



# COVENANT

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

## 2018-2019 **PARENT – STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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## Covenant Parent-Student Handbook

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### **Disclaimer**

This Parent-Student Handbook shall serve as a reliable guide to help parents, students, and teachers understand Covenant's Administrative Policies so that we may cultivate a peaceful and well-ordered school. This handbook is not all inclusive and does not cover every situation that may arise. The handbook may be revised by the school's administration at any time.

### **Acknowledgements**

Covenant gratefully acknowledges that this handbook has been influenced by handbooks from other classical Christian schools. In some instances we have built upon or copied passages from the Veritas Standard from Veritas School in Richmond, VA.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **1.0 FOUNDING PRINCIPLES AND ORGANIZATION**

- 1.1 SCHOOL HISTORY
- 1.2 MISSION
- 1.3 CLASSICAL EDUCATION
- 1.4 BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES
- 1.5 STATEMENT OF FAITH
- 1.6 CORE VALUES
- 1.7 SCHOOL MASCOT, COLORS, AND LOGO
- 1.8 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- 1.9 SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION
- 1.10 ACCREDITATION
- 1.11 PARENT TEACHER FELLOWSHIP (PTF)
- 1.12 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

## **2.0 ACADEMIC PROGRAM AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

- 2.1 CHEATING AND PLAGARISM
- 2.2 GRADE PLACEMENT
- 2.3 GRADING SYSTEM
- 2.4 GUIDELINES FOR WORK MISSED DURING AN ABSENCE
- 2.5 HOMEWORK
- 2.6 STANDARDIZED TESTS
- 2.7 VALEDICTORIAN/SALUTATORIAN
- 2.8 CURRICULAR RESOURCES OWNED BY COVENANT PARENTS
- 2.9 ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES
- 2.10 PROMOTION POLICIES

## **3.0 ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE RULES**

- 3.1 SCHOOL HOURS
- 3.2 DROP-OFF/PICK-UP PROCEDURES
- 3.3 BUS RULES
- 3.4 STUDENT DRIVERS
- 3.5 CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION

## **4.0 ATHLETIC PROGRAM POLICIES**

- 4.1 MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY
- 4.2 MIDDLE SCHOOL GOALS
- 4.3 JUNIOR VARSITY/VARSITY GOALS
- 4.4 AFFILIATIONS AND ATHLETIC TEAMS
- 4.5 ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY FOR CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
- 4.6 PARTICIPATION
- 4.7 ATHLETE AND PARENT CODE-OF-CONDUCT
- 4.8 CONDUCT OF PARENTS AND FANS
- 4.9 AWARDS
- 4.10 TRANSPORTATION AND PUNCTUAL PICK-UP
- 4.11 UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

**5.0 COMMUNICATION**

- 5.1 GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION
- 5.2 RENWEB, PHONE TREE, AND PILLAR PRESS
- 5.3 BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHTS
- 5.4 RELEASE OF INFORMATION
- 5.5 EMERGENCY CLOSING

**6.0 CONDUCT CODE AND STANDARDS**

- 6.1 STUDENT CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS
- 6.2 SCHOOL DISCIPLINE EXPECTATIONS AND PROCEDURES
- 6.3 THE GOAL OF DISCIPLINE
- 6.4 COVENANT BEST UNIFORM
- 6.5 STUDENT APPEARANCE GUIDELINES

**7.0 GENERAL SCHOOL LIFE**

- 7.1 LOCKERS
- 7.2 LOST AND FOUND
- 7.3 PLAYGROUND RULES
- 7.4 CELL PHONE REGULATIONS
- 7.5 CHILD PROTECTION, VISITORS, AND VOLUNTEERS
- 7.6 AFTER-SCHOOL CARE
- 7.7 LUNCH
- 7.8 SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
- 7.9 GRAMMAR SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

**8.0 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

- 8.1 ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS
- 8.2 ACADEMICS
- 8.3 COVENANT SCHOOL CULTURE

**9.0 FINANCIAL POLICIES**

- 9.1 TUITION PAYMENT PLANS
- 9.2 CALCULATING PARTIAL TUITION
- 9.3 OUTSTANDING TUITION

**10.0 HEALTH REGULATIONS AND SERVICES**

- 10.1 STUDENT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS
- 10.2 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

# FOUNDING PRINCIPLES AND ORGANIZATION

## 1.1 SCHOOL HISTORY

**Covenant Christian Academy** is a Pre-K-12 classical Christian school founded in 1997 by parents interested in giving their children an excellent education based on the medieval model of the trivium. Covenant maintains membership in the Association of Classical and Christian Schools and is accredited by Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The student body comprises students from the city of Harrisburg and the surrounding suburban and rural areas.

## 1.2 MISSION

The mission of Covenant Christian Academy is to provide students with a classical education that:

- Imparts an excellent academic foundation and a love for learning
- Trains them to see and submit to the Lordship of Christ in every sphere of life
- Prepares them to effectively serve God and thoughtfully engage the world with a distinctly Christian worldview

## 1.3 CLASSICAL EDUCATION

Classical education belongs to the authoritative, traditional, and enduring stream of education begun by the Greeks and Romans, developed by the Church through the centuries and renewed by contemporary educators. Infused with the liberal arts and sciences, classical education includes the language arts of the *trivium* (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) and the quantitative arts of the *quadrivium* (mathematics, science, music, and visual arts). Students study great works of art and literature, both old and new, by methods best suited to their developmental stages. As participants in the great conversation of history's finest thinkers, students acquire more than vocational skills; they prepare for their roles as informed citizens, thinking Christians, and virtuous shapers of culture.

## 1.4 BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Covenant is governed by two forms of policy. Policies that govern the school as a whole are reviewed and maintained by the Covenant Board of Directors and are written out in the Covenant Policy Manual. Policies that govern the “day to day” activities and procedures of the school are Administrative Policies and are represented in this Parent-Student Handbook.

## 1.5 STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following statement of faith expresses key elements of the Christian faith by which Covenant families, faculty, and staff are united in our pursuit of classical education. At least one parent of each student must agree to partner with Covenant in support of our Statement of Faith. Covenant board members, faculty, and administration are also required to affirm an expanded statement of faith found in the Covenant bylaws. This expanded statement represents the primary doctrine that we unapologetically teach through all grade levels. Secondary doctrinal issues will not be presented as primary doctrine. While all Covenant staff members seek to infuse these primary doctrines into the life of the school at every level, students will also be referred to their own family and local church for final authority in all doctrinal matters (see Board Policy Manual 2.5 and 2.6).

- a) We believe the Bible is the Word of God, verbally inspired and inerrant and the supreme and final authority in faith and in life.
- b) We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.
- c) We believe that God is the creator of all things, visible and invisible. We believe that God created mankind as male and female, and that these two distinct and complementary sexes together reflect the image and

nature of God. Rejection of the gender that corresponds to one's biological sex is a rejection of God's authority over creation.

- d) We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
- e) We believe that, for the salvation of lost and sinful men, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary.
- f) We believe that salvation is by grace through faith alone, that faith without works is dead, and through the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, the Christian is enabled to live a godly life. In pursuit of a godly life, we believe that Christians are called to flee from ungodly and sexually immoral behavior (which includes all forms of sexual activity – whether heterosexual, homosexual, or anything else – outside of a marriage between one man and one woman).
- g) We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved to the resurrection of life and they that are lost to the resurrection of damnation.
- h) We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

## 1.6 OUR CORE VALUES

In the pursuit of our mission, we hold to the following core values:

- 1. We embrace historic Christianity as represented in the tradition of the Protestant Reformation with the major tenets of the following:
  - a. ***Sola Scriptura***: We reaffirm the inerrant Scripture to be the sole source of written divine revelation, which alone can bind the conscience. The Bible alone teaches all that is necessary for our salvation from sin and is the standard by which all Christian behavior must be measured.<sup>1</sup>
  - b. ***Solus Christus***: We reaffirm that our salvation is accomplished by the mediatorial work of the historical Christ alone. His sinless life and substitutionary atonement alone are sufficient for our justification and reconciliation to the Father.<sup>1</sup>
  - c. ***Sola Gratia***: We reaffirm that in salvation we are rescued from God's wrath by his grace alone. It is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that brings us to Christ by releasing us from our bondage to sin and raising us from spiritual death to spiritual life.<sup>1</sup>
  - d. ***Sola Fide***: We reaffirm that justification is by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone. In justification Christ's righteousness is imputed to us as the only possible satisfaction of God's perfect justice.<sup>1</sup>
  - e. ***Soli Deo Gloria***: We reaffirm that because salvation is of God and has been accomplished by God, it is for God's glory and that we must glorify him always. We must live our entire lives before the face of God, under the authority of God and for his glory alone.<sup>1</sup>
- 2. While we hold to a distinctly Reformed doctrinal tradition as expressed in our bylaws, we welcome and respect other Christian perspectives into the school community provided they are consistent with our community Statement of Faith.
- 3. The responsibility to train and educate children belongs to parents. Covenant serves "in loco parentis" to assist parents in fulfilling this biblical charge.
- 4. A home life that embodies biblical principles of lifelong learning and child-raising provides a strong foundation for a Covenant education. Active parental involvement, in age-appropriate ways, is important

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<sup>1</sup> These five tenets are drawn from *The Cambridge Declaration of the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals* which can be accessed at [www.alliancenet.org/cambridge-declaration](http://www.alliancenet.org/cambridge-declaration)

to a child's education. Parents are welcome in the classroom and are encouraged to participate in the overall life of the school.

5. In our common pursuit of lives that please God and honor one another, we value mutual respect, edifying speech, humble behavior, gentlemanly conduct, modest appearance, and biblical conflict resolution. Seeking to make the best use of our time, we hold high expectations for the conduct and behavior of the entire school community -- students, parents, faculty and staff -- as we challenge one another to live out biblical teaching in our speech and conduct, both in person and online..
6. A warm and well-ordered atmosphere facilitates the education of our students. We continually strive for an environment that is joyful, peaceful, and disciplined.
7. Gifted teachers with a passion for learning and a love for students are essential. They must model careful thinking while evaluating ideas and philosophies, both historical and contemporary, in light of God's word. Our teachers should cultivate wisdom in our students while building a solid academic foundation.

## **1.7 SCHOOL MASCOT, COLORS, AND LOGO**

The mascot of Covenant Christian Academy is a Falcon. Covenant Christian Academy's colors are Navy Blue, White and Gold. The official school logo looks like this:



## **1.8 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

A Board of Directors consisting of Five Year and Three Year members is responsible for the overall supervision of the school.

The Board of Directors is responsible for hiring and evaluating the Head of School and for creating and overseeing the school's policies, procedures, and financial practices. The Board has historically met monthly but is in the process of moving to a Committee based structure that operates on a quarterly meeting schedule.

## **1.9 SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

The school is administered by the Head of School who works with an administrative team in divisional administration. The Upper School Dean and the Grammar School Dean are responsible to direct the faculty and staff in their area, respectively. Additional areas of administrative support include assistant to the Head of School, Business, Development, and Admissions.

In the absence of the Head of School another member of the administrative team takes on chief administration. The Assistant to the Head serves as a liaison to the administrators in his absence.

## **1.10 ACCREDITATION**

Covenant Christian Academy is a member of the Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS). After a rigorous multi-year accreditation process, Covenant received accreditation from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools in December 2015.

