

COVENANT CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Statement of Purpose

Christian academic community with the distinct task of equipping students to relate Christ to the world and life.

Philosophy

We take our philosophy from two key Scriptures: Deuteronomy 6:6-7 and Proverbs 22:6.

(1) In Deuteronomy 6:4-5, we read that God is the foundation of all knowledge, truth and wisdom. It is our belief that the truth of God became incarnate in Jesus Christ His Son. As an absolute truth, we then reject the world's philosophy of truth as being relative.

The Bible is God's revealed will for man. It is infallible, inspired and is the final authority in giving us direction for every area of life.

We believe the single most important thing a child must learn is to have the proper relationship with God.

We will stand firm on the doctrines that are clear in the Scriptures as put forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith. We will give unbiased instruction in those areas of Christian doctrine on which evangelical, fundamental Christians disagree so that the students will have knowledge of both sides of these issues. Although our basic stance is "Reformed," we will not take a dogmatic stand on such things as mode of baptism, eschatological issues, and special gifts.

(2) In Proverbs 22:6, we see the Christian school is an extension of the Christian home, training young people for time and eternity in a Christian environment. Our staff will work closely with parents/guardians to train the whole child and not undermine the parents' authority. For this reason, we must insist on having the cooperation and participation of all parents/guardians. (Ephesians 6:4)

Admissions Policy

Covenant Christian School (CCS) was founded on the conviction that a Christian school is an extension of the home. The Biblical principles which are taught and lived in the home are to be honored and reinforced. We use Scripture to evaluate behavior, textbooks and all facets of ministry. As a result, we seek to educate and ground young minds in "*whatever is true, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, and whatever is of good repute.*" (Philippians 4:8) We strive for excellence in all areas: academic, spiritual and emotional/social.

Although Covenant Christian School is a ministry of First Presbyterian Church, we have students, teachers and School Commission members from various Christian backgrounds. We emphasize the essentials of the gospel and do not stress beliefs nonessential to salvation.

In order to accomplish this, families are required to submit a written application to the school office, on a form provided by the school, along with a registration fee. After review of this application, an admissions committee, including the School Administrator and at least one Commission member, conducts a family interview with the student(s) and parents/guardians. The purpose of this interview is to educate the family as to how we implement the philosophical foundations of the school and to determine the family's acceptance of their children being taught from a Christian perspective. Any family who will not commit to following the covenant principles of the school will not be considered.

Covenant Christian School desires to minister to all families in the community; therefore, we do not discriminate on the basis of race, color or national origin.

Policies

Hours

School hours are 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m., with the exception of students in pre-K and Kindergarten whose parents have chosen the available half-day schedule. The half-day hours for those students are 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. It is required that the children not be brought to school before 7:30 a.m. and that they be picked up no later than 3:15 p.m.

Registration and Tuition

Registration – Information will be published in February with dates for early enrollment and fees. Registration fees are not refundable. All fees and records must be received prior to the first day of school.

Tuition – Tuition is determined by the Commission. A schedule of tuition will be provided by the school along with the registration information. The tuition may be paid annually, semi-annually, 10 or 12 monthly payments. Monthly payments are due on the 1st of each month from August through May. Tuition is delinquent after the 10th day of the month in which it is due. A late fee of \$15.00 is added if paid after the 10th but before the 15th; after the 15th, the late fee is \$25.00. Checks or cash are accepted. If paying by check, remit payment to Covenant Christian School. Tuition is to be paid in the office or mailed. If mailed, the envelope should be addressed to 105 S. George Wallace Drive, Troy, AL 36081, and should be **postmarked** no later than the 9th of the month, otherwise it is considered late.

