



**Parent-Student Handbook  
2017-2018 School Year**

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## Philosophy of Education

We believe that Christian education extends beyond the informational dimension and is transformational; it is designed to produce thriving disciples of Jesus Christ who love God, love others, and reach out to the world around them.

We believe in the active participation of the Holy Spirit in the educational process. It is the Holy Spirit who leads both teachers and students into all the truth.<sup>1</sup> It is by the leading of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, that enables the teacher to minister to the spoken and unspoken needs of the child's heart. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that regenerates, redeems and renews the child in Christ from an otherwise self-oriented nature (Ephesians 1:13-14).

*<sup>1</sup> John 16:13: But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will only speak what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*

We believe that the final responsibility for the discipline and instruction of the child belongs to the parents. We recognize that education begins in the home and is advanced in the Christian school as an extension of parental authority. Therefore, we seek to work closely with the home in a mutual effort to inculcate in the student those standards and values that are consistent with the Christian worldview.

We believe that in order for education to be consistently Christian, all those who impact the learning environment of the student must themselves be Christian. Within the school context the teacher serves as the primary shaper of a child's heart and mind as defined by the biblical worldview. Teaching and modeling in Christian discipleship by the teacher equips the student to live an exemplary life as a disciple of Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

*<sup>2</sup> Luke 6:40: A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.*

We believe that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom<sup>3</sup> and, consequently, no dimension of life can be rightly understood apart from the grace and knowledge of God. Christian education purposes to set the knowledge of God and of His creation in its right order by the application of biblical truth to every area of life and thought. Biblical integration is the method by which God's Word is infused into every aspect of the school program. All academic disciplines and extracurricular activities alike must be aligned to biblical principles and commands. No teaching, theory, or policy, which contradicts the teaching of Scripture, may be presented as true, practical, or expedient (Colossians 2:8).

*<sup>3</sup> Prov. 1:7: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.*

We believe that Christian education involves training the whole child and encompasses the study of his or her whole world. Each student's unique learning capacity and various talents are designed and given by God Himself. These gifts are bestowed upon each student, empowering them to fulfill the specific destiny for which they were created. Christian education seeks to realize the full potential God has invested in every student. It is not limited to the spiritual and intellectual domains but includes the physical and social domains as well.<sup>4</sup> The core of Christian education is not to be found in what is done for the students; it is to be found in what the students learn to do for themselves. With that in view, we emphasize challenge and affirmation, personal responsibility and self-discipline in our efforts to present each student complete in Christ (Colossians 1:28).

<sup>4</sup>Luke 2:52: *And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

### **Statement of Mission, Vision, and Purpose**

**Mission Statement:** Mission Hills Christian School (MHCS) exists to serve families who desire for their children an education that is distinctly Christian. To this end, we provide a biblically integrated academic program in a godly and loving classroom environment and a safe campus setting. Qualified and committed Faculty and staff train students to identify and achieve their God-given potential.

**Vision Statement:** Christian education is a vital component in the transforming process by which students become the people that God intends them to be. Christian teachers shape the hearts and minds of their students by bringing them into alignment with the truth of God's Word (Luke 6:40; Deut. 6:4-8). Christian schools equip students for life by cultivating the spiritual, intellectual, social and physical dimensions of the whole child (Luke 2:52). Our goal is that each student may be presented mature in Christ (Col. 1:28). This understanding of Christian education provides the backdrop of our expected school wide learning results.

**Statement of Purpose:** The primary objective and purpose of Mission Hills Christian School is to complement the home by providing a Christ-centered environment in which the development of the whole child is promoted through the love of Jesus Christ by the application of biblical truth.

It is our belief that education is a process in which all aspects of the growing child—spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, and physical—should be nurtured in a balanced environment of affirmation and challenge.

## **Statement of Faith/Articles of Faith**

We teach that...

There is one God, existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare His virgin birth, His sinless life, His vicarious and atoning death on the cross, His bodily resurrection and His personal future return.

The Work of the Holy Spirit is to convict unbelievers of their sin, to regenerate the believer unto eternal life, to indwell the Christian as a pledge of redemptive inheritance, to empower the Christian for life and service through the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and to distribute spiritual gifts to believers for the edification of the Church.

