

BETHLEHEM CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
Lower School (Early Childhood – 5th)

Parent/Student Handbook

2023-2024

BE MORE...

Lower School Campus
3100 Hecktown Road
Bethlehem, PA 18020

Lower School Campus (610)-868-6020
www.bethlehemchristianschool.org



Mission Statement

Bethlehem Christian School exists to assist Christian parents in their responsibility of training their children by providing a complete educational program that is Biblically sound, Christ-centered and academically excellent.

Vision

Bethlehem Christian School's vision is to cultivate students who view the world through a Biblical lens, practice critical thinking, are effective communicators, and ultimately steward their gifts to serve the Lord in their home, in their church, and in their community.

Core Values

Bethlehem Christian School is a **Christian school** – Our staff are all Bible-believing evangelical Christians who are active in their local Church. The majority of the curricular materials we use come from Christian publishers. The entire program is administered according to a Biblical, Christ-centered worldview.

Bethlehem Christian School is a **covenant** Christian school – Our mission is to partner with Christian families in the training of their children from an overtly Christian worldview.

Bethlehem Christian School is **innovative** – We leverage our curricular freedom to engage in varied activities and provide unique opportunities for our students.

Bethlehem Christian School values **accessibility** – We strive to grow our footprint to be accessible to more Christian families in the Bethlehem-Easton corridor.

Bethlehem Christian School values **partnership** – We equip our students for service and work within the many local churches they attend. We bring in the leaders from these churches for opportunities to speak with the youth at large during chapels and special events and also facilitate service, internship and ministry opportunities within the churches.

Educational Philosophy

At Bethlehem Christian School, we believe that true education must seek to meet the needs of the whole child, and engender in that child the positive development of the spiritual, mental, emotional, physical and social aspects of life. BCS acknowledges that an important difference exists between the Christian and non-Christian viewpoints on any given subject. Although knowledge is factually the same for both, no subject can be taught in totality without a foundation in Biblical Truth.

Expected Student Outcomes

Biblically Equipped – BCS graduates will be equipped with Biblical knowledge and principles that strengthen or result in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Biblical Worldview – BCS graduates will have a comprehensive understanding of the world from a Biblical perspective.

Critical Thinkers – BCS graduates will be active learners who think critically, work independently and cooperatively, and creatively solve problems using a variety of resources.

Effective Communicators – BCS graduates will be effective communicators able to use oral, written, and technological forms.

Good Stewards – BCS graduates will be responsible citizens who use their time, talents, and abilities to serve the school, home, church, and community.

Respectful – BCS graduates will demonstrate self-discipline and a respect for God, authority, and others.

Compassionate – BCS graduates will compassionately resolve conflict in a loving, Christ-centered way.

Board of Trustees

The Bethlehem Christian School (BCS) Board of Trustees oversees the continuing operation of the ministry and generally oversees the School's business affairs. The responsibilities of the board include, but are not limited to: making policy, acting on matters of personnel including hiring and firing, establishing tuition and fees, promoting Christian education in the community and praying for the ministry of BCS. The 2023-2024 BCS Board of Trustees:

Dr. John Wilson – President
Josh Wildasin – Vice President
Jason Meyers – Secretary
Sheryl Richards – Treasure
William Castro – Member
Jackie Cornelius – Member
Josh Kachadourian – Member
Joseph Schantz – Member
John Young Jr. – Member

Bethlehem Christian School Association

The school is owned and operated by the Bethlehem Christian School Association, which is an independent, non-denominational, non-profit corporation. Membership in the Association is open to those who agree with the Doctrinal Basis and Purpose of the Association as stated in the Charter, who affirm Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, who can testify to their relationship with Christ by a written testimony, and who support the school by contributing to meet the school's financial needs each year.

Parents and interested friends of the school may apply for membership by submitting an application to the Nominating Committee of the Board of Trustees for review and recommendation to the Board for final action on approval of membership. A member shall remain in the Association by attending each Annual Association meeting. Except by special consent of the Board of Trustees, once a second consecutive Annual meeting is missed, membership shall be considered to have lapsed and the member shall have to reapply for membership. The membership year is from July 1 though June 30 of the succeeding year.