The Commission understands that financial difficulties sometimes arise unexpectedly; therefore, families are encouraged to contact the Commission regarding any financial hardship resulting in an inability to pay. Communication is essential because after two consecutive months of delinquency, the student(s) is suspended. The grace period is over after 60 days of nonpayment. If tuition and late fees are not paid by the 10th of the month following the grace period, the student is suspended on the 11th. Once a student has been suspended for nonpayment, there is no additional grace period. Tuition payments must be made on time each month or suspension and/or expulsion will occur. Report cards/records will not be released until all fees are cleared.

Attendance/Tardiness

Consistent school attendance is critical for the student to succeed academically. In addition, it promotes the discipline necessary for a student to reach his/her potential. Accordingly, families are expected to provide a written excuse for all absences. If the absence is medical in nature, a doctor's note is required for the absence to be excused. The days excused will correlate to the doctor's note. If the absence is unexcused, the family is responsible for obtaining all missed work. The teacher will make it available for the family to pick up by 3:00 p.m. the same day. Families should not expect or ask for work to be made available prior to 3:00 p.m.

Classes begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. and students entering even a few minutes late cause a hindrance to the schedule. Students entering the classroom after 8:00 a.m. are considered tardy. Three (3) tardies are equivalent to one (1) unexcused absence. Parents/guardians are asked to have their children at the school no later than 7:55 a.m. **ANY STUDENT ARRIVING AFTER 8:00 A.M. WILL BE CONSIDERED TARDY.** If a student is tardy for the third time during a grading period, he/she will be suspended for one day. For each additional tardy during the grading period, the student will be suspended for one day. The suspension days will be considered unexcused absences. At the discretion of the School Commission, the parents/guardians of frequent offenders may be asked to meet with the Commission. The only exceptions will be for K-3 and K-4 students.

Students 1st grade and higher must stay until 12:00 p.m. to be considered present. Any student checking in after 9:30 a.m. or checking out prior to 12:00 p.m. will be considered absent for one-half of a day. Written notes (or verbal communication from the parents/guardians) are required for late check-in and early checkout as well.

Students are required to attend all educational field trips unless the student has a medical excuse. If a student does not attend or provide a written excuse, he/she will receive one unexcused absence. Participation is also required for all school programs unless there is a medical excuse.

Additionally, the Commission will contact the parents/guardians of any student within the compulsory school age if eight (8) unexcused absences are accrued. Covenant Christian works with governmental agencies and will report truancy. The Commission may also expel the student if the family does not cooperate.

In the event of inclement weather, CCS follows the same guidelines as the local school systems. Notification of closure or late start will be reported via media outlets, i.e., WTBF radio (94.7 FM or 970 AM on the dial); local TV stations (WSFA, WAKA) early morning news (5:00 a.m. or 6:00 a.m.); or local TV station websites (www.wsfa.com or www.waka.com) on the internet. If Covenant Christian School is not specifically named, follow the guidelines given for Troy City Schools and/or Pike County Schools. **Please do not try to call the school office—there is a possibility no one will be available to take your call.**

Medical Guidelines

If a student becomes ill while at school, parents/guardians will be contacted to make arrangements to take the student home. The student will be isolated until he/she is picked up and the responsible adult is required to remove him/her from school. If the student has fever, diarrhea, or is vomiting, he/she must remain at home until the symptoms have subsided for 24 hours. This is also true for the 24 hours leading up to the school day. In the event that a child has an infectious disease, open wound, or lice, then the school staff and teachers will follow the established procedure 04-02-005.

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to read and to adhere to school policies and to submit to the school requested information, forms, and/or other documents. **The parent's/guardian's failure to notify the school of a medical condition(s) for which a student may require medication to be administered at school may result in the revocation of the student's enrollment privileges at Covenant Christian School.**

Homework

Student Responsibilities - It is the responsibility of the student to write down all assignments, under the supervision of the teacher. It is

the parents'/guardians' responsibility to make sure the homework is done at home. Teachers conscientiously assign homework, and no exceptions will be made due to extracurricular activities. If a student is absent, make-up work is due at the teacher's discretion. If clarification of assignments is needed, the student should ask the teacher for additional help during normal school hours. It is not our policy to make teachers accessible for homework questions after school. Each teacher is given the authority to accept or refuse after-school calls.

Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities – It is the job of every parent/guardian to provide at-home support for homework. Each family must create and implement a strategy that ensures time is available for at-home guided practice. In other words, asking your student if their work is done without looking at it is unadvised. Teachers require parents'/guardians' signatures to acknowledge understanding of assignments and due dates. It is the parents'/guardians' job to look at the information sent home and sign. The signature obligates the parents/guardians and student to uphold their portion of educational responsibilities.

Discipline

Since God created man in His own image, we know that each student is unique and valuable in His eyes. Therefore, each student is worthy of personal admonition and loving correction. *“For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines.”* (Hebrews 12:6) However, each person is fallen and is by nature rebellious and in need of instruction and correction in order for his/her full potential in Christ. *“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it yields a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”*

Good discipline in the school is extremely important to the total school program regarding respect of authority and peers and is vital to the development of Christian character and good citizenship. Corporal means of discipline will be administered at the discretion of the teacher and or administration when other disciplinary measures have failed or when the nature of the offense requires it. No corporal punishment will be administered in front of other students and there will always be two adult school representatives present.

If a discipline problem persists, or if it cannot be dealt with immediately in the judgment of the teacher, then a parent/guardian may be contacted to come to the school. The student will be removed from the classroom in order for the parent/guardian to correct the problem. When the problem has been corrected, the parent/guardian will return the student to the classroom for apologies as appropriate under the circumstances and resumption of normal classroom activities. If, in the judgment of the Commission, a student's parents/guardians are not adequately cooperative in disciplinary measures, or if all disciplinary measures are not sufficiently effective to control a student's behavior, the Commission reserves the right to remove, suspend or expel the student.

Substance Abuse

It is expected of all students that they will not use or possess tobacco, alcoholic beverages, intoxicants or controlled substances at any time except for medication prescribed by a qualified physician. Any possession of such substances is prohibited on school grounds or during any school function, including field trips. Such harmful substances include tobacco without regard to whether it is used during a covered period.

The inappropriate use of potentially harmful substances, such as intoxicating inhalants, is prohibited on school grounds or during school functions. A teacher is authorized to take possession of any potentially harmful substance which he/she deems inappropriate at school, or at school functions or on school grounds, to be returned to the student's parents/guardians.

Confirmed illegal use or illegal possession of controlled substances will be referred to the appropriate legal authorities and will be grounds for immediate dismissal of the individual(s).

Students taking medication are to do so according to school policies.

Food

Snacks – There is an optional snack time at 10:00 a.m. If your child is going to participate, please send a small, healthy snack with the

student and designate it as a snack if your child is in pre-K. If a drink is sent, do not send carbonated, purple or red drinks. Drinks and snacks will be available each day for 50¢ each at the “snack store.” You may send in money on a weekly basis, and your child will receive “coins” to spend. Parents take turns providing snack store. You will receive a monthly calendar detailing who has responsibility for providing snack.

Lunch – Students may purchase or bring their lunches. We provide a hot lunch menu that may be ordered on Fridays for the week. All money and forms must be turned in Friday morning by 8:00 a.m. in order to be processed. We do not provide refrigerators, so please use insulated lunch boxes. Also, due to numbers, we cannot allow students to microwave lunches. Only grades K-3 and K-4 will have microwave use by teachers. For students in grades K-5 and above, you will need to send pre-cooked food that will not require heating. If a student forgets his/her lunch, you will be called and asked to bring it to the office. We do not encourage parents/guardians to eat with students, as this can be disruptive. If there is a special occasion or family visiting and you wish to eat with your child, notify the teacher so arrangements can be made. Parents/guardians/ family are not allowed to eat in the room with students, so communication is important as there may not be an available space that day.