The Bible is God's Word, His revelation of Himself and of His redemptive purposes for all human persons. Because God Himself inspired the very words written by the human biblical authors, the Bible is the authoritative and infallible standard for Christian belief and practice. It is truthful and reliable in all that it teaches and affirms.

Salvation is a free gift of God's grace, and is received through faith in Jesus Christ and His vicarious, atoning death on the cross.

The Universal Church is the Body of Christ, founded at Pentecost and comprised of all Christians. The local church is a disciple-making community of believers that is gifted and empowered to fulfill the Great Commission.

### **Articles of Faith**

- We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.
- We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the 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 personal return in power and glory.
- We believe that the salvation of lost and sinful man through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit is essential.
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
- 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 the literal existence of both heaven and hell.
- We believe in the spiritual unity and community of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

## Expected School wide Learning Results

MHCS students will...

<b>P</b>	<p>...possess an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present their personal testimony of salvation</li> <li>• Study and respect the Bible as God’s inspired Word</li> <li>• Express and defend their faith in all situations</li> <li>• Prayerfully look to God and His Word daily as the source of truth and direction</li> </ul>
<b>U</b>	<p>...understand that their bodies are temples in which the Holy Spirit dwells.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibit a godly, healthy lifestyle</li> <li>• Develop God-given abilities</li> <li>• Demonstrate physical, emotional, mental and spiritual fitness</li> <li>• Integrate biblical principles into the physical disciplines</li> </ul>
<b>R</b>	<p>...respect God, authorities, and peers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize God as the author of absolute truth</li> <li>• Model responsible citizenship</li> <li>• Express accountability for their words and actions</li> <li>• Demonstrate consideration of others</li> </ul>
<b>P</b>	<p>...problem solve and think critically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate meaning beyond the obvious in developing high level thinking skills</li> <li>• Collaborate with peers to problem solve and share ideas</li> <li>• Apply biblical principles to moral choices</li> <li>• Demonstrate use of the scientific method</li> </ul>
<b>O</b>	<p>...orient their lives to the needs of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute time, energy, and talents to improve the quality of life in their family, school, community, state, nation, and world</li> <li>• Develop an awareness of and compassion for diverse cultures</li> <li>• Model responsible Christian ethics by acting with justice and mercy</li> <li>• Demonstrate consideration and accountability for their words and actions</li> </ul>
<b>S</b>	<p>...succeed as self-directed learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set realistic personal and academic goals</li> <li>• Demonstrate organization and time management skills</li> <li>• Analyze, integrate, and synthesize new information</li> <li>• Take initiative and have ability to transfer learned skills to new situations</li> </ul>
<b>E</b>	<p>...engage in effective communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read, write, speak, and listen reflectively and critically</li> <li>• Express themselves creatively through art, drama, foreign language, music, or sports</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate competency in written, oral, and technological communication</li><li>• Articulate the precepts of a Christian worldview expressing and defending their faith</li></ul>
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## MHCS Home Visits

### Guidelines

Home Visits are a unique element of the MHCS educational experience. They reflect our desire for each student to be known and cared for as a specially created individual. This time allows the teacher to get to know his/her students outside of the classroom environment and to form a personal bond that will encourage each child's confidence and value inside the classroom. Jesus Himself often went to the homes of individuals, reflecting their special worth and His commitment to the individual's whole life (Matt. 9:23-28; Matt. 6:26; Mark 8:41-51).

In order for Home Visits to be effective with respect to a teacher's time and expense, your cooperation and understanding of the following guidelines is necessary:

1. Home Visits are scheduled the last week in September for elementary students. Early dismissal for students will take place daily in order for teachers to meet with students in the afternoon hours. We encourage you to make this time a priority in your family's schedule.
2. It is our intention that every child receives a Home Visit; however, it is understood that personal scheduling conflicts may make it impossible for every student to receive a visit every year. Home Visits take place during a specified period of time and will not be extended beyond that time.
3. Home Visits are designed with the student in mind. They are not intended to focus on parent questions or concerns. A separate conference can be arranged to accomplish this important purpose. This visit is a special time set aside for students to receive individual attention from their teachers to build a personal relationship early in the school year.
4. Teachers will visit students in a designated geographic area each day. Please sign up for your area on the day it is scheduled. If you are unable to accommodate that schedule, a Home Visit will not be rescheduled due to the logistics involved in changing schedules. Please do not ask a teacher to accommodate your personal schedule.
5. It will be necessary for the teacher to have directions to your home in advance of your scheduled visit. This will help the teacher to make efficient use of travel time, especially in light of today's gas prices. A schedule will be posted prior to Home Visits to make you aware of when your visit fits within a particular day's order. Multiple children in a family will be visited by teachers on the same day.



