



WHY GENEVA?

A RHETORIC SCHOOL OVERVIEW

GENEVA SCHOOL *of* BOERNE

WELCOME

Geneva School of Boerne is a classical and Christian school dedicated to developing servants, scholars, athletes and artists equipped to do hard things to the glory of Jesus Christ. Not only is that a mouthful but understanding what that means is the reason we ask you to do some reading. Why would a school require a student to do a reading assignment before they even begin to fill out an application? Great question! As a prospective Rhetoric student, (Our high school is called the Rhetoric School. Keep reading to find out why.) you have been given an opportunity to have a say in your education. You are old enough to evaluate educational options for yourself. But to determine if Geneva is a good fit for you, you need to know what you would be stepping into as a student, so let's jump in.

Geneva looks like most other schools in many ways. As you walk around campus and sit in classes, you see average kids carrying backpacks, eating lunch with friends, sitting in classrooms with teachers, competing in sports in the gym or on the field, or practicing music or a play. Spend some time here and you will find that it's different from other schools in some ways as well. If you eventually enroll at GSB, we want you to be prepared for these differences and then embrace them!

MISSION STATEMENT

The Geneva School of Boerne exists to provide a classical education from a biblical worldview to equip students for a lifetime of learning, service and leadership to the glory of Jesus Christ.

The differences start with our mission. Everything we do as a school is driven by this mission. We are also known by three distinctives that come from this mission that help make Geneva unique—we teach a classical Christian curriculum by deeply invested educators in a faithful, supportive community. Our mission is so important, that beginning in kindergarten, Geneva students learn to sing the mission to a recognizable tune so that they always remember it. It's that important to us.

CHRISTIAN

Okay, so Geneva is a Christian school, but what does it look like to have an “education from a biblical worldview”? We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and look to it as a source of truth and wisdom. In Luke 10:27 Jesus tells his disciples, and that includes all of us who call ourselves Christians, to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind.” He is calling for an all-in commitment. Abraham Kuyper, a late 19th/early 20th century theologian and statesman said, “There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry, ‘Mine!’” Your teachers will help you see how God interacts with every subject. They work to guide students to rightly order truth and feelings.

“Geneva’s curriculum is rooted in the belief that, as St. Augustine wrote, “All truth is God’s truth.” Thus, we read books, discuss ideas, and study things that are not Christian in a strictly literal sense but that contain deep truths about the beauty, virtue, justice and goodness of this world that God created. Rather than avoiding or insulating ourselves against culture, we strive to take a classical, critical and scripture-informed look at it, meaning we study history, the Great Books, math, science and the arts through a Philippians 4:8 lens: “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.”

Geneva students are trained to mine for the true and right and lovely in all things; we engage with the world around us with wisdom and discernment, neither scorning nor fully embracing it. At the heart of the classical education movement is a desire to create culture-makers and culture-keepers. Classical and Christian education seeks to do the same, but with the ultimate goal of forming culture-making and culture-keeping followers of Jesus who are propelled into their work and the world by a deep love of beauty, truth and goodness.”

– *Geneva graduate*

“Christianity also has spread throughout every part of my Rhetoric School education as we discussed God’s role in evolution and physics. During my education at Geneva, I learned about other religions, studying what they believe, and learning how to defend my own faith. My teachers seamlessly wove a Christian worldview into everything I studied, sculpting me into a Christian scholar.”

– *Geneva senior*

CLASSICAL

Geneva is a classical school. That doesn't mean we wear togas and sandals to class, though costumes are a fun part of some of our days. A classical education is rooted in ancient Greek and Roman literature and history, art and culture. Classical education challenges you to wrestle with original texts. It is a long-established education in both form and style that has produced learned men and women for centuries.

“The classical model of education returns us to the roots of how we learn, formalizes the process and ultimately gives you agency over your own mind. The classical idea of a classroom is an intellectual playground. The Latin word for classroom is *ludarium*, which has its root in the word *ludus* which means “game.” A regular playground is where we test and learn the physical limitations of our bodies, and so the classroom is where we test the boundaries of our mind. Grammar School (KP-5th) is the playground for the foundational blocks of our education. Logic School (6th-8th) is where we learn how the blocks are made and how they work in context with each other. Finally, Rhetoric School (9th-12th) teaches us how to communicate to others all that we've discovered. The phases of Grammar, Logic and Rhetoric will shape how you see the world and will then give you the tools to communicate your thoughts with others.