Holidays and Parties

You are welcome to bring refreshments for a special occasion/ birthday. You must notify the teacher **PRIOR** to the day of the occasion. If invitations are passed out at school, they must be given to everyone in the classroom. Private parties must be handled out of school.

It is the goal of Covenant Christian School to carry out the process of education with Christ at the center and in a manner that unites us. Regarding matters that are not essential to the gospel, we strive to avoid causing divisions. We do not teach or deny the existence of holiday characters; however, we do not allow clothing/curriculum/ activities that advocate said characters. We ask parents/guardians to support a position of neutrality, as these are not central to the primary mission of the school.

Toys

Students are not to bring toys from home. If a “show and tell” or project requires this, the teacher must clear the item first. This includes books and/or electronic devices as well. A teacher may confiscate any item not cleared first and require the parents/guardians to pick it up at an agreed-upon time.

Dress Code

All students and parents/guardians are expected to know and be compliant with the uniform policies. Ignorance of the policies will not be accepted as an excuse. A complete list of appropriate styles/lengths/ colors is provided to each family. The only exceptions are school-ordained activity days that may require apparel adjustments. The school will communicate any of these exceptions. If a student is not in compliance with the dress code, a violation form will be sent home for signature. After the second violation in a 9-week period, a fine of \$5.00 will be assessed for any proceeding offense. If the noncompliance merits, a parent/guardian will be called and asked to pick up the child or provide appropriate clothing. Any absence due to dress code violation is unexcused. It is important to understand that Covenant Christian School does not require a specific brand of clothing, only compliance with the stated lengths, colors and styles. It is also mandatory for each student to purchase a field trip logo shirt. Information is provided in the front office and is also sent in each acceptance packet. A student who does not have the appropriate field trip clothing will not be allowed to go and must be picked up. This would also be an unexcused absence. By signing the handbook covenant, each family is agreeing to comply with the fully-elaborated dress code provided to each family. Failure to comply can result in a Commission disciplinary meeting and/or suspension.

(1) Dresses, skirts, skorts and shorts (girls and boys) must be of modest design. The length of skirts, skorts and/or shorts will be no shorter than 4 inches from the ground while kneeling. Measuring for the appropriate length is the responsibility of the parents/guardians but will be measured for verification by an appropriate staff member as necessary. Shorts must be worn under dresses at recess/physical education/recreation times.

(2) Clothing must be clean and in good repair.

(3) Shirttails must be tucked in (both girls and boys).

(4) All students are **required** to have a collared school logo shirt for school field trips and other special events. The student will not be allowed to leave the school on the field trip if he/she is not wearing the required shirt.

(5) Shoes must be worn at all times and ***must be designed to fit so that they stay on the feet during normal daily activities*** and are functional to the activity. Boys must wear socks except when wearing sandals. **NOTE: High heels and flip-flops are not allowed.**

(6) Boys are not allowed to wear earrings. Visible body piercing (other than girls' earlobes) is not allowed. Tattoos and branding are not permitted.

(7) Hairstyles and makeup should not be distracting to others nor a hindrance to good reading or study habits. Hair dyes are not acceptable. Boys may not wear hair lengths that are longer than the shirt collar.

Visitation

Parents/guardians are asked not to visit the student's classroom during school hours unless arrangements have been made in advance. If you need to bring something to the student or check the student out early, please go to the office and ask the secretary to handle the visit to the classroom in order to minimize the disruption to the class.

Arrival and Pick-up

School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. Please have students at school by 7:55 a.m. to ensure they are in the classroom by 8:00 a.m. Also, only pre-K students may be escorted to the classroom. Kindergarten and up should be able to be escorted in by the teacher on duty. We will help students with projects/materials that need to be brought in. Please do not get out of your car when dropping off/picking up students unless you are appropriately parked in a designated parking spot. If a teacher conference is scheduled or a special need arises, the parents/guardians should drop the child off, then park. Enter the office and the secretary will contact the teacher. Parents/guardians are not to linger in the school building. If this takes place, they will be asked to go to the

office and wait. Students will be escorted out of the building for pick-up. If you arrive prior to 2:45 p.m., please park. Parents/guardians are to place the name of the family in the right side of the windshield for the first two weeks of school. If someone else on the approved list of contacts is picking up your child, have them place the family name in the windshield as well. This will cut down on traffic backup.