Alternate plans will be made by the junior high staff in lieu of Home Visits. Junior high will NOT have early dismissal during home visit week.

## **Parent / Teacher Communications**

You are encouraged to contact your child's teacher throughout the year to share positive comments, to discuss issues or ask questions. The teacher will contact the parent to share positive comments, give input or ask questions.

It is the desire of the Faculty to be of service to both parent and student. Please be aware that drop-off and dismissal times are not for parent/teacher conferences. Each teacher welcomes visits from parents; however, such visits must be by prearranged appointment. Call the school office to set up an appointment; a 48-hour notice is required.

It is required that at least one parent attend Parent/Teacher Conferences. The presence of both parents at the conference is especially important to strengthen communication between home and school for the benefit of the student. Conferences are scheduled during the first and third trimesters. This is an excellent time to communicate concerns regarding the student's progress and to make helpful suggestions. Additional conferences may be scheduled at other times of the year by the parent or teacher.

### **Questions and Concerns (Matthew 18:15-17)**

It is important that the lines of communication and fellowship be kept open.

If you have a concern, please follow these steps:

1. Talk to your child; have him/her share the details with you.
  2. Parent and student should talk to the teacher directly to gain further understanding of the situation. In most cases, a productive solution will be reached.
  3. If you still have a concern, a conference will be scheduled with the parent, student, teacher, and a member of the Administration.
  4. Should a concern remain unresolved, you may contact the Head of School.
  5. An appeal can also be made to the School Board. Address a written request to the chairman.
- Any communication that has not followed this progression will be referred back to the appropriate person.

## **Parent Service Hours Policy**

We value the home/school relationship and believe that each family is directed by God to MHCS for its unique ability to further the school's mission through tangible acts of service. The primary objective is to foster an others-oriented environment as the Scriptures encourage:

- Parents are to serve 15 hours per family each year as part of their commitment to the MHCS program and its development. Single-parent families are responsible for 7.5 hours per year. The mandatory nature of this program ensures a minimum, yet reasonable, level of participation from each family.

While the service program is not intended as a fundraiser and buy-outs are not preferred, it is understood that each family's time commitments and circumstances vary. Therefore, service hours may be fulfilled by payment at the rate of \$20/hour.

- Families may decide whether to serve their hours in full or buy them out in advance.
- Payment for hours not served should be submitted to the office.
- Payments may be made in full or in two equal installments of \$150 at the beginning of each semester.

MHCS provides a variety of service opportunities from which families choose to be involved. All family service hours should be done for Mission Hills directly. The following annual opportunities are currently available:

- Classroom help/activities (room parents, carpool drivers, activity coordination, etc.)
- School Board & sub-committees, PTP officers/support
- Development support (Golf Tournament/Gala, others)
- School workdays & school-related outreaches

A maximum of 10 service hours may be earned for any single activity including overnight field trips.

Service hours are recorded through ParentSquare. Log in to your ParentSquare.com account on a desktop (this feature is only available through the website's desktop version). On the left hand side, there is a tab labeled "Participation". Under that tab you will find a link to "Volunteer Hours". Fill out the boxes for date, hours, event and description of the volunteer service (in the additional details box). Don't forget to hit SAVE before logging back out of the website to ensure your hours are properly logged.

## **Daily Pledges**

### **To the United States of America**

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### **To the Christian Flag**

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands. One Savior: crucified, risen, and coming again to bring life and liberty for all who believe.

### **To the Bible**

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's holy Word. I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. I will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God.

### **To God**

I pledge myself to God the Father, who created me and loves me. I live each day by faith in Jesus, His Son, empowered by His Holy Spirit to do His will for His glory.

## School and Parent Agreement

Our desire is to provide our students with an outstanding – and distinctly Christian – educational experience. We also believe students benefit when the school and parents are mutually supportive in pursuing that goal. Toward that end, it is important that we understand what we can expect from each other.