## **1.11 PARENT-TEACHER FELLOWSHIP (PTF)**

The Covenant Christian Academy Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) is an organization dedicated to building and maintaining strong ties between parents, teachers, and staff because of one special common commitment—our students. Throughout the year there are many opportunities to bless our students, faculty, and staff in a big way for a relatively small investment of time. These include the school picnic, spirit nights, teacher appreciation luncheons, and more!

The PTF was established for the purpose of furthering the interests of the school, promoting fellowship among the parents and teachers, and assisting the school at social and other functions as needed. All parents, guardians, and teachers are members of the PTF.

All funds raised by the Parent-Teacher Fellowship will be deemed “designated” and therefore only used for the specific purpose determined by the Covenant Administration and the Executive Committee of the PTF.

## **1.12 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS**

It is our duty and privilege at Covenant to work together with our parents to help our students mature academically, socially, and spiritually. We are grateful to experience a great deal of alignment with families on our mission and methods as a classical, Christian school. We ask parents to keep in mind our unity on “the main things,” and to show support to our common mission by exercising humility and forbearance in areas of disagreement. We always welcome your thoughts on ways that we can better serve our mission through our rules and guidelines, so please let us know if you have an idea that could improve our school. Attention to the following items will help our community to grow strong together:

**Church Attendance:** Regular attendance and fellowship with a Bible-believing church is essential to our mission together and is therefore required for students and the parents or guardians with whom they live.

**Cooperation:** Parents should seek to understand and cooperate fully with all of Covenant’s written policies. This is particularly important in the areas of discipline and schoolwork standards where open and gracious communication with teacher(s) and administration is especially important to school harmony

**Discipline:** Covenant recognizes the great responsibility we have to discipline students toward godliness while at Covenant. In accordance with our discipline policy and the Word of God, our teachers and administrators will use their discretion to teach, rebuke, correct, and train students. Regular and healthy communication between parents and the school is an essential aspect of our partnering well together during times of discipline. (Please see section 5.0 on Communication and sections 6.1-6.3 on Discipline for more information on how we handle discipline at Covenant).

**Emergency Contact Information:** Each Covenant family must provide at least two local contacts that can be available to care for their child if they are not available.

**Faith Agreement:** Parents should have a clear understanding of Covenant’s biblical philosophy, mission, and purpose. This understanding includes a willingness to have your child presented with the clear teaching of the school’s Statement of Faith in various and frequent ways within the school’s program. At least one parent or guardian of each student must sign the Statement of Faith.

**Prayer:** Praying with and for the members of the school community is invaluable in carrying out the school’s mission. We encourage parents to participate in the PTF’s weekly prayer group whenever possible!

**School Functions:** Attending school events is a great way to become connected and to experience what is special about Covenant. Because of the high value we place on partnering well with our families, we ask that **at least one parent attend Back to School Night and Annual Meeting each year.**

**Special Gifts and Fundraising Events:** Tuition does not cover all the costs of educating our students. The school relies on tax-deductible gifts to bridge the gap. We are so grateful to our parents, grandparents, and

friends who support the school through fundraisers, EITC SPE donations, and gifts. The school holds several school-wide fundraising events annually such as our Hike Across the Valley, Evening of Gratitude Banquet, Read-a-Thon, and Covenant Classic Golf Tournament.

**Volunteering:** We rely on the volunteer assistance of parents to accomplish a myriad of tasks within our school. Volunteer opportunities include: field trip chaperone, lunchroom aide, office clerical aide, grounds and facilities maintenance, and committee service. Contact the school office or the PTF to find a place to serve! Please see section 7.5 for information on the necessary background clearances and training we require for child protection.

# ACADEMIC PROGRAM AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

## 2.1 CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

As cheating becomes a greater problem in society, it is important that we set high standards in dealing with this issue both as an educational institution and as a Christian community. We believe that honesty and trustworthiness are extremely important – and that their neglect will lead to serious problems in one's life – so there are severe consequences for those caught cheating at Covenant.

**Definition:** On all schoolwork (homework, class work, projects, quizzes, tests) cheating is

1. Acquiring answers from another student, person, or source (other than for legitimate research purposes).
2. Providing answers to another student.
3. Changing grades.
4. Plagiarism – using someone else's writing or ideas and trying to pass them off as your own. This includes copying word-for-word from a source without giving credit, rephrasing a few words from a source without giving credit, or using a source's key words, phrases or ideas as one's own without proper citation.
5. Any behavior that might result in altering a student's grade in a manner that could be considered cheating.
6. Parent-generated work turned in as student-generated.
7. Forging parental signatures.

**Consequences:**

1. Cheating may result in a disciplinary action. If such behavior continues, the student may be suspended or expelled at the discretion of the Head of School.
2. Cheating will result in reduced, or no, credit on the assignment as well as the requirement that the assignment be re-done.
3. Exceptions may be granted when the teacher and/or the Dean determines that the student's actions were done unwittingly.
4. Covenant teachers will provide age-appropriate training in avoiding plagiarism and proper citation.

It is assumed that all assignments require individual effort, unless specifically designated otherwise by the teacher. Note: *Both the student giving and the student receiving inappropriate assistance will receive disciplinary and academic penalties.*

## 2.2 GRADE PLACEMENT

Covenant desires that each student be placed where they will have the best opportunity to flourish as a student. The school has full discretion for the grade placement of each student. Students in grades K-12 may be given an entrance test to help determine grade placement and to determine if they fit the educational capabilities of the school. *All grade placement is provisional for a student's first trimester at Covenant.*

## 2.3 GRADING SYSTEM

Report cards are issued three times a year as noted on the school calendar. Parents access and print report cards through ParentsWeb. In the Upper School, weekly reports are emailed to parents beginning part way through each trimester.

A grading system is used for grades K-12. Each letter grade has a numerical equivalent. A student will receive an incomplete ("I") grade if he/she needs to complete make-up work due to excused absences. Arrangements for handling or changing an incomplete grade will be made by the Dean or the Headmaster.

**Upper School:** (4.0 grade point un-weighted system: only courses taken at Covenant are included)

A:	93-100	4 points
A-:	91-92	3.7 points
B+:	89-90	3.3 points
B:	83-88	3 points
B-:	81-82	2.7 points
C+:	79-80	2.3 points
C:	73-78	2 points
C-:	71-72	1.7 points
D:	66-70	1 point
F:	65 and below	0 points

**Grading Scale Grammar School:**

A:	93-100
B:	85-92
C:	77-84
D:	70-76
F:	69 and below

**MCL – Magna Cum Laude – “With Great Praise”**

The student exceeds expectations for mastery. The student excels in understanding and integration.

**CL – Cum Laude – “With Praise”**

The student has demonstrated diligence and has fulfilled expectations for mastery

**NM – Non Mastery**

The student has not mastered required material

- +      Excellent
- S      Satisfactory
- Needs Improvement

**High School Transcripts**

A student's high school transcript will be sent by the Guidance Office to colleges, scholarship foundations or other outside organizations upon written request. The GPA will be calculated using the grading scale above and the course credits earned.

**2.4     GUIDELINES FOR WORK MISSED DURING AN ABSENCE**

Students are expected to complete all assignments given to their class during their absences. Students must make up work within the number of days following their return equal to the number of days they were absent. After a sizable absence, teachers have latitude to extend longer make-up period to students for whom the workload seems burdensome, or after discussion with the parents and dean, to shorten the make-up period for students who are falling behind in the class. (See also 2.10.7)

Assignments should be graded in a manner consistent with the procedure used for the rest of the class. Once adjusted due dates are established, the guidelines for penalizing late assignments will be applied.

A student returning from an absence is expected to be ready to take any tests or quizzes that were given on the first day of his or her absence and is expected to hand in any assignments that were due on that day, unless the teacher deems it a situation where further adjustments are appropriate. For example, if a student felt ill all of Monday evening and Tuesday but returns to school on Wednesday, the teacher may determine that a test given to the class on Tuesday should be postponed for the student.

**2.5     HOMEWORK**

Homework assignments are a vital way for students to hone their skills and learn complex material. Our teachers strive to give thoughtfully constructed and age-appropriate assignments that will bless students on their journey as lifelong learners. Below are elements of our homework philosophy at Covenant:

1. Students often need extra practice in specific new concepts, skills, or facts. In certain subjects (e.g., math or languages), students may not have enough time in a school day to do as much practice as is necessary for mastery. The teacher therefore may assign homework to provide the necessary practice.
2. Repeated short periods of practice or study of new information is often a better way to learn than one long study period. Homework thus complements and aids what students are learning in school.
3. By their very nature, reading assignments cannot usually be completed during school hours and are therefore often assigned as homework.
4. Homework may also be assigned to students who, having been given adequate time to complete an assignment in class, did not use the time wisely. Homework in this situation serves to help students learn to be better stewards of their time (Eph 5:16).
5. Learning to manage one's time well and plan ahead is a very important life skill that few of our students master without struggle along the way. While it is never our intention to overwhelm our students with their homework load we know that, for a variety of reasons, students may experience a "homework meltdown" through the course of a school year. If you see your child struggling in this way, please talk to their teacher as soon as possible so you can discuss together ways to help the situation.
6. We recognize that parents have the authority to decide what is best for their children and we support their authority to set parameters for their child's life. For example, experiencing the painful consequences of staying up late to finish an assignment because of poor planning or laziness can be an extremely valuable lesson in a child's growth. However, enforcing a reasonable bedtime at the expense of a lower homework grade may also be a very wise choice at certain stages of your child's career at Covenant.

## **2.6 STANDARDIZED TESTS**

Covenant administers standardized testing to students in various grades each spring. Parents will receive more detailed information about testing dates prior to their occurrence. Covenant receives the testing reports and forwards the individual score reports to families. School administrators are available to help parents interpret test scores.

## **2.7 VALEDICTORIAN / SALUTATORIAN**

To qualify as either the class valedictorian or salutatorian, a student:

- Must have completed 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades at Covenant.
- Must have taken two of the following three courses: Physics, Calculus, Spanish IV
- Must be a candidate for an honors diploma

Graduation speeches may or may not be given by the class valedictorian and/or salutatorian. To be eligible to speak at graduation a student:

- May not have received more than two disciplinary actions during their senior year.
- Must exhibit the qualities listed in Covenant's Excellent Student document and must have been nominated by one or more teachers for an Excellent Student Award.

## **2.8 CURRICULAR RESOURCES TO BE OWNED BY COVENANT FAMILIES**

Families will need to purchase certain essential curricular items at various stages in their child's education at Covenant. These items are central to our program and will be used throughout the student's career.

The list of items is as follows:

- *ESV Study Bible* is necessary for students in grades 7 and above. (The *Reformation Study Bible* is being phased out starting with the class of 2023).