Non-enrolled Children

Due to safety and risk concerns, non-enrolled children may not participate in any school-sanctioned activity, including recess, lunch, field trips or any on- or off-campus activity, without prior approval. The only exception is for chaperones bringing their non-school-age children on age-appropriate field trips. Additionally, functions/activities may be held at school in which non-enrolled children may attend. The school will communicate this with families prior to the event.

Student's Progress or Behavior

If you have a question about your child's progress or behavior, please do not approach the teacher with your questions when bringing the student to school or when picking him/her up. This is not fair to the teacher as he/she is not prepared to give his/her full attention to your questions without advance notice. If you have a question for your child's teacher, please call the secretary to set up an appointment with the teacher. This will insure that you will have a satisfactory meeting. In fact, the Commission urges you to meet with your child's teacher at least once each calendar quarter.

These rules are necessary to ensure that each school day is as orderly and as productive as possible. Our only concern is for the students' social, academic and spiritual growth. Both the Commission and the teachers welcome and encourage your input and involvement with our school with these basic guidelines.

Asbestos Management

In compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Management Emergency Response Act, Covenant Christian School facilities have been inspected for asbestos-containing building materials and a special Management Plan has been developed by an accredited engineering

firm. This Management Plan contains the results of the inspection and recommends response actions in the event of ACBM identification. A copy of the Management Plan for the school is available for your review in the school office during normal office hours.

Vandalism Policy

Vandalism – The intentional injury, damage, destruction or defacement of property.

In the event that a student/family is found culpable for any type of vandalism, Covenant Christian School will notify the family and take action. Consequences will be based on the severity of the offense and may include financial compensation for the affected area/item, immediate suspension and dismissal. An account of the act will be documented and become a part of the student's permanent file. The Commission reserves the right to enact immediate consequences.

Playground Rules

- (1) Obey all teacher/supervisor instructions.
- (2) No name-calling or bad language
- (3) Follow all equipment usage rules as outlined by the teacher
- (4) Students may not use the side entrance steps
- (5) No student is allowed to leave the playground for water or bathroom without teacher approval
- (6) No pushing/rough play/tackling
- (7) No dodge ball
- (8) Must dress appropriately for the weather and wear appropriate shoes (see dress code for further clarification)
- (9) Do not wear/bring any valuables/purses on the playground

The teacher on duty will discipline any student who does not comply with the above rules. Students may lose recess privileges if the behavior does not improve. There are two recess periods—one for lower grades and one for upper grades. Recess lasts between 20-30 minutes, depending on the grade level.

Travel Policy

All transportation is provided by families, to and from school as well as field trips. All carpool arrangements are to be made by parents/guardians and must be communicated to the teacher. Teachers are not allowed to let a child leave with someone who is not on the approved pick-up list. Students will not be allowed to make carpooling arrangements at school; this must be handled by the parents/guardians prior to pick-up. If a parent/guardian wishes to drive for a field trip, the following criteria must be met:

- ◆ Must have a valid Alabama driver's license on file in the school office.
- ◆ Must have valid insurance on the vehicle used for transportation on file in the office.
- ◆ Must be 21 years of age or older.
- ◆ Must have operational seat belts for each rider. These must be worn at all times.
- ◆ Must be a teacher-approved driver (faculty/parent/guardian).
- ◆ Any additional minors/adults must be approved by the teacher (other than driver's additional children).
- ◆ The driver assumes supervisory responsibilities of all students in the vehicle for the entirety of the field trip.
- ◆ Drivers are not to make unplanned stops or detours from the trip route without prior approval by the teacher.