### Parents can expect Mission Hills Christian School to...

Fulfill its mission  
Hire qualified and committed Faculty and staff members to facilitate the mission  
Provide a safe, nurturing environment  
Provide consistent communications regarding your child's progress  
Provide consistent communication about the school  
Provide opportunity for involvement  
Provide consistency in values and discipline

Offer a listening ear at any time  
Respect your child and your family

Provide prayerful support and spiritual integrity in word and deed

### Mission Hills Christian School can expect parents to...

Support the mission of MHCS at home  
Provide a quiet study environment

Provide consistent communication  
Attend school meetings

Be appropriately involved

Support values and policies  
Seek reliable information and not believe rumors  
Respect school Faculty and staff  
Invest resources in support of Christ-centered education  
Provide prayerful support

## Curriculum

Because we value spiritual and academic excellence, all textbooks/teaching aids are carefully chosen to support the instruction of our teachers as they equip students in spirit, mind and body. All materials are tools used by our Faculty to impart knowledge, understanding, and wisdom as God requires (Prov. 9:9-10). MHCS recognizes and affirms the state educational framework and aligns all subject-specific content to state standards wherein they do not violate God's truth.

**Living Curriculum** is what a Christian school teacher represents. Our teachers do not simply impart knowledge, but model the Christian life and its values to students, who after they are fully trained, will be like their teachers (Luke 6:40).

**Bible** is a core subject for all grades. Students are trained in righteousness according to the scriptures (II Tim. 3:16), learning to hide God's Word in their hearts through ongoing memorization. Equally, students learn to apply the scriptures to their daily circumstances.

**Biblical integration** recognizes that all subjects have their origin in God and reflect His handiwork in the world (Col. 1:16-17). Therefore, God's Word informs the teaching of all subjects in order to instill a biblical worldview in each student.

**Reading, writing and mathematics** are the core of a traditional education and are foundational to all other learning. Students are taught in a sequential manner until mastery of the requisite content in the reading, writing and mathematics domains is achieved. Students are trained in library skills throughout elementary grades.

**Prayer, praise and worship** are integral parts of the school day (Psalm 100). Students and teachers pray for the needs in our school, community, nation and world. **Prayer Partners** is a relational program that allows older students to model the Christian walk to younger students.

**Chapel** is held weekly in order to encourage and establish students in their faith. Separate chapels are held to address age appropriate topics at combined grade levels, during which time various programs/speakers are integrated into the chapel format. Parents are welcome to attend.

**Patriotism** is promoted so that each child may grow as a responsible American citizen. Students are taught the enduring principles that this great nation was founded upon. Special attention is given to the Christian heritage of our nation and to those men and women who have acknowledged God's providence in its development (Psalm 33:12).

**Technology** Each student interacts with technology through the use of a laptop computer and/or Chrome book. Students are taught how to use computers for educational purposes as they integrate classroom objectives and computer skills.

**Fine Arts** instruction recognizes the multiple-intelligences of students and provides creative and confidence-building opportunities for them to utilize their God-given talents. Appreciation for the arts is developed through classroom music and art instruction and extra-curricular opportunities.

**Physical Education** is based on the premise that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and are to be treated as such (1 Cor. 6:19). P.E. develops the overall physical fitness of each student, encourages sportsmanship and team play, and prepares the student for a balanced life of physical activity and recreation.

## Accreditation and Membership

Mission Hills Christian School received accreditation from Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in spring 2006. This accreditation serves to:

- Certify to the public that MHCS is a trustworthy institution of learning
- Validates the integrity of our program and student transcripts
- Fosters improvement of our programs and operations to support student learning
- Assures a school community that our purposes are appropriate and being accomplished through a viable educational program
- Manages change through regular assessment, planning, implementing, monitoring and reassessment
- Assists MHCS in establishing our priority areas for improvement as a result of the perpetual accreditation cycle

We are a fully accredited school through the **Association of Christian Schools International** since 1999. Its purpose is to assist Christian education institutions, pre-school through post-secondary, in the improvement of education by establishing an organizational witness to their credibility of performance, integrity, and quality.

ACSI seeks to be evaluative and educative. In the evaluation process, the Association has established standards and criteria by which it reviews its membership and determines their educative process. ACSI provides materials, workshops, seminars, and access to Christian professional educators to assist each school in the development of quality Christian educational programs.

ACSI is dedicated to advancing the cause of Christian education in our nation and abroad. By recognizing outstanding Christian programs and involving them in the accreditation process, the accrediting body establishes a reliable witness of the strength of Christian education to the glory of God.