- **Archive binders:** Throughout the school year teachers may refer back to material covered earlier in the year. Students should file tests and written assignments for future referral and review.
- **Reader's Guide:** Upon entrance to 4<sup>th</sup> grade each student is given a copy of *A Reader's Guide*. Please use this guide to check off books that each student reads. This will serve as a record for them through their school years and beyond. Student's should consult their Reader's Guide when choosing a book report book. Please contact the office if a replacement copy is needed.
- ***Veritas Press History Flash Cards*** (relevant set for your students): We ask families to purchase history cards directly from Veritas Press because there are several options for you to consider. You may purchase *just* the cards (the minimum we require); the cards *plus* the audio CD with the song; or the entire set of *all five sets plus all the CDs*. Teachers may require students to bring their personal sets to school, but at *no* time will these personal cards be redistributed or removed from the possession of the student. **Students should have their card sets for the first day of school. Please hole punch the cards and place them on a ring or keep them in a zipper pouch to help keep them organized.**

## 2.9 ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Covenant's attendance guidelines are a specific application of our Code of Conduct and Standards (see section 6) and are designed to help us love and serve one another well as a school community. Consistent, punctual attendance encourages responsibility and fosters respect for authority in our students. Please consider the impact on the classroom when needing to excuse your child from part of a school day. Whenever possible, try to schedule appointments to minimize disruption. For example, a student leaving at a transition time or at the start of recess tends to be less disruptive to the class and the teacher's lesson than leaving in the middle of class.

1. Regular attendance for the entire school day (7:55-3:00) is expected of all students. *We recommend that students enter the building by 7:50 to be prepared for opening activities at 7:55.*
2. Any student entering the building after 7:55 is considered officially tardy and must fill out a tardy pass. The classroom teacher will record the tardy as excused or unexcused. Exception: Students on a delayed bus will not be considered tardy. A "bus tardy" will be recorded to assist school districts in tracking arrival times.
3. **Parents of grammar school students arriving by car after 7:55 must park and sign their student in at the front desk.**
4. If a student receives more than three unexcused tardies in a trimester, an unexcused absence will be recorded and a parent meeting will be arranged with a school administrator to discuss a strategy for more consistently punctual arrivals.
5. Students entering and leaving the classrooms at random times interrupt the lessons and classroom routines that teachers have designed and are distracting to other students. Any student leaving the building without a teacher before 3:00 must sign out at the front desk, whether returning or not. This includes upper school drivers who are going to their cars for any reason. Exception: Juniors and Seniors do not need to sign out to use the picnic pavilion area during lunchtime.
6. For all absences, the students' parent must provide a handwritten or emailed note explaining the reason for the absence. In the grammar school this should be sent to the child's teacher. In the upper school, the note should be sent to the Upper School Dean.
7. In the event that a student is absent for five days, or misses five sessions of any individual class, in one trimester the student's parents must meet with the Dean and/or teachers to determine the student's academic status. If the total number of days, or individual classes, missed exceeds fifteen in a school year, promotion to the next grade level may be affected.
8. Requests for planned absences (college visits, family vacations, etc.) must be submitted to the dean (by email) at least one week prior to the absence. Students are expected to complete all assignments given to their class during their absences. Due dates for these assignments will be determined when the dean receives the request for the planned absence.

9. Students who are ill, or have had a fever or vomiting in the last 24 hours should not be sent to school. In the case of emergency, illness or a disciplinary issue, parents will be notified to come to the school to pick up their child. The student must be picked up from the school within an hour.

## 2.10 PROMOTION POLICY

Covenant's promotion policy is specified in Board Policy 10.3. Below is a summary of relevant information. Covenant's promotion policy is applied to all entering and continuing students in grades 1 and above. Students entering Kindergarten must meet Covenant's admission qualifications and will be assessed according to age, maturity, academic readiness, etc.

Students are promoted – that is, advanced to the next successive grade – when they meet the following criteria, otherwise they will be retained in their most recently enrolled grade.

### **Grammar School:**

Grammar school students currently enrolled in Covenant Christian Academy must meet all the following basic criteria for promotion to the next successive grade:

1. Pass reading/literature, math, writing, spelling, and grammar with a yearly average of at least 70% in each subject.
2. Have no more than a total of 2 "F's" per trimester in academic subject.
3. Have no more than two "F's" in a single academic subject within an academic year. Academic subjects include: all subjects listed in #1, as well as, science, history, Bible, and Spanish.
4. In addition, when considering promotion of students currently enrolled, special emphasis should be given to the appropriate level of mastery of the following skills/subjects in the grades noted below. *It should be noted that it is possible to pass a subject with a 70% average and not have reached an appropriate level of mastery for success at the next level.* In such a situation, the teacher and dean will carefully assess the student's holistic performance, both academically as well as behaviorally, to determine whether it is in the best interest of the student and class for the student to be promoted. At every stage, Covenant will strive to communicate clearly and openly with parents so that the best plan can be made to assist the student's success.

### **Kindergarten to First Grade:**

1. Behavioral maturity
2. Reads three and four letter short vowel words

### **First Grade to Second Grade:**

1. Able to read orally with adequate speed and fluency
2. Correct use of phonetic skills (70% as noted above)
3. Satisfactory (70%) completion of reading and math assessments.
4. Fundamental comprehension of reading material
5. Able to neatly write in cursive
6. Able to add and subtract single digits with at least 70% accuracy (basic addition and subtraction facts)
7. Demonstrates comprehension of the concept of subtraction

### **Second Grade to Third Grade:**

1. Cumulative mastery of above requirements
2. Able to read fluently (orally) and independently (silently), using the books of our second grade level
3. Able to neatly and automatically write in cursive
4. Correctly identify the basic parts of a sentence
5. Able to write in complete sentences
6. Able to add and subtract two-digit numbers with regrouping with at least 70% accuracy
7. Able to add and subtract single digits with at least 85% accuracy (basic addition and subtraction facts)
8. Demonstrates comprehension of multiplication concept

### **Third Grade to Fourth Grade:**

1. Cumulative mastery of above requirements
2. Able to answer questions in a complete sentence.

3. Able to write clear, cohesive paragraphs.
4. Master the multiplication and division facts with 70% accuracy and confidently use the bar model drawing method for solving math problems
5. Satisfactory (70%) completion of curriculum objectives for this grade level.

**Fourth to Fifth Grade:**

1. Cumulative mastery of above requirements
2. Able to write four paragraph reports demonstrating proper use of spelling, grammar, and punctuation
3. Satisfactory (70%) completion of curriculum objectives for this grade level.

**Fifth to Sixth Grade:**

1. Cumulative mastery of above requirements
2. Able to write four paragraph reports demonstrating proper use of research methods
3. Satisfactory (70%) completion of curriculum objectives for this grade level.

**Sixth to Seventh Grade:**

1. Cumulative mastery of above requirements
2. Able to record adequate notes from class lecture
3. Satisfactory (70%) completion of curriculum objectives for this grade level
4. In addition, cumulative comprehensive mastery tests may be administered to assess the student's readiness for entering Covenant Christian Academy Upper School.
5. Able to execute a personal organizational system

**Upper School:**

1. To be promoted, students must earn a passing grade average for the year in every academic subject.
  - a. Fitness, choir and electives will not be considered toward promotion or retention.
  - b. Calculation of final grade for each course will be as follows:
    - i. The average of your report card grade for each trimester
    - ii. Averages below 66% are considered failing
2. Students failing a single course may meet the requirements for promotion through remedial summer course work according to the following guidelines.
  - a. Course work must be pre-approved by the teacher granting the failing grade and a Covenant administrator. Approval will be based on the course's comparability with Covenant's course in both content and standards.
  - b. Approved course work completed and passed at another institution will be accepted by Covenant for graduation credit and will appear on the Covenant transcript as a "pass". No letter grade will be given by Covenant. The "F" will be removed from the transcript.
  - c. Parents may seek a private arrangement with a Covenant staff member who may choose to oversee independent summer course work for a fee. No Covenant staff will be required to participate in this type of summer work. Students completing a course in this manner will be expected to meet the standards of the Covenant course. The grade earned for summer work will be listed on the Covenant transcript and will be used in the calculation of the GPA. The "F" will be removed from the transcript.
  - d. All summer remedial work must be completed by July 31<sup>st</sup>.
3. Students with a failing average in more than one course may not promote through summer course work.

# ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE RULES

## 3.1 SCHOOL HOURS

The regular school day is from 7:55 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. It is important to our life together as a school that students are punctual. Please follow the attendance procedures found in section 2.9.

## 3.2 DROP OFF/PICK-UP PROCEDURES

### Arrival

1. Drop off begins at 7:30 AM at the curb in front of the main office. If parking, please do not allow grammar school children to walk unaccompanied from the parking lot to the school building.
2. All students arriving before 7:45am must gather in the multi-purpose room until dismissed by a Covenant staff member.
3. Grammar school students must be in their classrooms by 7:55am
4. Upper school students must be at the morning hallway gathering by 7:55am.
5. Any student entering the building after 7:55 is considered officially tardy and must fill out a tardy pass. Parents of grammar school students arriving by car *after 7:55 must park and sign student in at the front desk. See 2.9 for additional important information on Covenant's morning tardy policy.*

### Dismissal / Car Pick-Up

To improve safety for our students we are implementing the following dismissal procedures for car pick-up. Cars will no longer be permitted to exit out the “wrong lane” of the main parking lot. To facilitate the exit of those who want to leave the parking lot before dismissal begins, it is very important that everyone follows these procedures. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Please line up your cars for dismissal along the walkway on the northern edge of the main parking lot, beginning at the “form line here” marker. *Make sure that car numbers are clearly displayed in the windshield.*
2. A “thru traffic” lane has been created adjacent the dismissal line to allow cars to exit from the parking lot prior to and as dismissal is beginning.
3. At 3:05 the dismissal attendant, having walked the line and taken numbers for as many cars as can be serviced at one time, will announce those numbers to the school building.
4. The first round of grammar school children will then be walked en masse across the street to their cars; upper school students will walk ON THE SIDEWALK to the car line from the Dunlap Center. Students MAY NOT cut across the flagpole loop.
5. Please DO NOT attempt to pass a car once you are in the “do not pass beyond this point” zone and please DO NOT exit out the *entrance* lane.
6. Cars further back in the line may use the “thru traffic” lane to carefully pass cars still awaiting riders. In an alternating fashion, traffic should merge into one lane at the “do not pass beyond this point” sign.
7. After first round of pickups exit the parking lot, the next car in line should drive to the “form line here” marker until called by dismissal attendant to fill in the flagpole loop.

### Bus Riders

Grammar school bus riders will enter and exit the building from the main school lobby. Upper school bus riders will exit from the Dunlap Center lobby. It is essential to be on time. Bus drivers will not wait for late upper school students.

### Half-Day Dismissal

1. Form line at the “form line here” marker in the upper parking lot. Make sure that car number is clearly displayed in windshield.
2. When a dismissal attendant gives the signal, line should drive all the way forward to front of the building, forming a shallow arc in the driveway.

3. Covenant staff members will walk students by hand to their cars.
4. Please **do not reverse** car in the line. Wait until the car in front of you has moved before trying to exit.
5. If extra time is needed to get your child situated, please pull forward out of the way of the line.

#### **Safety Rules**

For the safety of our students and staff, please remember these important rules during drop-off and pick-up.