Students may not be released to anyone other than the designated parents/guardians responsible for that child. Any other arrangements must be made in writing and submitted to the teacher for approval. No child may leave a field trip; all must return to the school for pick-up unless the child is riding with the parent/guardian.

Clubs

Clubs must have an approved adult sponsor and must meet the following criteria:

- ◆ Sponsor must be at least 21 years of age
- ◆ Sponsor must be willing to commit to the club for at least one semester
- ◆ Sponsor must be approved by the Commission and must submit an overview of purpose/activities

Clubs that are exclusive (i.e., Honor's Club, girls or boys clubs) should have a clear set of guidelines for membership and may not be exclusive due to ethnic, racial or popularity-based grounds. All charters, rules and meeting minutes must be recorded and available for review by the Commission.

Meeting times cannot conflict with classroom time. There must be two adults in the building or area during the meeting. Meetings may take place before or after school. The Commission must approve any club-related field trips. All areas used must be cleaned up prior to leaving.

Fundraisers

Fundraisers must be pre-approved by the Commission and have a clear set of guidelines. All families are required to participate in two fundraisers annually. Tuition does not cover the operational costs of the school; we have fundraisers to help meet operational costs. If you do not wish to participate you will be assessed a fundraiser fee as determined by the School Commission.

Work Days

The school will hold three to four work days throughout the school year. Each family is required to participate in one. Attendance will require a two- to three-hour commitment on a Saturday. Families will receive a schedule of dates and must sign up for one of the work days and attend. If a family does not wish to send a representative, a \$100 service fee must be paid. There will be no makeup opportunities. If a family does not attend, the service fee will be billed to the student's tuition.

Grievances

If a parent/guardian has a grievance regarding any of the stated policies, first contact the teacher. If the grievance cannot be addressed or clarified sufficiently, the parent/guardian should submit a written request to meet with the School Administrator and the teacher. The request should outline the concern and provide times of availability for

contact. If, after this meeting, the issue is not resolved to your satisfaction, you may make a **written** request to meet with representatives of the School Commission.

SCHOOL/PARENT COVENANT

Covenant Christian School strives to assist families in providing a Christ-centered, academically excellent education for their children. The school and families partner together in a covenant, a binding agreement, in order to accomplish this task. Both parties must agree to seek wisdom and walk with the love and patience as we fulfill the call of Jesus, to be one as He is one with the Father and Spirit. Understanding the depth of this commitment, Covenant Christian School covenants to:

- ◆ Provide educational facilities and resources to the children within its policies; and
- ◆ Be guided by Scripture in the policies, practices and procedures.

Likewise, each family covenants to:

- ◆ Conduct themselves in a manner that is supportive of school doctrine and policies.
- ◆ Strive to provide a home environment that supports the teachings and principles of the school.
- ◆ Cooperate with the school and its faculty and staff and to abide by the policies and procedures adopted by the Commission; and
- ◆ Pay all tuition and fees for the entire duration of enrollment.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

(All parties involved in the child's home who may interact with the school must sign.)

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, _____, enrolled in
(Name of Student)

Covenant Christian School, and my parents/guardians, hereby acknowledge by our signatures that we have received and read, or had read to us, the foregoing handbook and code of student policies. We also acknowledge that we understand that it applies to all students enrolled in Covenant Christian School and school-sponsored activities and events, including but not limited to the following:

- ◆ School buses or any other transportation provided by the school
- ◆ Field trips
- ◆ Club or organization meetings
- ◆ School groups representing the school in educational events
- ◆ Occupants in an automobile driven or parked on school property
- ◆ Other school-sponsored events.

We also hereby agree to abide by the policies as stated herein as well as those policies that shall be implemented by the administration as they shall deem necessary.

Student's Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

NOTE: Please detach pages 16 & 17 after signing and have the student return it to the teacher. This acknowledgement will become a part of the student's cumulative file and is required for attendance.