The culmination of the classroom playground is Rhetoric School. History and literature aren't just facts to be memorized; they are round table discussions. Sometimes we don't know an idea is bad until we say it—or sometimes we take for granted a thought we've always had when it might be something no one else has thought about. The seminar nature of the humanities encourages you to engage with the teacher as well as your peers—which is how you test your command of the material. Science and math are approached in the same way—you are asked why you came to a conclusion and then you are expected to be able to say more than “because the textbook told me so.” Your Senior Thesis is the capstone of Rhetoric School—the penultimate opportunity for you to show what you've learned, order your own thoughts and then speak your own mind.

Geneva has been blessed with educators that are passionate and engaged, families that are generous and involved and students that are willing to ask questions and take risks. Like a complicated ecosystem, these are fertile environmental factors for a student to encounter higher education and learn how to think for themselves. Most importantly, Rhetoric School is fun. It's your opportunity to discover what you're interested in, and at Geneva's intellectual playground, there is no shortage of subjects to explore and discover.”

– *Geneva graduate*

SERVANT • SCHOLAR ATHLETE • ARTIST

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

A Geneva graduate is a disciple of Jesus Christ, exhibiting excellence, passion and integrity as he leads for Christ's cause in the world.

He is a critical, logical thinker, able to discern absolute truth from cultural trends and philosophies.

As one who loves the Lord with all his mind, the Geneva graduate will be a lover of learning, and have the ability to grasp new ideas throughout his lifetime in pursuit of truth.

These qualities, clothed in humility, create a foundation that will enable him to present engagingly articulate and persuasively winsome arguments.

A Geneva graduate honors God's image within himself and thus, is interested in all people because of God's interest and image in them. The classical education and biblical worldview gained at Geneva will equip the graduate to exhibit vocational excellence to the glory of God.

SERVANT

The second half of Luke 10:27, which is the second great commandment, is to “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Because we call ourselves disciples, followers of Christ, we do our best to follow his teachings and emulate his life of service.

“Service is undoubtedly a cornerstone of our classical Christian education here at Geneva. This stems from our calling as Christ followers to seek out ways to serve one another daily. What does this look like at Geneva? Anything from being an AIM Buddy (program where high school students mentor elementary school students) to participating in our EagleFest and more.

What has set Geneva apart is that service is woven intricately into our culture. A servant heart is the expectation, not for self-gain or even Geneva’s gain, but to point back to what Christ did on the cross and how that categorically changes how we should live. When this reality sinks in, and it has for so many students throughout the years, AIM becomes a treat, the EagleFest becomes more than just a fundraiser and “doing the minimum” provides a whole new perspective.

It is encouraging to think how normal service can become in our community. Service at Geneva is neither taken for granted nor compulsory, but rather leveraged to equip students to meet the needs of those around them. That is what it is all about, and so many Geneva students come to understand how eternity-altering a heart of service can be.”

– *Geneva graduate*

“Geneva truly changed the way I looked at serving my community. In every loaf of bread given at Hill Country Daily Bread, in every dollar raised at Hoops for Heartland, in every smile during AIM, I saw God and his unconditional love for us. Christlike service grows from our own genuine love for our Savior.

Service doesn’t have to be difficult. We are called to “love thy neighbor as thyself.” We serve through large and small acts. Yes, we see people starting large nonprofits or donating large amounts of money, but that’s not realistic for Grammar, Logic or Rhetoric students. At Geneva, we serve through small acts of kindness toward peers or through sharing our gifts and talents to serve the local community.”

– *Geneva graduate*

READING

At Geneva, we read from a list of the greatest books, those timeless classics that have shaped the western world over the past 3,000 years. Readings in the humanities classes, both history and literature, follow a chronological outline.