The Association normally holds one meeting each year to receive reports and act on any business necessary to the operation of the school. This annual business meeting is held in May of each year. At such time, at least five members are elected to the Board of Trustees for a three-year term. Additionally, unexpired term vacancies, if any, from resignation or death of a Trustee may also be filled at this election. Members receive copies of the proposed Annual Budget, candidate profiles and voting information prior to the annual May business meeting. The Board of Trustees is responsible to the Association for the direction of the affairs of the school. Association members may, from time to time, be asked to serve on committees of the Board.

Policy Statement

The BCS Parent/Student Handbook is an extension of Board policy and is a reflection of the goals and objectives of the Board. The Board, administration and employees expect students to conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level, maturity, with respect and with consideration for the rights of others. Students are expected to treat teachers, staff, peers, visitors, property, themselves and God with respect and courtesy.

This handbook and school policies, rules and regulations are in effect while students are on school ground, school property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school; while on school-owned and/or school-operated buses or vehicles or chartered buses; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds. School policies concerning conduct are in effect twelve months a year. A violation of the expected behavior and/or conduct may affect a student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities whether the violation occurred while school was in session or not in session.

Bethlehem Christian School reserves and retains the right to modify, eliminate, or establish school policies, rules and regulations as circumstances warrant, including those contained in the handbook. Students are expected to know the contents of the handbook and comply with it. Students entering into grades K-12 will be expected to sign a Student Agreement. Students or parents with questions or concerns may contact the school for information about the current enforcement of policies, rules or regulations of BCS.

Statement of Faith

We believe that the Bible, made up of 66 books, verbally inspired, and free from error in doctrine, fact and ethic, I.e., inerrant, is the Word of God and the only infallible and authoritative rule of faith and practice.

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existent in three co-equally persons Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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 imminent personal and physical return in power and glory.

We believe that man was created in the image of God, but that through sin, he brought upon himself and his posterity, not only physical death, but also spiritual death which is separation from God; that all human beings by physical birth possess a sinful nature and are therefore actual sinners in thought, word, and deed; and that man, as such, is condemned to hell and utterly unable to remedy his lost condition by himself or by ecclesiastical rite.

We believe that the salvation of lost and sinful man is a free gift of God, is grace apart from works, based solely upon Christ, His vicarious and atoning death, effected by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, and received by trusting in Christ's finished work on the cross.

We believe in the Deity and present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by Whose solitary baptism of every believer at the moment of regeneration and by Whose indwelling each Christian is enabled to lead a godly life as manifested by the fruit of the Spirit.

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.

We believe in spiritual unity of all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

BCS believes that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive covenant union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). The BCS Statement of Faith expects BCS parents and students to maintain a lifestyle based on what are biblical standards or moral conduct. Violations of Biblical standards include, but are not limited to, any form of sexual promiscuity, heterosexual or homosexual activity outside the marriage covenant between one man and one woman, attempting to change or act outside of one's God-ordained biological gender, or any other activity contrary to the unique, God-given and complementary roles of male and female. (Exodus 10:14' Leviticus 18:8-23; 20:10-21; Deut. 5:18; Matthew 5:27-28; 15:19; Romans 1:21-27; I Corinthians 6:9-20).

Non-discrimination Statement/Harassment/EEO/Bullying Policy

As in accordance with biblical mandates to show compassion, Bethlehem Christian School does not condone or allow bullying or harassment of others, whether by employees, supervisors, students, or other persons who may be present in our facilities or at school-sponsored events. All students, employees and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the dignity of others on school property or at any school-sponsored activity or function. Any threat of violence or intimidation will result in an immediate response by school officials.

Harassment is defined as any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward another person which is:

- 1) Based on any of the following actual or perceived traits or characteristics: age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation,

gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status; and

- 2) Creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:
 - a) Places the person in reasonable fear of harm to person or property.
 - b) Has a substantially detrimental effect on the person's physical or mental health.
 - c) Has the effect of substantially interfering with academic or job performance.
 - d) Has the effect of substantially interfering with the person's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by this school.

