to the process of faculty development. The following is an overview of the faculty evaluation process that will be conducted on an annual basis:

1. Presentation of expectations (Grace Faculty Profile, etc.)
2. Completion of self-evaluation and professional goals by teacher
3. Start-of-the-year meeting with administrator
  - discuss teacher's self-evaluation and professional goals for the year
  - approve teacher's professional development plan for the year
4. Informal and formal observations throughout year
5. End-of-the-year meeting with administrator
  - review any formal observations
  - review teacher's goals for the year
  - assess completion of the professional development plan for the year
  - discuss summary evaluation