Grade	Humanities (History and Literature)	Books
9	Ancient and Classical	Homer's <i>Iliad</i> and <i>Odyssey</i> Sophocles' <i>Theban Trilogy</i> Virgil's <i>Aeneid</i>
10	Medieval to Early Renaissance	Boethius' <i>Consolation of Philosophy</i> <i>Beowulf</i> <i>Sir Gawain & the Green Knight</i> Dante's <i>Inferno</i> Chaucer's <i>Canterbury Tales</i>
11	Renaissance to Early Modern	Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i> Shakespeare's <i>Hamlet</i> and <i>The Tempest</i> Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i> Defoe's <i>Robison Crusoe</i> Joyce's <i>A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man</i>
12	Modern United States	Hawthorne's <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> Lee's <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> Fitzgerald's <i>The Great Gatsby</i> Miller's <i>Death of a Salesmen</i> McCarthy's <i>The Road</i>

“Discussion of classical literature is among the key components which comprise Geneva. It gives students a rounded mind, strengthening beliefs by contesting them against opposing worldviews or defining them through profound words of past authors. At Geneva, you will grow, through repetition, an ability to dissect lofty ideas into bite-sized maxims to carry with you throughout your life. The subject matter may seem daunting at first, but as with any physical activity, you will notice your reading comprehension improve with hard work and determination. Rest assured, for every philosophical or rhetorical question you may struggle with on your Geneva literature journey, there are about 10 faculty members who would jump at the opportunity to discuss it with you.

The reading workload at Geneva is by no means light but is doable with the correct time management and effort. By putting in the effort now and learning to harness determination, you will be better equipped for more difficult challenges down the road. Not only will you reap the rewards of your self-discipline, but you will receive the opportunity to glorify God in the process. Geneva’s curriculum will stretch your brain and your capabilities to their limits. However, by keeping your eye on the prize and staying organized, you can choose to take this opportunity and use it to propel you forward in life.”

– *Geneva senior*

SPEAKING

Persuasively communicating orally also requires practice to develop the skills needed to be successful. In Rhetoric School you will have speaking assignments in these classes, but teachers in your humanities and other classes will also provide opportunities for you to practice these skills across subjects.

“Another big part of Geneva is public speaking. I used to think I hated public speaking. Even the thought of it terrified me. It wasn’t until eighth grade oratory that I discovered that I actually really enjoy public speaking and am pretty good at it. Once you get over that initial fear, everything is fine. Plus, Geneva really goes the extra mile to help you overcome and combat that nervousness so that when Senior Thesis comes around, you’ll have nothing to worry about!”

– *Geneva senior*

WRITING

At Geneva, students are taught “advanced rhetoric in order to clearly, eloquently, respectfully and persuasively communicate their thoughts both orally and in writing.” This takes a lot of practice, so our students do a lot of writing.

“Expectations for writing in Rhetoric School are high, and successfully achieving the style of writing expected of you at Geneva will prepare you very well for college writing and beyond. You can expect to receive writing assignments frequently and in most classes. Teachers will expect your writing to be grammatically correct and for the concepts and arguments to follow a logical order. Your papers must be formatted properly according to MLA style. Most writing assignments will require you to conduct research and properly cite the research used in your arguments. You should expect to take your papers through multiple drafts before turning them in and receive feedback from at least one other reader.”

– Geneva graduate

“Geneva School of Boerne taught me the craft of thought that I then applied to all my reading and writing. When we wrote an essay it wasn’t some leading question poking you to give what the teacher thought of something, but rather it was pushing you to dig deep and ask hard questions about texts and about your own beliefs. Geneva teaches you that words have impact and meaning, not just number grade equivalents. Classes are never isolated; they build and weave together so when you write you can pull out skills and ideas from other classes (or even ask for help from other teachers). We would frequently be encouraged to write multiple drafts for feedback since the end goal of each assignment is to truly challenge you and your ideas.

One of the teachers told me that I could have the most wonderful, life changing ideas, but if I didn’t know how to present them then they were useless. The ideas are the most important part since without them you have nothing to write about, but the format and presentation are also important. We learned how to make paragraphs flow so readers could best see and follow our ideas, we learned how to turn papers into verbal presentations by tweaking certain words and knowing when to pause, and we learned MLA format which served me so well in college.

Writing is not sitting alone in a dark room agonizing over prepositions; it is alive with creativity, reasoning and perseverance.”

– Geneva graduate

“MLA Style specifies guidelines for formatting manuscripts and citing research in writing. MLA Style also provides writers with a system for referencing their sources through parenthetical citation.”

LATIN

Geneva requires at least one year of high school-level Latin. On top of this, all graduates must have at least three years of high school-level instruction in any one foreign language. Why Latin? It’s not just because it’s a classical language. Latin helps train the mind to read and think carefully. As an added bonus, the majority of the English language has Latin roots so that you will be expanding your English vocabulary as well. Latin is also the foundation of all the romance languages like Spanish, French and Italian, so you will be well-equipped to take on any of them. If you choose to continue your Latin studies beyond your required year, you will be able to read classical works in their original language.