The following activities, absent substantial aggravating factors occurring inside or outside the classroom, do not constitute harassment or bullying:

- 1) Instruction and participation in lessons and worship service.
- 2) Discussions and debate concerning issues important to Christian faith.
- 3) Electronic, written, verbal and physical interpretation of biblical scripture, and religious texts, music and opinion.
- 4) Witnessing and faith-sharing

Sexual harassment, one of the forms of harassment prohibited by this policy is defined as follows:

- 1) Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or otherwise creating an intimidating, uncomfortable, bothersome, hostile or offensive working or learning environment.
- 2) Making submission to, or rejection of, such conduct the basis for employment or education decisions affecting any person.

Any person who believes he/she has been subjected to bullying or harassment should report it immediately (within 24 hours) to an appropriate superior. A student may report to a teacher, administrator, or principal as well as discussing the incident with the student's parent or guardian. An employee may report to the Head of School or principal. However, the Head of School is responsible for receiving reports and ensuring this policy is implemented. All suspected harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the Head of School or his/her designee.

Any person who is determined to have violated this policy will be subject to corrective action and discipline, including the possibility of termination (for employees), expulsion (for students), or criminal charges if determined appropriate to file.

It is the policy of Bethlehem Christian School to provide equal education and employment opportunities. As a Christian school, Bethlehem Christian School reserves the right to discriminate or impose qualifications based on religion, gender identity or sexual orientation as allowed by the Pennsylvania Civil Rights Act. Nothing in this policy, or any other policies of the school, shall be construed to limit, inhibit, or otherwise restrict the genuine expression of religious belief or conviction, or the free exercise thereof, as expressed in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America.

Bethlehem Christian School admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to the students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship and financial aid programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Conflict Resolution Policy (Complaints/Conflicts/Concerns)

Bethlehem Christian School believes that as Christians, it is God's will that we live and work together in harmony. In the event of a complaint, conflict, or concern, the Bible commands us to resolve all disputes in a private manner and to reconcile ourselves with one another. As laid out in I Corinthians and Matthew, conflicts among Bethlehem Christian School persons are expected to be resolved in accordance with biblical procedures and precepts.

There are several clear principles that Jesus taught in solving people-to-people problems:

One: The first step and most often the only step needed when an issue arises regarding the school or a classroom situation is one of the two individuals involved to initiate face-to-face dialogue. (Matthew 5:23-24)

Two: If a satisfactory solution to both parties cannot be reached through initial communication or conference, an appointment should be arranged with the appropriate administrative representative, at which point an amicable solution should be reached.

Three: If the issue remains unresolved and the previous two steps have been taken, only then should person(s) seek the involvement of the BCS Head of School. (Matthew 18:15-19)

Four: If following the meeting with the BCS Head of School, a resolution has not been found, the last recourse for the parties would be to submit a written request summarizing their individual concerns to the President of the Board of Trustees. The President, in consultation with the Executive Board, will examine the submitted written request and issue and may take one or more of the following actions:

- Direct the matter back to the BCS Head of School for resolution.
- Present the issue as a Board agenda item for review and response.

- Convene a special meeting of the Board to consider the concerns.
- Invite the person(s) who submitted the concern to appear before the full Board.

In summary, the Matthew 18 principle requires that parents talk to teachers about student problems before they talk to their administrators. If unresolved at the two-person level, the matter is prayerfully and in an orderly fashion moved upward in the school organizational structure. This is the Lord's way of solving people-to-people problems.

Academic Probation

All students new to BCS begin their enrollment on academic and behavior probation for the first nine weeks. Students who continue to exhibit academic or behavior difficulties may be recommended to the administrator for possible withdrawal from school.

Late Work

Student assignments are due on the date identified. Late work will be accepted at a 15% deduction on the final grade per day work is late.