A few benefits of accreditation are:

- Involvement in an international organization assisting Christian schools and establishing standards of performance and credibility in Christian education.
- Guidance and direction in a self-study and evaluation process. This assistance by professional Christian educators and representatives from peer schools strengthens and improves our school.
- An external witness to our community and parents of our students as to the level of quality and professionalism of our school.
- An indication to other schools, colleges, educational interest groups of our commitment to standards and acceptance by some businesses, industries, and foundations of our status for matching grants and funds.

## **Student Placement Policy**

The majority of students learn to perform successfully in a variety of classroom environments. The ability to adjust to different teacher personalities and a diversified classroom of students, as well as to make new friends each year, is an important life skill.

### **Goals of the Placement Process**

- To prayerfully and seriously consider the best interests of individual students with regard to their specific homeroom placement on an annual basis.
- To create a well-balanced learning environment that best suits the educational needs of all students.

We ask that you trust our judgment in the placement process, as considerable time, effort and prayer is invested by the Faculty and Administration.

*The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs His steps. Prov. 16:9*

## **Non-discrimination Policy**

MHCS does not discriminate on the basis of color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies or programs. We do screen applicants on the basis of religious preference, grade level readiness, and student's potential for success within the MHCS environment.

## **Care and Recreation (C&R) Program**

MHCS provides before and after school care for our families to every day Monday through Friday on regular school and minimum school days.

C&R is available to K-8 students on regular school days from 7:00-8:00am and 1:45/3:00-6:00pm,

Students not picked up 15 minutes after their school day ends will be checked in to C&R.

### **Telephone/Emergencies**

Please contact C&R directly at 589-5279, especially in the case of an emergency when a late pick-up is anticipated. Students are not allowed to use the phone except in an emergency.

### **Pick-up Changes**

Students are released to those listed on the Emergency Contacts only. If any pick-up changes are anticipated, a written note or verbal contact with the front office or C&R director is required to release the student. For your child's safety, students will not be released to siblings less than 18 years of age.

## Emergency Information

Emergency contact information will be kept on file in the school database for each student. The information provided is your authorization for releasing a child, contacting persons authorized to care for your child in an emergency, or pick-up before, during, and after school. A student will **not** be released to anyone who is not listed unless the office has received a signed note from the parent stating otherwise.

### Illness

For the welfare of students and staff members, children must be kept home when sick. Students **remain at home** with any of the following conditions:

Runny nose, continuous cough, red throat, unexplained rashes, swollen glands, head or stomachache, or a fever **within the past 24 hours**. Please call the school office prior to 9:00 am the first day your child is sick and will not be attending school. When a child becomes ill at school, the parent will be notified immediately and is expected to pick up student as soon as possible. When a student returns to school after being absent due to illness or injury, send a note to the teacher with an explanation and student's current ability to participate in activities.

### Medication

The State of California Health Department manual defines the procedure for all schools with regard to medication, prescribed or otherwise. ALL medication, prescription or over the counter medicine, must be administered in the school office. Children are NOT to possess any medication while at school.

If a student requires medication during school hours, whether prescription or non-prescription, a parent will need to:

1. Obtain and complete a *Request for Medication Administration and Physician Statement of Need* form.
2. Medications must be brought to the school office in their *original* containers.
3. The *Request* must be submitted each year or for each illness.

### Physical Education Excuses

Generally speaking, a student who is well enough to be in school is also well enough to participate in P.E. Students who have been out of school with a fever etc., will be excused from P.E. for one day immediately following their return to school upon written request by the parent. Any student who is to be excused from P.E. for more than 3 consecutive days must have a written excuse from their physician.

If a doctor limits physical education participation for an extended period of time, please pick up a *Request for Medication Administration and Physician Statement of Need* form and return it to the school office. You must state the specific amount of activity and/or what your child can/cannot do, as well as the date he/she is able to return to full participation in class.

## Releasing Students

If a child must leave school during regular hours:

- Parents or authorized persons must sign every child in/out on the designated sign-in/out sheet in the office during school hours. For safety reasons, this procedure must be followed before a student will be released from the campus or accepted back into the classroom.
- Whenever possible, please send the teacher a note with the date and time that you will pick up your student. Advance notice is very helpful for classroom continuity.
- If picking up when a student is on a field trip, it is necessary for you to come to the adult who is supervising the students and sign out on the designated sign-in/out sheet. *This is for the safety of your children.*
- Please schedule doctor and dental appointments during non-school hours whenever possible.