1. Keep speed below 10 MPH at all times when driving on campus.
2. No texting and driving!! When parked and waiting in pick-up line, please be sure to put your phone down before putting car in drive.
3. Do not pass in the “no pass zones” in the main parking lot and at the front curb.
4. Do not exit out the “wrong way” from the upper parking lot.
5. Do not reverse in pick-up / drop-off lines. Please be patient and wait for vehicle in front of you to move.
6. Whenever possible, please have students load and unload from the curb-side door of your vehicle.
7. Please be mindful of cars waiting behind you during pick-up and drop-off. If you prefer a longer goodbye with your child, or if you need more time to settle your child in at pick-up, please pull forward and park so others are not delayed.
8. At drop-off, be very careful to finish your goodbye before driving forward. We have had near misses as parents started slowly driving while their attention is still on their children. Be aware that people may be crossing in front of you and cars may be overtaking you from the left.
9. Please never leave vehicle unattended curbside in the drop-off line. If you need to come inside, please park in one of the spaces adjacent the flagpole.

#### **3.3 BUS RULES**

1. If Covenant receives notice of a behavioral issue on a bus, we will pass the information to the parents.
2. Covenant will document the report, but there will be no further disciplinary action by Covenant.
3. Parents are encouraged to contact one another directly if students from two families have a conflict on a bus. Covenant will not mediate these situations.

#### **3.4 STUDENT DRIVERS**

1. Students with a valid Pennsylvania driver's license must submit a "Student Driver Permit Form" annually to the school office with a copy of their driver's license, registration, and insurance card to be allowed to park on campus.
2. Students will park in the area designated by the administration and will remain parked until the end of the school day. A car is not to be used as a locker. Students may briefly visit their car during the school day only after receiving a pass from the Upper School Dean.
3. No other students are to be transported by the student driver unless *written parental permission* from both the driver and passenger has been given in advance to the school office.
4. Student drivers may not exit the parking lot between 3:05 and 3:15 without specific permission from an administrator or the Covenant staff member supervising dismissal.
5. Failure to comply with these guidelines or any reckless driving will result in the revocation of campus parking privileges.

**Covenant campus speed limit is 10 mph - Please carefully monitor your speed.**

### **3.5      CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION**

1. Please inform the Covenant office when your child is going home in a way that is not usual for them. Please contact the school office either by leaving a message on the transportation extension 160 or by emailing Transportation .Change@DiscoverCovenant.com.
2. When calling Covenant to make a transportation change, your child will receive a transportation change slip at dismissal time. Calls must be received prior to 2:00 pm unless it is an emergency.
3. If you are making a repeated and regular change in the transportation routine (for example: being picked up by car every Tuesday for piano lessons, staying at the school for every cross-country practice, being tutored at the school every Monday), you may send one note to cover all the affected dates. Make it clear to the transportation coordinator whether the change for a particular day is in effect until the end of the year or just until a specified date. Please note that you must inform the office if the change is being reversed for one day! We will not put a grammar school student on a bus if the last notice we received from you was that they should not ride on that particular day of the week.

# ATHLETIC PROGRAM POLICIES

## 4.1 MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

For our students to “effectively serve God” and to “see and submit to the Lordship of Christ in every sphere of life” as our mission states, we must train their whole persons, which includes their bodily health, physical abilities, and cooperative team relationships. As competitive sports are a major cultural icon in our society, we believe this is an important arena for a Christian school to bring under the Lordship of Christ. The metaphor of athletic competition is used many times in the Bible and provides a helpful experiential analogy through which to understand Christian life.<sup>2</sup> Through athletics, we learn and practice such things as:

- How to handle conflict and stressful situations.
- The consequences of excellent preparation versus a poor work ethic.
- How to make good decisions under pressure.
- Learning to deal with success and failure and the attention they both bring.
- Learning to cope with disappointment, criticism, praise, and many other facets of public scrutiny.
- Courage, perseverance, resilience, resourcefulness, camaraderie, selflessness, leadership...
- Submission to authority, e.g., referees, coaches, the rules of the game, etc.
- Importance of teamwork, self-denial, and friendship above personal fulfillment and desire.

Athletic activity is incorporated within the framework of Covenant’s fitness classes and co-curricular offerings. Covenant’s athletic program exists to encourage students to develop personal physical skills and abilities and to provide the opportunity for students to experience various selected team sports. The development of interpersonal skills related to team effort and sportsmanlike competition is emphasized.

The goal of athletic competition is to win, and Covenant student athletes should train hard and discipline their bodies and minds to perform well on the court, field, or track – but always under the authority of Christ. At Covenant, winning is never the *ultimate* goal and will never be allowed to justify dishonesty or unsportsmanlike conduct, nor to become all-consuming to one’s life. A win is a cause for celebration when it is achieved within the rules and spirit of fair competition. Losses will be acknowledged with gracious congratulations to opponents, and humble estimation of what can be learned. Coaches and mentors will seek to help athletes evaluate their performances, after wins and losses, to improve skills, conditioning, and attitude.

## 4.2 MIDDLE SCHOOL INTERSCHOLASTIC PROGRAM GOALS

Students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades participate in a competitive setting with the overall goal of skills training, teamwork, and building strong Christian character. The program also emphasizes coordination, physical fitness, enjoyment, and responsibility. Middle school competitive athletes will, over the course of the season, have ample opportunities to perform in games. Coaches monitor playing time carefully and see to it that, over the course of the season, all athletes have had playing time. Winning is important but is the secondary goal. Playing at the same competitive level or above that level with other teams is our primary goal. The program, while appropriate for the middle school age, is a transition from the elementary setting to the competitive sports in the upper school.

## 4.3 JUNIOR VARSITY/VARSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC PROGRAM GOALS

Students in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades learn to compete in a setting that seeks to develop high level skills and strategies, Christian character, teamwork, good sportsmanship, and school spirit. The program seeks to provide each student with a sense of affiliation, motivation, and accomplishment by balancing challenge and demand with support and encouragement. The athletes are expected to give their best each time they practice or play.

## 4.4 AFFILIATIONS AND ATHLETIC TEAMS

Covenant is a member of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Conference (PIAA) at the high school level as well as the Commonwealth Christian Athletic Conference (CCAC).

### Athletic teams for 2018-19

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<sup>2</sup> A few examples: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Philippians 3:14; 1 Timothy 4:7-8; Hebrews 12:1-2.

- Girls soccer, fall – MS
- Boys soccer, fall – MS, V
- Boys cross-country, fall – MS, V
- Girls cross-country, fall – MS, V
- Girls volleyball, fall, MS, V
- Boys basketball, winter – MS, V
- Girls basketball, winter – MS, V

Covenant occasionally enters a cooperative agreement with another hosting school to allow a student to play a sport that Covenant does not currently offer. These have been done in the past for Varsity Girls Soccer, Lacrosse, and Baseball.

#### **4.5 ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY for CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Students are eligible to participate in Covenant co-curricular activities (sport, drama, clubs, yearbook, newspaper, etc.) according to the following guidelines. Ineligibility is not meant as punishment but is intended to provide the student with both incentive and time to give extra effort to their academic work.

1. Eligibility will be evaluated each Friday afternoon.
2. Students in grades 7 to 12 will be ineligible with a grade of F in any subject.
3. Students in grades 5 and 6 will be ineligible with a grade of F (grammar school grading scale) in any of the following subjects: Math, Literature, History, Grammar/Vocabulary, Writing or Spanish.
4. Ineligibility is in force from the following Sunday to Saturday. Students found re-eligible at the next Friday's check may begin participating on the following Sunday.
5. The student is expected to maintain the academic standard on normally assigned coursework. Extra-credit work for the purpose of raising a grade may not be given by teachers to a student on academic suspension, unless the entire class is receiving the same optional assignment.
6. Curricular goals and lesson plans made by the teacher will determine how often assessments are given. Teachers are not expected to increase the frequency of assessments in response to a student's ineligibility.
7. Students ineligible at the close of any trimester are ineligible for the first ten school days of the following trimester, including cases where the next trimester is the first of the following school year.

#### **PIAA Eligibility**

As a member of PIAA, all Covenant athletes must meet the PIAA eligibility requirements. PIAA guidelines and requirements can be found on the PIAA website at [www.piaa.org](http://www.piaa.org). The handbook can be found under the resources tab.

#### **Practice and Game Attendance**

Student athletes are expected to show the same respect and commitment to co-curricular activities as they do for their academic work. Attendance at all practices is mandatory. Exceptions may be granted for the same reason that school absences are deemed “excused,” e.g., illness; medical appointment that cannot be scheduled otherwise; family emergencies, very special family events such as a wedding or graduation.

Unexcused absences from practices and team meetings may result in an athlete not being allowed to participate in a game or event as determined by the coach and Athletic Director. Repeated absences may result in a player being removed from the team. In such instances, discussion between the athlete, parents, coach, and Athletic Director will occur.

An athlete who chooses to quit a team once the regular season has begun will not be eligible to participate in a Covenant sport during the next season. The athlete must receive approval from the Athletic Director prior to participating in another sport.

#### **4.6 PARTICIPATION**

### **Physicals, Consent, and Code-of-Conduct Forms**

Prior to participating on any Covenant athletic team, including practice, athletes must turn in a completed *PLAA Athletic Physical Form* and an *Athletic Participation Student & Parent Consent Form* to the Athletic Director. Covenant athletes and parents must also sign a *Code-of-Conduct* agreement prior to a student participating on an athletic team. Links to all of these forms will be available on the school website. These forms are valid for a single school year and must be completed and turned in prior to the first season the student is planning to participate on a team. Forms must not be dated prior to June 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Insurance**

Covenant recommends that each family of a student athlete check with their insurance provider to ensure that they have sufficient insurance coverage in the event of an injury while participating in a sport. Each family must provide a copy of their insurance card to the Athletic Director when turning in their athletic participation consent form.

### **Practices**

The number and length of practices will vary from sport to sport, but Covenant seeks to structure athletic requirements in a way that will coordinate well with academic demands and family life. Practice times and schedules are set by the coach and Athletic Director. Middle School athletic teams will have a maximum of 4 practices and games per week. Varsity athletes may have a maximum combination of five practices and contests per week. As a general rule, Covenant does not hold practices on Wednesdays. Occasionally, however, situations may arise where a contest must be scheduled on a Wednesday.

### **School Attendance and Athletic Participation**

Upper school students must attend school for at least three periods in order to participate in a practice or game that day. Grammar school students must be present for at least half the school day. For practices or events held on Saturday, school attendance on Friday will determine eligibility. The Upper School Dean and Athletic Director may make exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis to accommodate unusual circumstances.

## **4.7 ATHLETE AND PARENT CODE-OF-CONDUCT**

### **Biblical Basis**

We are ambassadors for Christ in every encounter we have with others, whether with fellow believers or non-believers. The athletic arena provides a tremendous opportunity for students to learn to glorify God through their actions. As we think through how to glorify God through athletics, we must be careful to take our cues from Scripture and not from what is deemed acceptable in our secular society.

Thought we will always strive to win, Covenant athletes will be taught that both winning *and* losing provide us with ample opportunity to glorify God. Because Christ is ultimately the One whom we want to please, we are free to achieve our ultimate athletic goal of honoring Him in both victory and defeat. Through the trials of training and competition, we want our athletes to grow in perseverance, humility, diligence, selflessness, respectfulness, courage, and other biblical virtues.<sup>3</sup>

### **Conduct of Athletes**

Athletics are in many ways a proving ground for character. The nature of competition can escalate temptations to cheat, make excuses, blame others, and avoid taking responsibility. On the other side, the heat of competition can give rise to boastfulness, ingratitude, and selfish ambition. As such there is always much need for coaches, parents, teachers, and fellow students to encourage and support Christ-like attitude and actions from our athletes.