Academic Standing

Each student admitted to BCS is assumed to have the preparation, the ability and the desire to achieve success at BCS. However, some students do not make the progress expected of them. These students are notified and receive academic counseling in sufficient time to improve their performance. If the student's performance does not lead to the necessary improvement, the student will be advised to locate a more appropriate placement. Listed below are the BCS academic standings and consequences for students who are not in good academic standing.

- **GOOD STANDING:** The minimum cumulative average required for Good Standing is a 70% for all students per semester.
- **WARNING:** Whenever the semester cumulative average of a student slips below a 70%, the parents and student will be notified that the student has been placed on Warning. The student is instructed to seek the counsel of his or her teachers in the course work in which he/she is doing poorly. The student is counseled to seek tutoring. If a student on Warning is unable to return to Good Standing after one semester, the student is placed on Probation.
- **PROBATION:** Whenever the student's cumulative average drops below the limit of 70% for more than one semester, the student is placed on probation. If a student is unable to return to Good Standing after two semesters on probation the student and parents are required to meet with the administrator to discuss whether continuing at BCS is in the student's best interest. Additionally, the student will forfeit the privilege to participate in extracurricular activities such as athletics, school play, choir, student government and leadership in Chapel or any other leadership positions.

Grading Scale

A+	97-100	O	90-100
A	93-96	S	70-89
A-	90-92	N	60-69
B+	87-89	U	below 60
B	83-86		
B-	80-82		
C+	77-79		
C	73-76		
C-	70-72		
D+	67-69		
D	63-66		
D-	60-62		
NC	Below 60		

Grading

- Progress reports for each class will be made available for every student in the middle of each nine-week grading period.
- A minimum of one test grade, three daily grades, and five homework grades will be represented on each progress report.
- The progress report will include an “O”, “S”, “N” or “U” grade and general comments.
- Grading periods are divided into four nine-week quarters.
- Report cards are issued quarterly via RenWeb. A hard copy is available upon request.

Homework

Teachers are to remember that excessive homework can become a burden for the student and the family. Purposeful activities for additional learning and additional knowledge acquisition are encouraged. Discretion and sensitivity must be exercised on evening with heavy school-sponsored activities. General guidelines for amounts of homework are as follows:

- Kindergarten average approximately 30 minutes (total of all subjects)
- Grades 1-2 average approximately 45 minutes (total of all subjects)
- Grades 3-5 average approximately 60 minutes (total of all subjects)

Homework for Wednesday evenings will be modified so as to allow time for church activities. However, parents and students should be aware that some assignments given prior to Wednesday could be due on Thursday.

Policy for Advancing a Grade

A sincere and conscientious effort is made at the time of admission to place a student at the proper grade/age level. There will be circumstances where the administration recommends testing for grade appropriateness. Advancing a grade is not generally considered to be a

beneficial practice and will rarely be considered or permitted by BCS. The school administration, in partnership with the parents, will always consider nonacademic factors, including maturation, social development and emotional readiness.

Policy for Grade Retention

Current BCS students with a final cumulative grade in ELA, Math, Science and social Studies of less than 60% will be recommended for retention.

Expected School-wide Learning Results (ESLRs)

Biblically Equipped – BCS students will be equipped with biblical knowledge and principles that strengthen or result in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Students will demonstrate a Biblical Worldview and be able to effectively communicate and defend their faith.

Critical Thinkers & Effective Communicators – BCS students will be active learners who think critically, work independently and cooperatively, and creatively solve problems using a variety of resources. Students will be effective communicators able to use oral, written, and technological forms. Students will be lifelong learners who strive for academic excellence and perform at or above grade level in all subjects in accordance with state standards.

Stewards – BCS students will be responsible citizens who use their time, talents, and abilities to serve the school, home, church, and community. Students will demonstrate self-discipline and respect for God authority and others. Students will compassionately resolve conflict in a loving Christ-centered way.

Achievement Testing

In order to assess our academic program and to provide comparative data to the school community, BCS will conduct standardized testing annually in grades 2-8. A national norm-referenced test, which has a high degree of validity and reliability, will be used.