DISCUSSIONS

Rhetoric teaches us that different settings require different speaking styles. Much of your speaking at Geneva will be conversations in class; almost half of our classes meet around the Harkness Table. While the Harkness Table is an actual table that seats up to 20 students, when we talk about the Harkness Table we are also referring to the method of teaching and learning where the teacher guides and encourages an open-minded discussion of ideas. Harkness Discussion, like “Classical Education,” is a relatively new term for an old concept. It is a method of learning in which inquiry, collaboration, and reflection on the learning process are intentionally integrated into the classroom experience.

“The Harkness Table is a big oval table where we gather around and have thoughtful discussions with one another. Students and teachers alike are able to really engage with each other and share thoughts and questions in a more comfortable, conversation-like way rather than students just answering questions. Differing opinions are shared and talked through and I really enjoy hearing perspectives that may differ from my own. Whether you agree with someone else’s opinion or not, you are now given a new way to look at it, which I believe makes us more thoughtful and empathetic people. We are able to understand and see where someone else may be coming from, without necessarily having to agree with them.”

– Geneva senior

SENIOR THESIS

All roads lead to Rome, and everything at Geneva leads to this capstone project. It can seem daunting if you only look at the end product—researching and writing a documented essay on a defensible thesis. This essay must also be memorized and delivered orally (and eloquently) before an audience of faculty, students, parents and invited panelists. Upon completion of the oral presentation (approximately 15 minutes), the panelists question the presenter (another 20 minutes) upon points that have been raised, whereupon the presenter demonstrates competency in fielding the questions by “thinking on his feet.”

“From afar, Senior Thesis looked like an overwhelming project with stressful deadlines and expectations, but by working with my thesis advisors I was able to make the project something that felt natural for me. I spent time really thinking about a topic that was both exciting and challenging, making a year-long engagement with it second-nature. I also used that opportunity to create my own internal deadlines with the project, setting aside my time to research, write and rehearse that fit into a schedule that included extracurriculars like sports and the debate team. Finally, my teachers were all eager to work with me offering feedback and critique with my presentation until I was comfortable with an authentic speaking style that felt unique to me. In Rhetoric School, what you get out of it has everything to do with what you put into it. There are so many opportunities to prioritize your interests, take control of your schedule and really learn how to be yourself when speaking in front of others, whether on a stage or around a table.”

– Geneva graduate

“If the idea of standing up in front of a crowd of people and defending a thesis you wrote sounds absolutely terrifying to you, you are not alone. I can still remember the fear I felt entering Rhetoric School knowing that my thesis presentation was on the horizon and would soon become the culmination of my classical Christian education in just a few years. But like most things at Geneva, something I didn’t really want to do ended up challenging, stretching and growing me in ways I’ll forever be thankful for.

The thing about Senior Thesis is that it has very little to do with your actual presentation. Yes, you will have to eventually write a compelling thesis and defend it in front of an audience in the weeks before graduation, but that’s not the ultimate objective. The real aim is that Geneva graduates can go into the world not only believing in things that they think are true, beautiful and good, but that they can also clearly and confidently articulate why they do so.

Ultimately, your thesis presentation is simply the opportunity you get to showcase all of the byproducts of a classical Christian education—things like logic, memorization and delivery. And while you may never again have to write or defend a thesis post-Geneva, I promise you that the skills you learn from your time in Rhetoric School—the same ones evidenced in your thesis—are skills you’ll carry with you the rest of your life. The value of being able to communicate your ideas in a persuasive, intentional and equally thoughtful manner cannot be overstated in today’s culture.

So, whether you thrive presenting in front of a crowded room of people or instead favor one-on-one deep discussions, senior thesis will equip you to approach both and everything in between with confidence, conviction and grace. And if you actually buy into the whole process, you’ll walk away with skills, knowledge and practices that you’ll continue to use and refine for years to come.”

– *Geneva graduate*

STEM

“Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics” (STEM) is often misunderstood as being in opposition to a liberal arts education. While the subject matter may differ, the approach to both is the encouragement of rigorous thinking. At Geneva, we do not advocate the false dilemma of STEM versus the liberal arts. Instead, students are encouraged to excel across the board academically. Challenging AP course offerings in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Calculus, Statistics, Music Theory, Spanish and Latin, U.S. Government and Politics as well as Computer Science. These courses combine with time-tested training in the classics to produce well-rounded students at home in either arena. Geneva alumni regularly go on to college to study engineering, pre-med, research sciences and computer sciences.