As Christian students representing Christ and the school, Covenant athletes will be called to:

- Be thankful in all circumstances, remembering that God is sovereign and His will is greater than ours.
- Refrain from grumbling and complaining; Legitimate concerns must be voiced with respect and grace;
- Look for ways to help teammates and coaches;
- Participate fully within the rules and “spirit” of the game, not merely by what can be “gotten away with,” or what is socially acceptable in the world at large.

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<sup>3</sup> A sampling of relevant verses: Colossians 3:23-24; Colossians 4:5-6; Romans 8:29; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 4:29-32; Philippians 2:3-4, 14-16; 1 Corinthians 10:28-32; Romans 12:1-2.

Toward teammates

- Encourage teammates, help those weaker to improve;
- Be present for all team activities in so far as it is possible;
- Learn to work together with others;
- Sacrifice personal ambition for the sake of the team.

Toward coaches and referees

- Be respectful and courteous
- Be obedient
- Overlook offenses and mistakes and extend forgiveness when necessary;
- Show self-control over body and facial expressions that communicate disrespect or disapproval.

Toward opponents

- Respect opponents by playing hard, honest, and according to the rules;
- Treating them as you would wish to be treated, being gracious in victory and humble in defeat;
- Before and after competition treating opponents courteously and with respect, recognizing the bond of Christian unity is far greater than athletic opposition, being ready to forgive or ask for forgiveness when appropriate.

In general

- Never make excuses for losing, be gracious and give credit to opponents where due;
- Never gloat about winning; be thankful and remember that your every breath is by God's grace.

#### **4.8 CONDUCT OF PARENTS AND FANS**

##### **Guidelines for Spectators**

Parents and other spectators have an important role of helping to set a tone at our games that glorifies Christ. Athletic competitions provide an extraordinary opportunity to model speech and behavior to our children that brings honor to Christ in the midst of challenge, triumph, or disappointment. Since through the course of an athletic contest – not to mention, a season – we will all very likely fall short of the standard to which Christ calls us, it is also important to also remember that God is honored and our children are blessed when we confess our sin and ask for forgiveness.

The following guidelines for conduct apply to student and adult spectators at all sports activities. It is acceptable for any Covenant staff member to call attention to these guidelines when appropriate:

1. Demonstrate self-control and respect for others.
2. Accept and respect the integrity and authority of the officials and coaches.
3. Avoid booing, taunting, personal comments and “coaching” of players from the sideline or stands.
4. Accept victory, defeat and referee’s decisions with grace, dignity and contentedness, realizing that everything we do should bring glory and honor to God.
5. Students are required to dress appropriately and modestly for all school events. Students who are not dressed appropriately will be denied access.
6. Parents are responsible to monitor their children during games and to assure that they remain in the gym area during games.

##### **Parent Communication**

In recognition of a coach’s authority and to preserve the integrity of the coach/player dynamic, parents should not attempt to communicate with a coach or player during practice or game unless requested by the coach. If a parent has a grievance or dispute with a coach, he or she must follow biblical principles of conflict resolution in seeking to address it. These include:

- Examine yourself and seek to remove any “beams” that may be in your own eyes. (Matthew 7:5).

- The parent must first present their concern to the coach directly.<sup>4</sup> It is often wise to allow a day to pass before discussing a contentious issue so that there is time to pray and calmly think through the matter.
- If the problem is not resolved after meeting with the coach, a parent may bring the concern to the Athletic Director. If the problem is still not resolved, it should be brought to the Head of School.

#### **4.9 AWARDS**

Students can work throughout the year to earn various awards that are presented at the end of the school year or during an awards event.

##### **Letter Awards**

High school students may earn Letter awards in Varsity sports. A Letter award recipient receives a certificate, a chenille letter (first year), and the appropriate activity pin based on participation requirements at the sports awards assembly.

##### **Athletic Awards**

Athletic participation certificates are given to students in middle school and high school who participate in athletics. Athletic Awards are given for Most Improved Player and Most Valuable Player. The Coach's Award is given based on ability, leadership, and character.

#### **4.10 TRANSPORTATION AND PUNCTUAL PICK-UP**

Parents must provide transportation home and after all after-school activities. No student is allowed to be left unattended. Students who are picked up late on multiple occasions may be denied the opportunity for continued participation.

#### **4.11 UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

##### **Practice Apparel**

All practice apparel must meet the standards set for modesty at Covenant. All shorts should have a minimum of 3" inseam and shirts should cover the midriff (e.g., sports bras that are worn alone, tied up shirts, etc. are not appropriate). Although often disregarded and even mocked in the broader culture, Covenant wants to preserve and promote a modest spirit in all of our activities in keeping with biblical teaching. (1 Peter 3:3-4).

##### **Game, Meet, or Match Apparel**

All uniforms worn during interscholastic contests will be provided by Covenant and are not to be worn for practices. The purposes of the uniforms are: team unity; functionality appropriate for that given sport; safety related to the specific sport; adherence to NFHS (National Federation of High Schools), PIAA, and league regulations; and promotion and representation of Covenant. We want to glorify God in all we do, including how we look.

Covenant does not provide uniform socks for soccer or basketball. All soccer players need to purchase a pair of solid white and a pair of solid navy blue game socks. Basketball players will defer to the coach to determine the desired socks.

Uniforms will be distributed prior to the first interscholastic contest and must be turned in to the Athletic Director within a week of the end of the season for that sport. All uniforms must be returned, freshly laundered and in a large Ziploc bag with the athlete's name clearly on the outside of the bag. A student-athlete will not be given a uniform for another sport until the uniform from the previous sport is turned in in the condition expected. Grades may be held if uniforms are not returned by the end of a trimester. Uniforms that must be replaced by Covenant as a result of mistreatment by the student-athlete will be the financial responsibility of that family.

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<sup>4</sup> An exception to this would be if the matter involves serious moral misconduct or a safety matter putting the health of students at risk. In such a case, parents may come directly to the Upper School Dean or Head of School.

# **COMMUNICATION**

## **5.1 GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION**

The school telephone number is 717-540-9885. The school FAX number is 717-540-7176. The school mailing address is 1982 Locust Lane, Harrisburg, PA 17109. The school website is [www.DiscoverCovenant.com](http://www.DiscoverCovenant.com) and email address is [office@DiscoverCovenant.com](mailto:office@DiscoverCovenant.com)

If you need to contact us with information or a question, please email the school office or send in a note with your child. We will answer in writing or call you as soon as possible. Except in the case of an emergency, students will not be given phone messages during class, nor will they be called out of class to receive calls.

As much as possible, parents and teachers are encouraged to use electronic communications (through RenWeb and the school email accounts) as this provides a record. A phone call or face to face meeting, however, is often a more effective means of communicating and should be a regular exercise. Especially at the grammar school level, teachers will reinforce electronic communications with paper copies of notes for parents to sign (allowing the child to be tangibly involved in the communication process). Parents wishing to contact teachers by telephone should do so between 7:30am and 3:15pm and avoid contacting teachers during evenings and weekends. Meetings may be set up by appointment with a teacher or administrator. If a teacher is occupied in a class, a voicemail message can be left.

To build trust, strong teacher-student relationships, and healthy independence, parents should encourage their upper school student to handle as many communication needs as possible by talking directly with their teachers or an administrator. Teachers and parents should also maintain their own line of communication (independently from the student) so that larger issues can be handled by adults in an open and cooperative manner. Parents should also keep healthy lines of communication open with parents of classmates. Covenant administrators are able to facilitate a meeting between parents but will generally assume that they are taking place in a regular and productive manner. When concerns between parents, teachers or students are not resolved by direct communication between the individuals involved, please include an administrator. Any concerns unresolved by the Deans should be referred to the Head of School. (Please refer to Grievance Policy 9.8 in the Board Policy Manual for further details regarding expectations).

## **5.2 RENWEB, PHONE TREE, AND PILLAR PRESS**

**RENWEB/PARENTSWEB:** software used for communication with parents and upper school students, providing assignments, grades, homework and more.

**PHONE TREE:** used to notify school families of weather delays and cancellations, as well as important upcoming events, and other announcements.

**PILLAR PRESS:** weekly email publication which contains timely and important school news and updates.

## **5.3 BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHTS**

In the fall, the school hosts a Back-To-School night which gives parents an opportunity to meet faculty, learn about their child's curriculum, and fellowship with other school parents. Back-to-School Night is not a time to discuss individual student concerns with teachers. Parents should request to schedule an individual conference with the teacher if they have questions or concerns about their individual children. Please note this evening is for parents only, not children.

## **5.4 RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

The school will only release student information (i.e. school records, report cards, etc.) to parents or guardians who are so designated on the school's "Family Information Sheet." With respect to student activities that require parental consent, the school accepts consent only from the parent with legal custody of the student, unless authorization to grant consent is given to another parent by court order or comparable legal document.

## **5.5 EMERGENCY CLOSING**

1. Delays and closings will be communicated using the school phone tree system to those parents who ask to be placed on the “Early Call List”.
2. Delays and closings will also be announced at the following places:
  - AM Stations – WHP 580
  - FM Stations – WITF 89.5
  - Television – WHP TV 21, WGAL 8, Fox 43, ABC 27
  - Internet – Covenant website and Covenant Facebook page
3. Decisions to transport students home early during a storm are made by the public busing districts.
4. Covenant will dismiss students when their buses come for them, unless a parent notifies Covenant prior to the time that the public bus comes to Covenant.
5. Covenant will send out a phone tree message using the “emergency contact list” notifying parents of an early dismissal for emergency or weather related purposes. If the weather is inclement, parents must check radio and television news sources for closing information. DO NOT CALL COVENANT TO ASK IF YOUR PUBLIC DISTRICT IS DISMISSING. We often do not know this information any sooner than the news outlets do.
6. Please do not ask a Covenant office staff person to research particular classroom activities for you before you make a dismissal decision. They do not know a specific teacher’s plans and cannot afford time away from the office to make trips to classrooms.
7. Covenant will remain in session until the normal end of the school day, unless the weather is extreme, in which case parents who normally pick up their children by car at 3:00 will be notified to come earlier. For bus-riding students, see above.

**Covenant-Specific Closings:** If Covenant has reason to close when public districts are not closing, parents will be called and asked to come for their children.

# **CODE OF CONDUCT AND STANDARDS**

## **6.1 STUDENT CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS**

As God's image bearers, students at Covenant are taught to pursue their vocation as scholars with their whole body, heart, mind, and strength, enthusiastically urging themselves and their peers to grow more like Christ. As a Covenant community we recognize that we are called to Christ-exalting conduct throughout our lives and not simply during the school day. In accord with the gospel, we also recognize that every one of us regularly falls short of these standards in our thoughts and deeds and that we need practice asking for and extending forgiveness to one another. While we are eager to walk in grace with one another, we know that it is important to the health of our community to speak truthfully about sin and to confront it biblically when necessary. Behavior, either on or off campus, that indicates a student has little desire to live a life honoring to God, or conduct that gives evidence of flagrant disregard for the spirit of the school standards and biblical godliness, is sufficient cause for disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion.