Attendance

Under Pennsylvania Public School Code, Bethlehem Christian School must adhere to compulsory school laws and/or attendance guidelines. Pennsylvania state law requires that school age children are in attendance when school is in session. Parents removing their child for family trips may take curriculum materials and follow lesson plans posted on RenWeb. Upon return to school, the completion of missed classwork and/or assessments is at the discretion of the classroom instructor.

Absence & Tardiness:

- **PA law requires a written reason for any absence/tardy from school**
- Absence and/or Tardiness must be signed and submitted to the student's teacher within 2 days of the absence or tardy.
- Tardiness – the student arrives to campus up to two hours late.

- Half-day absence – the student is out of school for more than two but less than five hours (a written parental note or doctor’s excuse will be necessary)
- Full-day absence – the student is out of school for five hours or more (a written parental note or doctor’s excuse will be necessary)
- Guidelines for completion date of all outstanding assignments are as follows:
 - Class assignments K-5: Make-up days are equal to the number of school days missed.
 - Tests K-5: Make up days are equal to the number of school days missed.

Successive Absence:

- A doctor’s excuse is required along with the documentation after (3) successive absences.
- Report cards will not be issued until all documentation for absences is on file.

Excused/Unexcused Absences:

- Valid excuses according to PA law: illness/quarantine; death of an immediate family member and/or impassable roads.
- Unexcused absences will result in a grade of zero on all scheduled work, quizzes, and tests given during the day of absence. An out of school disciplinary suspension is considered unexcused.
- Three (3) unexcused/unlawful absences are cause for legal action by the school district in which the student resides.
- Examples of unlawful absences are the following: parental neglect or lack of control/truancy; missing the school bus; oversleeping; hunting or fishing; shopping; working or family trips.

Progressive Attendance Action:

- A warning letter will be mailed to the parent after ten days of absence due to illness.
- After fifteen days of absence due to illness; a doctor’s excuse will be required for any and all absences. Failure to provide the required doctor’s excuse will result in an unlawful absence.
- Absences due to illness beyond 15 days, that are not accompanied, are considered excess and will require an administrative conference to determine the cause.
- Absences due to non-illness beyond 15 days will require parents to withdraw their child for the duration of the absence and notify their home school district of their prolonged absence. Parents may choose to seek re-enrollment following the absence.
- The District Magistrate will be notified by the school district following three unlawful absences or absence in excess of fifteen days without a doctor’s excuse.
- The parent is liable for all fines and court costs incurred when a summary offense is warranted.

Retention/Promotion: After thirty days of absence in any school year, notice will be given to the Board of Trustees where a determination will be made regarding the retention or promotion of the student.

Early Dismissal

Students who must be excused from school early for medical, dental or other emergency reasons are required to provide a written note from the parents. Arrangement for make-up work must be made with the teachers of all classes to be missed prior to leaving. If the school plans to dismiss students early, parents will be notified in advance.

Tardiness

It is the responsibility of both the student and the parents to see that the child reports to school and activities on time. If a student is tardy, an late slip must be obtained from the school office before the student can be admitted to class, chapel or activity. Repeated tardiness will result in disciplinary action and a conference with the parents may be requested. If a student accrues three unexcused tardies throughout the year, a note will be sent home. If a student accrues six unexcused tardies, a conference with the campus administrator will take place in order to facilitate the development of a success plan regarding attendance. Any unexcused tardies in excess of six will result in the accumulation of unexcused absences, with six unexcused tardies equaling one unexcused absence.

Doctor's Appointments

Parents are requested to make doctor, dentist, and orthodontist appointments after school hours. However, in the event that it is unavoidable, a physician's note is required when your student returns to school. The student will be marked "excused tardy" or "excused absence" depending on the time away from school.

Arrival and Departure

Start of school:

Upper: 8:10 AM
Lower: 8:20 AM

Dismissal of school:

Upper: 3:00 PM
Lower: 2:50 PM
12:30 PM (Half-day K)

A student will be considered tardy after the starting times noted above.

Snow Days

Occasionally, snow and ice storms make it advisable to issue statements concerning delayed openings, early dismissal, or school closings. These statements are broadcast over our local television station, as well as on the school website and the designated websites listed below. You can also check our social media platforms. Parents are urged to be diligent to watch for these announcements, and are asked not to call the school except in the case of an emergency.