“The number of classes I took in a specific subject is not what prepared me for my university STEM degree or Physics Ph.D. program. As it happens, acquiring practical knowledge related to physics was not as important as learning how to acquire that knowledge and the skills required to use it.

It is true, I have never needed to know that William the Conqueror defeated King Harold in 1066, but I have needed to know how to clearly express my thoughts in a range of topics, explain the significance of events and speak eloquently in front of my peers. At Geneva I was taught how to learn and how to express myself well in any field. These are the skills practiced and developed by studying in the liberal arts, more specifically the humanities.”

– *Geneva graduate*

At Geneva, we talk about our students as servants, scholars, athletes and artists. We addressed the heart of service Geneva desires to nurture and have covered a lot about the scholar part of that description since it fills the majority of a school day. Let’s look at the other parts of a Geneva student.

ATHLETE

Geneva requires all Rhetoric students to participate in at least two sport seasons. This is to encourage the advantages of participating on a team, not to embarrass those who struggle with sports. For those of a less athletic bent, opportunities to serve as team managers or trainers are also available. The benefits of athletics go far beyond what happens on the field or court.

“Geneva strives to produce young men and women who excel in all of their commitments, including athletics. Wearing a uniform and participating in team practices and games does not make a Geneva athlete. Rather, a Geneva athlete is made in how you approach your athletic commitments. It is developed through your relationship with teammates, your teachability with coaches, your selflessness, dependability, discipline and grit. Furthermore, Geneva athletes are not just athletes but representatives of their team, their school and their faith. As such, their conduct should always reflect the tenets of Christianity.

We believe playing sports not only enhances the student’s experience—through working with others towards a common goal—but strengthens the wider fabric and culture of Rhetoric School. Part of the uniqueness of Geneva is its students’ ability to involve themselves in a wide variety of activities. It is a place where a football player can also play in the band, where a tennis state champion can hurry back from her tournament to star in the school play.

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“This, among many other elements, is part of what distinguishes Geneva from other schools, private and public alike. Geneva students are not asked to specialize but to involve themselves. We maintain that a high level of involvement aids in the development of confident, committed and dynamic Christians. What we’re asking requires effort and accountability, and, like all worthwhile endeavors, shapes character. We look forward to watching you excel in your athletic commitments. Talons Up!”

– *Geneva graduate*

“When first I arrived at Geneva, it was at the start of my freshman year. I was homeschooled until then and had never been part of a sports organization or team. Since basketball was the only sport I truly understood, that is what I chose to participate in. When the season started, I was extremely nervous and fearful of practices and games because I was focused solely on what my coaches and fellow teammates thought of me. This was obviously a bad mindset to be in before our season commenced.

After a few weeks, I began to lose this poor mentality and gain a more positive attitude. This change in my perspective was caused by the exact community I was afraid of. My coaches didn’t sit there and judge me, they pushed me to be better. Their encouragement gave me the confidence to try my hardest and exceed my original capabilities. They allowed me to fully utilize my diligence and persistency transferring over to my academics.

My teammates showed me kindness and accepted me for who I was. I will never forget the conversations we all had and the bonds I have created with them during practices, games, late night bus rides home and stops at Buc-ee’s. I have been part of the Geneva Eagles basketball team for two seasons now, and I aim to keep making an effort to improve and inspire my teammates to do the same.

The sports program at Geneva is filled with people who absolutely love what they do. Our administrators aspire to give us as students the greatest experience they can provide. The coaches for each sport give everything they have and carry the knowledge to guide their athletes throughout their years in Rhetoric. And the home games are an absolute blast whether you’re in the stands or competing exceptionally. This classical and Christian community that has developed inside every sport is truly special.”

– *Geneva graduate*

ARTIST

Art, band, choir, guitar, orchestra. You have a lot of options for fine arts participation at Geneva, though not participating isn't one of them. And if this is your area of strength, there are additional opportunities with electives like Jazz Band, Praise Ensemble, Chamber Orchestra, Music Theory and Songwriting!