### **1. Obey promptly and cheerfully. (Heb. 13:17; I Thess. 5:18; Phil. 2:14-15).**

Students will be taught to obey immediately without reminder. Students should have a respectful attitude and make attentive eye contact with the person giving direction. Our desire in Christ is that students will learn to obey with a thankful attitude and we will therefore address grumbling, grimacing expressions, sighing, eye rolling, and non-verbal complaining that is observed.

### **2. Exercise joy and diligence in work and play. (Eph. 6:6,7; Col. 3:23-24).**

Students will be taught to become hard workers. Their work should give evidence of neatness, precision, and diligent, strong effort. They should be focused on, attending to, and engaged in the task given. Assignments should be completed. Students should also be diligent in their play when it is the appropriate activity. Apathy, at work or play, is a vice we want to help our students to overcome.

### **3. Speak truthfully and for the good of others. (Eph. 4:25-32, Ps. 19:14).**

Students are expected to speak honestly without rationalization and excuse. Gossip, slander, and "tattle tales" will be addressed. Students will be encouraged to speak directly with the person with whom they have a concern and to model the biblical principle in Matt. 18:15-17 in a way appropriate to their age.

### **4. Display consideration, kindness, and compassion. (Eph. 4:31-32).**

Students are expected to treat others with kindness in action and in speech. Harsh words and harmful behavior will be addressed and will result in appropriate discipline.

### **5. Display self-control in attitude and action (Prov. 25:28, I Cor. 14:40).**

Students will be taught to control their tongues and actions. They will be encouraged to speak at appropriate times and to control their bodies. Students will take an active part in maintaining their personal belongings and the school's appearance as well as demonstrating orderly behavior when in groups.

## **6.2 SCHOOL DISCIPLINE EXPECTATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

The purpose of Covenant's Discipline Procedures is to shepherd all students in grades Pre-Kindergarten thru 12<sup>th</sup> grade toward a genuine and growing relationship with the Lord. Our teachers will seek to consistently hold students accountable to godly conduct that flows from the hope of the gospel in the power of the Spirit. We maintain Scripture as the center of our school and as the standard by which we educate and train our students. These expectations and procedures apply to our students during school hours as well as at all school sponsored events before and/or after normal school hours.

### **Expectations**

Covenant Christian Academy expects every student to demonstrate the biblical characteristics described in the Student Conduct and Expectations section of this handbook. Covenant expects our students to refrain from behaviors which include: disrespect shown to any staff member, dishonesty in any situation while at school

(including lying, cheating, and stealing), rebellion, fighting (i.e. striking in anger with the intention to harm another), obscene, vulgar, or profane language, images or gestures, as well as taking the name of the Lord in vain, gross violence, vandalism of school property, violations of civil law such as bringing and/or possessing a weapon on school grounds or to a school sponsored event, involvement with alcohol or illegal drugs or any flagrant act in clear contradiction to scriptural commands. We value and preserve the warm and orderly environment that characterizes our school and that makes it possible for each student, teacher and coach to pursue our mission.

### **Procedures**

Students who do not demonstrate these biblical characteristics will require discipline and restoration. Covenant handles each on a “case by case” basis, maintaining equitable standards while walking the student through a process of full restoration. The following consequences are used in the course of the discipline and restoration process: warnings, student conferences, parent meetings, opportunities for seeking and granting forgiveness, restitution, silent lunch or recess detention, after school detentions, suspensions, corporal punishment, and expulsion. Additional disciplinary measures may be added as deemed necessary by Covenant’s Administration.

In order for corrective discipline to be effective or helpful, it must be painful, in some sense. While in younger children this effective pain is often physical, loss of privilege and separation from peers are examples of painful consequences that are often effective with older students. "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it." (Hebrews 12:11) If the discipline given is not painful, it does not effectively penetrate to the heart and conscience of a child and lead him to godly sorrow and repentance (2 Cor. 7:9). Painful discipline teaches him that he reaps what he sows (Gal. 6:7) and that the consequences of sin are death and sorrow. Also such discipline leads him to desire and embrace the cross of Christ and the ideal of living a holy life (righteousness). In the end it brings him peace as he is reconciled to God through Christ. And this is what we want for him when he returns to the classroom: peace and righteousness.

Responsibility for discipline of Covenant students starts with the school appointed supervisor (teacher, coach, parent volunteer, etc.). The kind and amount of discipline will be determined by the teachers, and if necessary, the Dean or Head of School. The discipline will be administered in light of the individual student’s behavior and attitude. Parents are informed at each stage (see Communications Guidelines in this handbook) and their supportive involvement is integral to the process. Although we strive to communicate regularly, these electronic communications will not remain in the student’s permanent record. Only those incidents deemed worthy of a formal office visit will be filed and done so with the parents’ knowledge.

In grammar school cases where a formal office visit is required, the following accounting guidelines will be typically observed, in addition to the procedures above:

- The first time a student is sent to the Dean or Head of School for discipline, the student’s parents will be contacted and given the details of the visit to equip parents in their follow-up at home. Additionally, parents may be expected to come to the school immediately to administer discipline.
- The second time a student is sent to the Dean or Head of School for discipline, a meeting with the parents will be requested and the student will receive further discipline. Additionally, parents may be expected to come to the school immediately to administer discipline.
- The third time a student is sent to the Dean or Head of School for discipline, parents will be expected to come to the school immediately to administer discipline, an immediate suspension will be imposed, and a meeting with the parents will be required before the student is restored to the classroom.
- Should the student require additional office visits, discipline with more serious consequences will be enforced, such as expulsion from school.

*These accounting guidelines will be reset at the beginning of each trimester.*

### **6.3 THE GOAL OF DISCIPLINE**

Discipline is instituted by God in order to train us to be righteous and godly. While the Spirit does work directly on the hearts of believers to sanctify them, he is pleased regularly and ordinarily to use discipline to reveal our sin, show us his holiness, and lead us to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the most pertinent passages of Scripture on the subject is Hebrews 12:7-11:

<sup>7</sup> Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? <sup>8</sup> If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. <sup>9</sup> Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! <sup>10</sup> Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. <sup>11</sup> No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

The word translated as "discipline" in this passage is the Greek word *paideia*, which is also translated as "training" in Ephesians where Paul exhorts fathers to bring up their children "in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). It is from this word *paideia* that we get our word *pedagogy*--the art of raising, instructing and training children. The original root word is actually *paios*, which means child. In the New Testament, discipline and the child are integrally related conceptually and verbally. Imagine calling discipline "childing" and you will get the picture.

While all believers are disciplined by God (and under authority), children undergo discipline solely by means of their parents, who are charged to raise them up in "the training and nurture of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Children in a school setting receive discipline from teachers, staff and other adults who have authority to do so only by permission and charge of parents. The human means of discipline (through which God disciplines) are therefore parents, and those to whom parents responsibly assign this duty.

Discipline should therefore be conducted with a self-conscious understanding that God does his disciplining work through parents or their designees, as we are faithful and responsible to do as the Scripture commands us. Discipline is therefore a holy work and requires a consecrated heart.

Since discipline of children is the responsibility of parents, sinful behavior and attitudes in students really is chiefly and originally the problem for parents to address, and only collaboratively a problem for teachers and staff. Therefore, while teachers and staff will always seek to responsively discipline in the school setting, they will also refer problems back to the parents who will in turn discipline in the home. For helpful book-length treatments on biblical discipline as it applies to children, see *Shepherding a Child's Heart*, by Tedd Tripp and *Age of Opportunity* by Paul Tripp.

What kind of discipline does a child need to be so trained, to turn from folly to wisdom? At least the following:

- Clear teaching on the nature and being of God; his holiness, wrath, justice, love, mercy, grace, etc.
- Clear teaching on "the path of right;" what a holy life entails and why it is best: the joy of obedience
- Clear teaching on the importance of internal, attitudinal holiness as well as external holiness: a conscience clear and cleansed (Hebrews 10:22)
- Clear teaching on the principle of sowing and reaping (Gal. 6:7)
- Clear and consistent correction, rebuke and exhortation when the child veers from the path in sin
- Clear teaching on what it means to repent (Westminster Confession of Faith, Ch. XV)
- Clear teaching on what it means to believe the Gospel of Christ
- A godly parent (or teacher) who models wisdom, righteousness, holiness, repentance and faith; a person who in effect shows the child what he should become

#### **6.4 COVENANT BEST UNIFORM**

"Covenant Best Days" are days on which all students will be required to wear the Covenant Best uniform. Upper school students will be required to wear Covenant Best every Thursday of the school year. Grammar school students will wear Covenant Best the last Thursday of each month. All students are required to wear Covenant Best on the first day of the school year. See our online calendar for additional dates when Covenant Best is required and our Uniform Guidelines for specifics on the Covenant Best uniform.

#### **6.5 STUDENT APPREARENCE GUIDELINES**

1. All students will present themselves with an appearance that is characterized as modest, clean, neat, and not distracting. Where choices are given, please make sure the specific item (e.g., shoes, hair accessories, nail polish, etc.) does not draw excessive attention.

2. Hair must be kept clean and neatly combed out of the eyes. Unnatural (e.g.—blue, pink, etc.) hair colors or hair styles deemed to be extreme by an administrator are not permitted. Facial hair should be neat and defined (not an unshaven look). Hair feathers, wraps, tinsel, and multi-color ribbons are not allowed. Girls may wear plain headbands or hair bands (no sparkles, logos, or beading, etc.) in a solid, neutral color or the school plaid.
3. Jewelry must be minimal and not involve pierced body parts with the exception of girls' ears. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.
4. Grammar school girls may not wear makeup except for pale pink or clear fingernail polish and lip gloss.
5. All students are required to wear the Covenant uniform when in the school building between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Students must enter the building in uniform.
6. School administrators are authorized to interpret and enforce these guidelines and to grant exceptions where needed.
7. A student who is found to be out of uniform will be given a warning and an "Out of Uniform Notice" will be emailed to parents. After the first notice, disciplinary action could include but is not limited to silent lunch, student not attending class until the uniform problem is corrected, parent conference, etc.
8. A student who does not wear the required "Covenant Best" uniform for a field trip or special school activity may not be kept from participating in the activity.

## **GENERAL SCHOOL LIFE**

### **7.1      LOCKERS**

Students in grades 7-12 are issued lockers for the storage of their personal belongings. All lockers are the property of the school. Students are permitted to go to their lockers between classes to obtain what they need for their next class.

All books must be inside the lockers, all coats hung on hooks in the hall or placed inside lockers, and all bookbags must be in the lockers, hung on the hooks or placed neatly against the wall. Nothing can be placed in front of the lockers as this is a fire code violation.

Students may hang decorations inside the lockers, but all decorations must be consistent with the Student Conduct and Expectations listed in this Handbook. No decorations or writing are permitted on the exterior of the locker.

The administration may authorize the opening of a student's locker at any time. Students do not have the right to be present at such inspections. Any suspected locker abuse will be cause for an unannounced locker check.

### **7.2      LOST AND FOUND**

The following procedures will be followed with items ending up in the Lost and Found:

1. Clothing and unmarked personal items left on the playground, in hallways, outside of the lockers and other areas in the school will be placed in the Lost and Found.
2. All unclaimed, unmarked clothing will occasionally be displayed for reclaiming. If not claimed after a period of time, items will be made available for resale or discarded.