In the event of an early dismissal from school, the school office will send a text alert out to all of our parents who have supplied us with current contact information.

In addition to the BCS website, please stay tuned to the following:

Television

WFMZ69

Internet

www.wfmz.com

www.bethlehemchristianschool.com

www.waeb.com

Behavior Expectations

DISCIPLINE - School discipline is the behavior expectations of student conduct that permits the orderly, efficient and safe operation of the school on a daily basis. Biblical standards of behavior are expected at and away from school. Our Christian lifestyle should exhibit respect for God, respect for others, and respect for yourself. (Biblical references: Romans 13:1; I Corinthians 10:31; and Romans 13:7).

The potential for serious moral misconduct for students is as real in a Christian school as it is in the world. This is particularly true with the emphasis on moral values and the substitution of humanistic principles by secular institutions. Because the focus of BCS is on Christian training, conduct and behavior of BCS students' matters both at school and away from school.

BCS is not the primary entity responsible for corrective discipline; that is the responsibility of the parents and their local church. Therefore, the thrust of the school's action must be the maintenance of conduct standards and the presentation of a biblical role model.

95% of all discipline should be handled in the learning environment via the teacher's classroom management plan. The classroom discipline plan is collaborative at an age-appropriate level so that the "community" can own the guidelines that they help establish. The 5% of the time that a behavior becomes disruptive to the learning environment where the entire class is impacted a referral to the office may be necessary.

Behavior Expectations (Grades EC-5)

CLASSROOM

- Follow directions the first time given.
- Stay on task to complete work.
- Show respect to others.
- Keep hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.
- Accept consequences for behavior.
- Please see individual classroom teacher for specific discipline plan.

HALLWAY

- Walk to the right of the hallway.
- Follow line basics (straight line, hands, and feet to self, no talking).
- Be respectful to others.

RESTROOM

- Respect others privacy.
- Use, flush, wash, leave.

LUNCHROOM

- Keep hands and feet to self while eating.
- Use an inside voice.
- Leave your area neat and clean.
- Follow directions of the lunchroom supervisor.

PLAYGROUND

- Obey the teacher at all times.
- Do not leave the playground area without permission from the teacher.
- Always SIT on the swings. Use your FEET to stop the swing. Do not JUMP from the swing. Never run behind the swings while others are swinging
- Use appropriate behavior; no pushing, shoving, wrestling, fighting, etc.
- The slide is for going down while seated only. After sliding down, move quickly.
- Students may hang on the monkey bars but not walk across them or jump off.
- Line up in the designated area at the end of the recess time.

COLD WEATHER

- Children will go outside when:
 - wind chill or standing temperature in the mid to upper 30s or above.
 - No active precipitation.
 - No public announcement that advises caution due to extreme weather.
 - No ice on the playground equipment and/or black ice on the parking lot.
 - Non-soggy conditions on playground and/or non-slippery conditions on the parking lot.

HOT WEATHER

Children will not go outside when:

- the heat index is in the mid to upper 90s or a combination of relative humidity and temperature are in the danger category of the Heat Index Chart.
- No public announcement that advises caution due to heat that may cause health problems.

EC-5 Referral Process

First Referral:

- Meeting with the administration for redirection; note to parents

Second Referral:

- note to parents; 30-minute detention

Third Referral

- note to parents; 1-day in-school suspension

Fourth Referral

- 1-day out of school suspension

Fifth Referral

- 2-day out of school suspension

Sixth Referral

- Meeting regarding continued enrollment at BCS

Assignments missed due to suspension will be completed but will receive a "0".

Weapons

Pennsylvania law prohibits weapons of any kind on school property. BCS considers student possession, use or threat of the use of weapons as a serious offense and will not tolerate possession by students on school property, at school events, or any other time the student is enrolled. Students who possess a weapon or who carry, exhibit, display or draw any items apparently/ostensibly capable of producing bodily harm in a manner which, under the circumstances, manifests intent to intimidate another or warrants alarm for the safety of others shall be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.