“Fine arts at Geneva is not just another slot on your schedule, but rather an important part of the integrated whole that is a classical Christian education. Involvement in the fine arts trains one's heart and mind to love the true, good and beautiful, in the same way that reading and studying a classic work of literature aims to cultivate these loves in the student. The cultivation of these loves through the fine arts requires one to consistently ask the question, does this piece of music or art that I am creating express something that is true, good, or beautiful? Your fine arts faculty will ask this question as they select pieces of music for you to play or artistic prompts for you to paint in art class, but these loves cannot be cultivated in you if you do not engage in the process of your own formation.

For example, your teacher may choose a piece of classical music for you to play on the violin that will help train you in the basics of playing the violin and expose you to the genre of music that is fundamental to all other genres. She may intend for this music to challenge your mind and skill, woo your heart to love beauty, and evoke praise of your creator who designed the idea of music and the violin, but it is up to you to respond to these invitations with openness. Fine arts at Geneva calls you to seek excellence in your technique, ask good questions about the meaning evoked and glorify God by creating something that is true, good and beautiful. Fine arts, like all aspects of a Geneva education, will require you to fully engage your heart and mind, which is often challenging, but always rewarding.”

– *Geneva graduate*

“Fine arts at Geneva is truly a special place. Spending four years in the theater, there's no place like Geneva theater—we explore, and have a free place to grow and mature in mind, body and soul. If you love to sing, we capture each musical with grace. If you love to act, our spring play is challenging and fun. If you love to compete and push yourself to the next levels of acting, then step out and audition for the next school play.

What makes Geneva fine arts stand out is the way our instruction from teachers is performed- together we create the extraordinary. Joy is one word to describe how I feel about all the growth Geneva fine arts has given me and my classmates. Coming from a public-school background, I had no idea how much an art, such as theater, could remain rooted in Christ. That is what gives Geneva fine arts an edge. We all have a greater common goal behind the physical one at hand.

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From a theatrical perspective, it can get tricky to navigate the world of theater. People have a tendency to get lost along the way of either finding themselves or their character. However, it is almost impossible to get lost when you have mentors guiding you down the correct path who want you to grow in your faith. Whether the play is as light as a fairy tale such as Cinderella or dark like the depths of a Greek Tragedy like Euripides Medea, you know Geneva theater will put on a spectacular production rooted in Christ. Geneva fine arts may be summarized as so, learning about the arts of man for the Glory of God.”

– *Geneva student*

MORE GENEVA

FACULTY

One of Geneva’s three distinctives is “Deeply Invested Educators.” Our small school and class sizes allow you to get to know your teachers, and they are on your side ready to help you get the most out of what Geneva offers. Many graduates will tell you that the teachers are the best thing at Geneva.

“I’ve had the privilege of attending Geneva since kindergarten and I honestly cannot imagine going anywhere else. All of the faculty are truly there for you academically and spiritually. I always feel welcome to go to a teacher if I’m struggling with something in or out of school. They really do love and care about us. Whether they’re joking around with you or saying a prayer over you, my teachers have never failed to show me anything but care and support.”

– *Geneva student*

HONOR CODE

The Honor Code is also unique to Geneva. All Rhetoric students are required to sign the Honor Code annually, recite it together weekly, and agree to abide by it and uphold it. At Geneva, we also understand that we are all sinful and broken people who fall short in achieving what we set out to do, however, grace shapes the culture at Geneva in all areas.

HONOR CODE

Out of the threefold desire to honor God, respect my school, and value my classmates, I pledge, as a student at the Geneva School of Boerne, to strive to do my best in all things. As a student leader, I promise to abide by all school policies. I will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate these behaviors by my classmates. In confirmation of my pledge to you and my accountability before the Lord Jesus Christ, I profess that in all of my school work, my name affirms my honor;
in all of my dealings, my word is my bond.

“To me, the Honor Code is akin to a contract. Whenever you sign it, you are signing an agreement that you will do your very best to uphold the rules set before you. I find the Honor Code vital because it aligns with Christian values that you can carry out in your day-to-day lives, not just at school. At Geneva the values listed in the Honor Code are values that students are proud to hold to.”

– *Geneva student*

“At Geneva School of Boerne, every year each Rhetoric School student signs the Honor Code. This is a code that vows to uphold honor, respect and integrity at school and for the glory of God. Each student is responsible for justifying the code for themselves and their classmates. If a student violates the honor code, it will be taken up with the Rhetoric School Headmaster and the Dean of Students to decide what needs to be done. Ultimately, discipline, or better termed discipleship, is intended to result in restoration and recovered good standing as a Rhetoric student.”