Parents can help alleviate the build-up of articles in the lost and found by marking your child's name on all uniform items, coats, sweaters, jackets, lunchboxes and other personal items. It is the responsibility of the parents to instruct their children to take care of all clothing and personal items. Covenant assumes no responsibility for these items.

### **7.3      PLAYGROUND RULES**

Please send children prepared with the appropriate footwear and outerwear. Children without appropriate outerwear may be kept indoors during recess.

The following rules govern the conduct of students on the playground during the school day:

#### **Balls**

There is to be no kicking of balls at any time unless a faculty supervised game that requires kicking is being played. Only soccer balls or footballs may be kicked, not foursquare balls or basketballs. Balls are not to be bounced on the walls of the school building. Students should not bring balls from home.

#### **Bicycles**

Bicycles are to be parked and locked upon arrival at school and are not to be used until school has closed at the end of the day. Bicycles are not to be ridden in the playground area at any time.

#### **Covered Entrances**

The covered entrances at the front and rear of the school building are not part of the playground. They are intended to be for entering and exiting the school building. There is to be no ball playing or running in those areas.

## **Games**

Organized games, such as foursquare, kick ball, football, basketball, baseball, and soccer, are to be played by the school rules. No “special rules” are allowed.

## **Leaving the School Grounds**

No student is to leave the school premises at any time, for any reason, unless he or she has permission to do so. This rule is in effect from the time of arrival until departure by the usual means used for transportation to and from school. If a student needs to leave the playground to go to the bathroom, he or she must first check with a faculty member and obtain permission to do so. Failing to obtain permission will result in discipline.

## **Wooded Areas**

Students are not allowed to play or run through the woods which surround the school. Students are not to go into any of the wooded areas without adult supervision.

## **Skateboards, Roller Blades**

Skateboards, roller blades, roller skates and roller shoes are not allowed on the playground or elsewhere on campus during school hours.

## **Swings and Slides**

There is to be no standing on the swings or climbing up the slides. Only one person may swing in a swing at a time. Swings may not be swung from side or side or twisted. No jumping from a swing in motion.

## **7.4 CELL PHONES**

Cell phones must remain off and out of sight between 7:30 am and 3:00 pm., unless we are experiencing a school-wide emergency.

The above rule applies at all events during school hours and throughout the day, including breaks and lunch. Parents desiring to contact their child may contact the school office requesting a return call at a convenient time (or immediately in the case of an emergency). Students may also ask supervising adults for use of the office phone in case they need to contact their parents during the school day.

Students who violate the rules will have their cell phones confiscated.

- In the case of a grammar school student, the cell phone will be returned only to their parents (unless other arrangements are made by an administrator due to extenuating circumstances).
- In the case of an upper school student, the cell phone will be documented in RenWeb and placed in the school office to be picked up by the student at the end of the day. On the third or subsequent occurrence, the phone must be picked up by one of the student's parents.

## **7.5 CHILD PROTECTION, VISITORS, AND VOLUNTEERS**

Covenant seeks to foster biblical fellowship between parents, students, teachers, and administration. As such, we recognize and welcome the important contribution and responsibility of parents to be involved in the lives of their children, and thus in our school life. The school also recognizes and embraces its responsibility to not only comply with state laws regarding child protection, but also to be vigilant and attentive to the safety of the students entrusted to us. In order to meet these obligations, we have instituted the following policies and procedures.

### **Background Clearances and Training**

All **employees** must complete the three background checks required by Pennsylvania law (good for five years), undergo an ACTS 168 employment review (at the time of hiring), must have completed 3 hours of Mandated Reporter training within five years, and must complete yearly review of Covenant’s child protective policies. This includes all *full and part-time faculty, support staff, administration, substitute teachers, and paid coaches*.

Covenant also requires this level of all applicable clearances and training for all unpaid volunteers in official and regular roles such as coaches and assistant coaches, club leaders, aides, recess monitors, lunchroom monitors, adult tutors, host families for international students, and *anyone who accepts responsibility for a student*. These unpaid volunteers must complete the following clearances:

- [Department of Human Services Child Abuse History Clearance](#) (free for unpaid volunteers)
- [Pennsylvania State Police Access to Criminal History \(PATCH\)](#) (free for unpaid volunteers)
- A disclosure statement if you have lived in PA for entirety of last 10 years, otherwise you must complete the [Federal Criminal History Record Information \(CHRI\)](#) (\$22.60)

Each of these checks is good for FIVE YEARS.

Volunteers in these roles must also complete 3 hours of **Mandatory Reporter Training** every FIVE years and must review Covenant's child protective policies on an annual basis. The school recommends the free, online course from the University of Pittsburgh, available here: [www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu](http://www.reportabusepa.pitt.edu), and may also accept certain approved trainings completed elsewhere (e.g., *Darkness to Light* training).

### **Parent Participation and Visits**

Parent participation in more informal and infrequent roles such as fieldtrip chaperones library helpers, and classroom readers must complete the same background checks as other more regular volunteers, but are not required to take the mandated reporter training.

Background clearances are not required for occasional visits or attendance at school wide events. Examples of these would be back-to-school night, athletic events, senior thesis, parent-teacher visits, eating lunch with your child, visiting a class, or helping with a class event where the teacher remains with the students (e.g., Medieval Feast, Greek Feast, etc.)

If you have any questions about whether or how to complete background checks or mandatory reporter training, please contact a school administrator.

We welcome parents to visit us at Covenant. Please make prior arrangements with teachers and the dean when planning to visit a classroom. In the event that a parent's visits are becoming in some way distracting to the classroom, a teacher or a dean will follow up to address the issue. Please always remember to SIGN IN and SIGN OUT at the main office whenever you are visiting campus. The sign-out book is used to account for every person on campus in the event of an emergency.

### **Other Policies and Procedures**

In order to protect students and to help minimize situations where inappropriate conduct could be given an opportunity to occur, all school employees and volunteers are required to follow the following policies and guidelines at all school activities and events:

- A school employee or volunteer should never be alone with an individual student (unless family related) unless in a public location visible to others or in an office with a window providing view of the student. If a teacher needs to talk to an individual student privately, the conversation must be held in a place and time easily viewable to passers by.
- A school employee or volunteer should not drive alone with a student (unless a family member) to or from any school event unless given written permission (text or email is acceptable) by a child's parent. Employees must notify the Dean or Head of School prior to such arrangements being made.
- Private music lessons, tutoring, or any other one on one activity must either be done with the parent in attendance or in a location and time allowing for frequent visibility of other adult(s) in the same part of the building.
- Employees or volunteers (including athletic teams and clubs) are not allowed to work alone with a student at school on weekends or evenings. If a student wishes to arrange to work on an art project or other activity at school on a weekend or evening, there must be a minimum of three people in attendance at all times.

- Employees and volunteers may not use the weight room or ride the school elevator with an individual student (unless a family member).
- Fieldtrip chaperones in the Grammar School must always be paired up with at least one other parent for car rides with students and are not allowed solitary supervision of a child at any time.
- The doors to the Grammar School bathrooms are to be propped open during the entire school day and the Dunlap Center bathrooms are be propped open when Kindergarteners use these bathroom at lunchtime.

Please Note: PA law requires that all Mandated Reporters (which includes all employees at Covenant and any volunteer who accepts responsibility for a child) to personally report any case of suspected child abuse directly to ChildLine. This can be done by calling ChildLine at **1 (800) 932-0313** or online through the Child Welfare Portal: [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home). Please notify Covenant's Head of School if you have made a report about an incident involving a Covenant student or family member, or if you would like support in making a report. Please remember that it is not sufficient to *only* inform a supervisor or administrator, PA law requires mandated reporters to report suspected abuse to ChildLine directly.

## **7.6 AFTER-SCHOOL CARE**

To better serve our families, Covenant provides a limited after-school childcare program from 3:30 to 4:30 each day. There is a fee of \$5/hour for this service.

Unless under the direct supervision of a parent, any grammar school student on school grounds after 3:30 p.m. must go to After-School Care. *There is no After-School Care on days when school dismisses prior to 3:00pm.* Unless your child is a regular attendee, please inform the school office on days your child will be using this service.

### **Safety**

Covenant's After-Care program will be staffed by a school employee and will have received all background clearances necessary for working with school children. When you pick up your child from After-Care, you will be required to sign your child out and show the car number provided by the school to the After-Care supervisor.

### **Hours and Rates**

After-Care runs from 3:30-4:30 p.m. at the flat rate of \$5.00 per day. There are no partial use rates.

**Students picked up after 4:30 p.m. will incur a \$10.00 late fee charge per occurrence.**

If a situation arises that impacts your ability to arrive on time to pick up your child, please call our After-Care supervisor so that arrangements can be made to stay later. The After-Care worker can be contacted after 3:30pm by calling **(717) 540-9885 x 201..**(Before 3:30 pm, please call the main office).

You will receive a bill at the end of each Trimester for your After-Care use. Students will not be permitted to continue in After-Care if there is an unpaid balance for more than two weeks.

## **7.7 LUNCH**

Eating together is one of God's great gifts to mankind and is a blessing we seek to enjoy with gratitude at Covenant. We structure our meal times in a way that allows for enjoyable and relaxed conversation with classmates, while also mindful of the logistics of a larger number of students eating at one time. We also take this time to reflect on our vocation as students under the goodness of God's provision. Grammar school meals conclude with a few minutes of peaceful transition in which conversation ceases and a piece of classical music is played. Quiet reflection, praying together, and singing the doxology are pleasant reminders of the peaceful and joyful days we are given to be learners at Covenant.

Meals are presently divided up in four settings:

- 11:00 AM – 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> grades (in the MPR)
- 11:30 AM – 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades (in the MPR)
- 12:00 PM – Kindergarten and Pre-K (in the Dunlap Lobby)

- 12:05 PM – 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades (in the MPR; 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders may eat at the outside pavilion).

The following guidelines help to structure our mealtimes:

- Students must bring their own lunches except on days when they have ordered a prepared lunch.
- To help us foster a peaceful environment, lunch boxes should not display cartoon characters and other “pop culture” images.
- Grammar school students, including children of Covenant employees, do not have access to refrigerators or microwaves.
- Upper school students may use the microwaves located in the lunchroom.
- If a student forgets a lunch, Covenant will provide a lunch to the student, if one is available, and the family will be charged the appropriate amount for the lunch.
- Students will clean up the lunchroom by assignment.

## **7.8 SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

The school provides a variety of activities and programs to promote student and family involvement in school life. Co-curricular activities, both during school and after school, are an important part of the educational process.

Eligibility requirements apply to all non-credit student activities, such as athletic teams, choir, trips, and all school-related clubs. Students are expected to maintain a high standard of Christian conduct and may be declared ineligible if they fail to do so.

Students must be at school by 10:30 am and may not leave before 1:00 pm to participate in after-school activities (unless approved exception by the Dean or Head or School).

**Back to School Picnic** is held in early fall as a time of fun and fellowship for school families and staff.

**Grandparent's Day** is held in the spring. Grandparents are invited to come to visit their grandchildren during a school day. A special program is presented and refreshments are served.

**Christmas Concert**: Students participate in a Christmas concert each December.

**Pastor Appreciation Day** is held annually to give students an opportunity to show their appreciation to their pastors. Pastors are invited to tour the school and visit the classrooms of students who attend their churches.