PDA - Public Displays of Affection

In order to maintain a professional atmosphere of learning, mutual respect, and safety in school, students should refrain from inappropriate, intimate behaviors on campus or at school-related events and activities. Students are expected to conduct themselves respectfully at all times respecting each others personal space. Students involved in inappropriate expressions of affection will be spoken to privately and respectfully with a view to modifying their behavior and educating them. Continued failure will be considered as discipline violation and will result in parent notification and consequences as outlined in the discipline policy.

Bible

The Bible courses at BCS use the NIV version for easy reasoning and consistency of understanding and are not intended to indicate any superiority of accuracy. Effort will always be made to present a foundation grounded in biblical truth for a particular issue with which the student can engage. Once the foundational elements of an issue are presented and considered, the students are then to be referred to parents and/or local church leaders for instruction consistent with the home and church.

Pennsylvania School Immunization Requirements

Children in ALL grades (K-12) need the following vaccines:

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis* (one does on or after the 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given)**
- 2 doses of measles, mumps, rubella***
- 3 doses of hepatitis B

- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

**Usually given as DTP or DTaP or if medically advisable, DT or Td*

***A fourth dose is not necessary if the third dose was administered at age 4 years or older and at least 6 months after the previous dose.*

****Usually given as MMR*

Children ENTERING 7th GRADE need the following additional vaccines:

- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) by the first day of 7th grade.
- 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) by the first day of 7th grade.

ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL, unless the child has a medical or religious/philosophical exemption, a child must have had at least one dose of the above vaccinations or risk exclusion.

- If a child does not have all the doses listed above, needs additional doses, and the next dose is medically appropriate, the child must receive that dose within the first five days of school or risk exclusion. If the next dose is not the final dose of the series, the child must also provide a medical plan within the first five days of school for obtaining the required immunizations or risk exclusion.
- These requirements allow for the following exemptions: medical reason, religious belief, or philosophical/strong moral or ethical conviction: forms must be on file in the school office. Even if your child is exempt from immunizations, he or she may be excluded from school during an outbreak of vaccine preventable disease.
- Pennsylvania's school immunization requirements can be found in 28 Pa.CODE CH.23 (School Immunization). Call 1-877-PA-HEALTH for more information.

Telephone

Students are not permitted to use the phone. Exceptions to this would be emergency calls, which should be made from the front office.

Students are not allowed to use teacher's cell phones during class for personal calls.

Personal cell phones are not permitted in the classroom and must be silenced and stowed in backpacks and/or kept in the hallways. If a student is seen using a personal cell phone, the classroom teacher or building administrator will confiscate the phone. Parents will be notified and must come to the school campus to reclaim the phone.

Accreditation

The Bethlehem Christian School is approved and has license exempt status by the Pennsylvania State Department of Education. The school meets the State's code of requirements.

BCS is affiliated with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and has completed the necessary requirements for and received accreditation from that agency.

Bethlehem Christian School is also accredited by Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

Accidents and Illnesses

Students may become ill or may have an accident during school hours. Parents will be notified as soon as possible. However, the school reserves the right to have emergency treatment administered by a hospital or medical doctor.

Medication

Medication to be administered by the school secretary or principal during the school day, must be individually packaged, accompanied by a parental signed note explaining dosage amounts and times. Over the counter medication will not be provided or stocked due to 2021-2022 restrictions. All prescription medication must be in the original Rx container. A physician's signature is required for all prescription medication.

Allergies

BCS has a number of students with allergies to fish, peanuts/peanut oil, gluten and various animals. Should your student have any allergies, please notify the school secretary. Animals are not allowed inside the classroom without administrative approval. Should a parent desire to bring treats into the classroom, teacher approval must be obtained ahead of time to protect all students in the classroom. All treats must be store bought so that ingredients are clearly displayed.

Technology

Electronic games, MP3 players, I-Pods, iPads, CD players or cell phones are not allowed to be used by students on school grounds at any time unless special permission has been granted by the administration: permission to use these items on school busses must be granted by the individual school bus drivers. If a student is observed using an electronic device on campus by school authorities, the device will be confiscated and returned to the parents.