– *Geneva student*

HOUSE SYSTEM

The Honor Code is supported by Geneva's House System (think Harry Potter, although it did not originate there). Students gain points for their houses by upholding the Honor Code. A deterrent to breaking the Honor Code is the loss of points from your house. In your core classes you will be with students in your own grade level, so Geneva's House System is one way to connect you with students in other grade levels.

“Most commonly associated with traditional British private schools, the House System is one of the unique features of the Rhetoric School experience. Geneva has four houses, each named for an author critical to the English literary tradition: Chaucer, Lewis, Milton and Sayers. Students are placed into one of the houses in eighth grade (or upon enrollment in Rhetoric School) and families are automatically members of the same house as it is a legacy House System. Faculty members are also placed into a house. Each house appoints one student from each class to serve on the Student Senate. Students earn and lose points for their crest on a daily basis and compete as houses through a number of organized competitions. The point totals determine the House of the Quarter and the winner of the coveted annual House Cup.

The House System is most visible in the uniform accents worn by Rhetoric School students, the Quidditch competitions, and the elaborate themes of Field Day and Induction Day ceremonies. There is no doubt that the houses give Rhetoric School an element of fun and friendly competition, but the system plays an even larger role. By placing students with groups of peers they may not have come to know otherwise, the House System builds relationships across grade levels, sports teams and other extracurricular activities. It gives diverse groups of students a common ground, something to rally around, and a distinct culture to foster and represent.

The point system also instills a unique accountability among students that demerits and dress code violations alone do not. By the same coin, it often prompts students to participate in acts of service or leadership which they may have ignored without the point system.

Lastly, the House System presents interested students with the opportunity to build vertical relationships with students both older and younger with whom they serve, compete and hold one another accountable. Overall, the House System gives students an even greater stake in their education and contributes to the one-of-a-kind culture of the Rhetoric School.”

– Geneva graduate

UNIFORMS

Many schools, both private and public, require uniforms. There are practical reasons for this, as well as philosophical. It takes the focus off yourself and frees you to focus on your education learning to express yourself well in areas other than appearance.

“Geneva requires its students to wear a uniform to school throughout the week. The uniform is the most formal on days when the Rhetoric Assembly is held. Uniforms give the Geneva campus a sense of fellowship and provide a foundational layer of uniformity among peers that deters students from being singled out. Wearing a uniform instills in students the habit of being presentable and prepared. It allows them to focus on schoolwork and fellowship without the unnecessary distractions that can come with individual outfits.

Uniforms also allow outside visitors to see one of the goals of Geneva. Anyone walking onto the Geneva campus will notice the joy of the students and the love they have for each other and for Christ. Wearing a uniform enhances this companionship and consistency. It is not required in hopes of restricting students, but it is implemented so that students may love each other well and be unified on our mission together.

In terms of uniforms, it really isn't that bad, I promise. I also never have to worry or stress over what I'm going to wear, nor if I'm wearing clothes that are “fancy” or “trendy” enough.”

– *Geneva student*

A theme that has echoed from many of these testimonies is that Geneva has a lot to offer. What you get out of it has to do with how much you choose to engage and put into it.

“My years in Rhetoric School at Geneva were an exercise in being a self-starter. Geneva offered students the ability to take ownership of their interests, schedule and style in a way that prepared me to enter into college and a career after.”

– *Geneva graduate*

A FINAL NOTE

“I quickly want to add that Geneva is also so fun. Most people think classical equals stuffy, boring academics, but I have so many hilarious memories especially from humanities classes. In freshman Literature, our teacher brought us Starbucks coffee to explain Sirens from *The Odyssey*. In Dual Credit English, the instructor gave us M&Ms to use (then eat) to write a paper on probability and statistics. If this sounds like you, give it a try.”

– *Geneva graduate*

You made it. You finished your required reading. We trust you have a better understanding of what a classical education from a Biblical worldview looks like at Geneva. Now what?

Ask yourself some questions.

- What is appealing or intimidating about enrolling at Geneva?
- Does this description conform well with your personal, spiritual and academic goals?
- Can you see yourself embracing the curriculum and culture at Geneva?

If this has created an interest in or confirmed a desire for a classical Christian education, talk with your parents. We pray God will bring clarity and unity as you discern the best decision for you and your family.

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