**Open Houses** are held at various times throughout the year. Prospective families are invited to visit the school to see the students' work on display and tour the facility.

**Field Trips** are provided as first-hand experiences and observations to supplement the regular classroom experience. Teachers and parents act as chaperones on all trips. Parents should not bring siblings on field trips.

## **7.9 GRAMMAR SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS**

To acknowledge special dates on the calendar or to enhance the curriculum, various events will be scheduled through the year. Because each of these events is an extension of the classroom, we request that parent helpers find childcare outside of Covenant for their younger children.

**Student Birthday Recognition for Grades 1 - 6:** Each student may bring in a classroom treat on the day of, or nearest to, his birthday. Students with summer birthdays may celebrate their “half birthday” during the school year. It is not mandatory that students bring in a treat.

Guidelines for treats are as follows:

- One treat per child in classroom
- Individual portions not requiring a utensil or plate
- Treat to be carried in by student in the morning
- Teacher to determine when the treat is distributed during the day

**Student Birthday Recognition for Pre-K and Kindergarten:** Please see the classroom handbook for details.

**Other Events:** Events that have specific ties with a particular grade's curriculum may be celebrated in ways that enhance classroom learning. Parents will be contacted to supply food or help for these events as needed. Please do not send unplanned treats without the classroom teacher's request.

**Special Note on Valentine's Day:** No parties will be planned for this day, though the day will be acknowledged and given a Christian "friendship" interpretation ("love" as defined in 1 Cor. 13). Valentine's Day cards that reflect Christian love may be made in class and exchanged.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

### **8.1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS**

In order to help international students reach their English proficiency and post-high school goals, Covenant expects international students to be immersed in the English language.

- International students are required to use only English during the school day, unless given express permission by a teacher. Lunches are English-only unless announced otherwise.
- International students are expected to live in Covenant family homes whenever one is available. Host families are encouraged to require English immersion in their homes, also with the goal of helping students to quickly become proficient in their English skills.
- The emphasis on immersion is not meant to demean a student's home culture or language in any way; Covenant staff seeks to give international students opportunities to share about their countries in various ways within the school—both with their peers and with younger students.
- Covenant's guidelines are in place to aid students in their quest for fluency in English. Students who become most fluent, in turn, become the students whose academic work reaches the level required by American universities.

### **8.2 ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS**

- Full application submitted with the applicable fees
- Skype interview to assess conversational English abilities
- Submission of TOEFL Junior scores (all three sections) to verify English proficiency
- Submission of health records and transcripts (in English) from former schools within one week of arrival at Covenant
- Orientation to Covenant, as scheduled by the school, at the time of arrival
- International students whose goal is a high school diploma must ordinarily be admitted to Covenant prior to 11<sup>th</sup> grade; Under normal circumstances, international students applying to 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade should be doing so for the purpose of cultural exchange and language acquisition, not course credit.
- Unless an international student is living locally with a relative, he or she is required to live with a Covenant host family if one is available. Non-Covenant families who serve as host families must have a family interview; all host families must have at least one parent who professes faith in Christ.

### **8.3 ACADEMICS**

- When available, first year international students are expected to take an introductory Bible class, an introductory English literature class and ESL; exceptions to this policy will be rare and will be based on a student's exceptional skills in English conversation and writing or strong knowledge of the Bible. The remainder of a first year student's schedule will be filled with a variety of other school subjects.
- Covenant cannot guarantee that first year students will be admitted to all the classes of their choice. The determination of the schedule will be based upon space in classes and the student's background. The primary goal for the first year at Covenant is to improve English speaking and writing skills. Therefore, students may be in math, science or history classes that are not their first choices but will provide them with ample opportunity to improve in English.
- A student's continued enrollment at Covenant will be based upon their writing skills, ability to participate in Covenant classroom discussions and their overall behavior in the school. Students will be informed in April whether they will be considered for re-enrollment the following year.
- Senior Year and Graduation
  - Covenant does not issue diplomas based upon time in the school but upon a student's meeting of the graduation requirements. International students are expected to meet the requirement for the Senior Speech and Writing course as set forth in the graduation requirements policy. Covenant staff will guide students through this project but will not do major re-writing of a student's work. Any student whose writing needs significant coaching must arrange for a private tutor.

- Covenant's guidance coordinator will provide international students with the same assistance given all Covenant students in the college admissions process. It is the student's responsibility to have any foreign transcripts translated into English.

#### **8.4 COVENANT SCHOOL CULTURE**

- Covenant strongly encourages international students to maximize their time in speaking English. We expect that they will be immersed in English, both in school and in the evenings. Within a few months of arrival, students should be thinking in English. Time spent speaking a mother tongue, watching foreign television and internet are all activities that will slow down a student's progress in English. Covenant reserves the right to ask host families to limit a student's conversation in his mother tongue in order to assist in the English learning process.
- English must be spoken between 7:30 and 3:30 in the school building unless a teacher gives permission otherwise.
  - During a student's first week at Covenant, verbal instruction and reminders will be given regarding the use of a mother tongue. During the remainder of the student's first month at Covenant, use of a mother tongue will result in a silent lunch detention.
  - After the first month, use of a mother tongue without permission will result in a silent lunch detention for the first two offenses. Third and fourth offenses will each result in one day of in-school suspension. A fifth offense will result in expulsion from Covenant.
  - Students who need to use a mother tongue to explain something to one another are encouraged to seek a teacher for permission; it will likely be granted. Students using a mother tongue with permission receive no penalty.
  - Students are encouraged to ask questions, both during class and during appointments made with teachers. American education values a student's active pursuit of learning. Students will be better prepared for university classes if they participate in discussions and ask questions during high school.
  - American teachers and classmates consider sleeping during class or school activities to be extremely disrespectful and rude; international students are encouraged to establish good sleeping habits overnight to avoid being tired during the school day. Sleeping during a class will result in disciplinary measures.
  - International students are expected to abide by all the guidelines found in the Covenant Upper School Student Handbook and the Covenant Parent-Student Handbook—including uniform and electronics guidelines. Electronic translators may be used only with express teacher permission during a class or study hall. Printed translation dictionaries are encouraged.
  - International students are welcome—and encouraged—to participate in the co-curricular activities of Covenant as they are able. These athletic and artistic activities are an important part of Covenant's culture and are often the source of many friendships.

# **FINANCIAL POLICIES**

## **9.1 TUITION POLICY**

In 2016 the school entered a partnership with FACTS management to handle tuition payments from our families. Every family is required to sign up for a tuition payment plan through FACTS by a deadline in June of each year (or within one week after accepting an offer of admission if admitted after the June deadline). Please consult your FACTS account to view payment policies and procedures. All tuition and fee payments should be submitted through FACTS rather than to the school office. **Tuition fees (including all prepaid amounts) received by Covenant are nonrefundable and not transferrable to another student or institution**, regardless of the circumstances. Late fees and insufficient fund fees will be assessed by FACTS.

### **Pre-Paid Tuition**

- Families who pre-pay their yearly tuition in full may receive a percentage discount in such amount and pursuant to such terms and conditions as may be established by Covenant's board from time to time.
- If, for any reason, a student disenrolls before the end of the school year, the balance of their prepaid tuition will be deemed a charitable gift to Covenant.

### **Biannual Payment Plan**

- If a student disenrolls before the date the second tuition payment becomes due, the second tuition payment will not be required.
- If, for any reason, a student disenrolls before the end of the school year, the balance of their prepaid tuition will be deemed a charitable gift to Covenant.

### **Monthly Payment Plan**

- If a student disenrolls for any reason before the end of the school year, tuition will be required through and including the month of disenrollment.

## **9.2 CALCULATING TUITION FOR PARTIAL YEARS**

In cases where a student enrolls upfront for part of the year (i.e., where the intent to enroll for a partial year is disclosed in advance to Covenant), or a student enrolls after the start of the school year, tuition owed will be prorated in the following manner:

- The full year tuition will be multiplied by a fraction, the numerator of which is the total number of weeks the student will be enrolled and the denominator of which is the total number of weeks in the school year.
- For purposes of the foregoing,
  - i. the school year is the total number of weeks that school is in session,
  - ii. each calendar week that a student is enrolled will be deemed one week even if the student is only enrolled for part of the week, and
  - iii. each calendar week that school is in session will be deemed one week even if school is only in session for part of that week.

If a family chooses to pre-pay tuition for a partial school year, they may be eligible to receive the annual pre-paid discount, subject to such terms and conditions that Covenant's board may establish from time to time.

## **9.3 OUTSTANDING TUITION**

- Families are urged to contact Covenant's business office as soon as it becomes evident they will not be able to make a payment so that an emergency plan can be made.
- All payments received from families who are not current with their tuition payments will be applied by Covenant, first, to late fees and penalties, second, to tuition and any other amounts in arrears, and, third, to tuition, registration fees, and other amounts then payable. All amounts in arrears must be paid in full before a family may enroll or register any of their children for a following school year or apply for financial aid for a following school year. Covenant will not reserve places for a family's children in Covenant's classes for a following school year so long as the family is not current with respect to tuition and all other amounts payable.

- Students with an outstanding tuition balance remaining unpaid for more than 30 days past the due date may be subject to expulsion.

If a family is not current with respect to tuition and all other amounts payable due Covenant, Covenant will not release any records or student files with respect to that family's children until such amounts due has been paid.

For further detail on Covenant's tuition policy, please see Board Policy 8.4.

# **HEALTH REGULATIONS AND SERVICES**

## **10.1 STUDENT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

All students attending Covenant Christian Academy must have on record with the school office, either a **current immunization record or an exemption statement according to Pennsylvania law, before entering school in the fall.** Standard immunization record forms may be obtained and completed by your family doctor and a copy given to the school office.

The school cannot give internal medicine such as an aspirin, a spoonful of medicine, or epinephrine for an allergic anaphylactic reaction without written permission from both a physician and parent. The "Medication Disbursement in School" permission form is kept on file in the office. Only medications given three times a day or more can be administered at school. Prescription bottles must be labeled with amount of medicine needed while at school. All medications, including inhalers, are to be turned over to the office when student arrives at school.

Other forms necessary for student health records can be obtained from the school office. Each student must have a current Student Health History and Emergency Form on record with the school office.

## **10.2 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS IN PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOL HEALTH LAW**

**Immunizations** – Pennsylvania law requires all children entering school to have had the following immunizations:

- 4 DPT – 1 dose on or after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday
- 3 OPV/IPV
- 3 HepB
- 2 MMR
- 1 dose Varicella (chickenpox), or 2 doses if immunized at age  $\geq$  13 years; or history of the disease.

**Please provide Covenant with immunization records from your family physician or pediatrician.**

**Medical Exams** – Pennsylvania law requires a medical examination of your child at the following times:

- Upon original entry into school
- In the Sixth Grade
- In the Eleventh Grade
- New entrants in all grades who do not have a health record on file.

Standard Medical Forms that you may give your doctor to complete are available at the school office upon request. Copies of physical forms from your physician's office are also acceptable.

**Dental Exams** – Pennsylvania law requires a dental examination of your child at the following times:

- Upon original entry into school
- In the Third Grade
- In the Seventh Grade
- New entrants in all grades who do not have a health record on file.

Standard Dental Forms that you may give your dentist to complete are available at the school office upon request. Copies of documentation of dental exams from your dentist are also acceptable.