The Bethlehem Christian School digital network is to be used for educational purposes only. The administration of Bethlehem Christian School shall develop and enforce regulations, procedures, terms and conditions for both device and network use and user agreements consistent with the purposes and mission of Bethlehem Christian School. Stored data, electronic mail transmissions and other use of electronic resources by BCS students are not considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by the administration or its designated representative to ensure appropriate use.

Bethlehem Christian School shall not be liable for the inappropriate use of school's electronic resources or violations of copyright restrictions. Violation of BCS technology policy by a student will result in disciplinary action up to suspension and expulsion.

Elementary Focus on the Holidays

It is BCS's intent to honor the responsibility and privilege of the parents to train up their child with regard to cultural, national, or faith-based holidays such as Christmas, Easter, and Halloween's fictitious characters as they see fit. Our focus is to honor Christ while not undermining the parents. It has been our practice, by choice, to avoid conversations of judgment as to whether the practices of traditions are correct or not and to steer student conversations to other topics. Without apology we desire to help the student concentrate on the abundance of God's provision at fall harvest time, Christ's birth at Christmas and His death and resurrection at Easter.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Throughout the school year, BCS may release for publication a student's name, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors, awards and post-high school plans without the consent of the student or parents. Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) parents have a right to inform the school within a reasonable time that they do not wish certain information to be released without prior consent. FERPA affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day BCS receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the administration a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The designated BCS official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The rights to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask BCS to amend a record should write the school administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, BCS will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has outsourced services or

functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate education interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Bethlehem Christian School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that Administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Field Trips

Field trips are considered valuable supplementary activities to classroom instruction. Parents will be notified in advance. Fees will be charged to cover expenses.

Citizenship

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Romans 13:1

Students will be graded for citizenship. Evaluation of each pupil will be based on the following criteria: conduct, cooperation, effort, initiative, attitude, contribution, regard for others, influence on others, honesty, and respect for all authority.

Student Transportation-Bus/Parents Who Transport

In accordance with Pennsylvania School Transportation Law, transportation to each BCS campus is provided at no cost by some Public School Districts for families who reside in those Districts. Each District has its own method of providing this service, and specific information can be furnished by each campus office. Bethlehem Christian School does not provide transportation. Parents should request bus transportation at the time of registration.

All students who ride the buses will be sent home on their buses to their regular bus stops each afternoon by the teacher, unless parents notify the teacher or school office in advance. If for any reason a change is to be made, parents must send a note of explanation to the teacher in the morning or call the office no later than 2:00pm the day of the change.

As part of our responsibility to the students, we consider teaching basic disciplines of prime importance. Therefore, we expect **parents who transport** their children to demonstrate responsibility and consideration for others in setting an example by having their children to school **on time**, as well as to pick them up or be under parental supervision by 3:00 P.M. If a

student is to leave with anyone other than a parent or to be transported in any way “out of the ordinary” a signed note must be sent containing specific instruction. Also, that assigned person should be prepared to show identification, if necessary. Finally, if a student is going to be tardy or if pickup is later than 3:00 P.M., please call the school office.

If a student is tardy his/her parents must accompany their child to the school office and sign a late slip before the student may go to class.

Notification of Rights - Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- 1. Consent** before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) –
 - Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
 - Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
 - Sex behavior or attitudes;
 - Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 - Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 - Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 - Income, other than is required by law to determine program eligibility.
- 2. Receive** notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –
 - Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 - Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 - Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- 3. Inspect**, upon request and before administration or use –
 - Protected information surveys of student;
 - Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales or other distribution purposes; and
 - Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under Pennsylvania State law. Bethlehem Christian School has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Bethlehem Christian School will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. BCS will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. Bethlehem Christian School will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the administration has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Updated August 2023

Parent/Student Handbook Acknowledgement of Receipt

Please sign and return this page to the Lower School Office by: September 8, 2023

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the content of this handbook and agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained herein.

Student Name (Please Print)

Date

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date