If parents are divorced or separated and one parent is not allowed to see or pick up the child, we must have a certified copy of the *Court Order of Final Judgment* on file in the office.

**Please note:** Children will NOT be released to a person not listed on the emergency card without written authorization signed and dated by the parent.

## Visitor Verification

All visitors and volunteers must check in and out through the school office daily, and be prepared to show picture I.D. Visitors will be given a visitor's badge to wear while on campus. Anyone on campus without a visitor's badge will be questioned about his or her identity and purpose.

## Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

*"Safety comes first!"*

**The following procedures are designed to ensure the safety of our students as well as a smooth and orderly flow of traffic. Your cooperation is required.**

Safety begins as parents approach the school zone on Aventura.

- Obey the speed limit (25mph).
- Do not drop off in the cul-de-sac.
- Respectfully follow all signage and verbal directions given by school personnel.

Parents are encouraged to use the loop right away. However, we recognize that many parents will want to walk their students to class on the first day of school, so for that reason the main lot will be used for parking as well as for drop-off.



**Morning Drop-Off:**

1. The safe and efficient drop-off loop system in the back parking lot will be available and is encouraged. *Drop offs should be done ONLY in the loop; please help us to keep all students safe by not dropping off on the street or in other areas.*
2. The middle parking lot will be closed for morning drop-off.
3. Preschool: You may park in the upper lot or lower lot.
4. Grades JK – 8: If you wish to walk your child to class, please park in the upper lot by the Sanctuary or on the street (exceptions will be made so that parking in the main lot is available on the first day of school).

**Afternoon Pick-up:**

1. Preschool: You may park in the upper lot or lower lot.
2. JK and K: Park in the upper lot (by the Sanctuary) and pick up students at the classroom (12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.)
3. Grades 1 – 6: You may park in the main lot or the upper lot near the Sanctuary to pick up students at the classroom (2:45p.m.).  
*Note: The main lot opens for parking at 2:40 p.m. after all PE classes have ended and the lot is clear. Please arrive no earlier than 2:30 p.m. so as not to block traffic.*
4. Grades 7 – 8: Please Park in the middle lot or upper lot. Students may be picked up on the grass area at 2:45 p.m. Parents must make contact with the teacher on duty.

Please remember that the speed limit on campus is 10 mph and the speed limit on the street approaching and exiting the campus is 25 mph.

**Students Arriving After Class Begins**

After 8:15 a.m. elementary students will be marked tardy. After 8:25 a.m., parents must come in to the school office to sign in their students. They will be given a Class Admit slip for the teacher.

**Junior High students** are expected to be in their seats with books and materials ready for class by 8:00am. Please note, a parent must sign the student in at the office if arriving more than ten minutes (8:10am) after the school day begins.

## **Parent Service Hours Dress Code Guidelines**

The Faculty and staff of MHCS dress in a modest, professional manner to set an example for the students. We require parents who help with school activities to dress in this same manner.

## **School wide Progressive Discipline System**

Purpose: To produce school wide consistency in handling discipline matters, to assist students in improving behavior, to assist teachers in dealing with parents and students in a proactive and positive manner, and to help ensure that matters are referred to Administration only after following the appropriate steps.

Each teacher will develop a written behavior intervention plan and will be displayed in the classroom. If a student is disrupting the learning environment the teacher will follow the policy. This plan should include:

1. Specific student expectations
2. A progressive plan of consequences
3. Positive interventions and support.

The plan will reflect the specific needs of the teachers' classrooms. Teachers will include well-defined expectations, rules, and procedures that are taught, reviewed and practiced.

The following are the steps the school will adhere to should a conflict or misconduct arise in the classroom or on campus. For this progressive discipline plan, a conflict or misconduct is defined as anything that detracts from the learning environment. As a general rule, MHCS will adhere to a system of increasing consequences.

It is important that the words "First Offense" refer to the first "documented" offense. Teachers should have at least one private conversation with students to discuss behaviors. This is an opportunity for teachers to help students begin to take responsibility for their own actions. Education on the process is key.

1. **Verbal Warnings** - Teacher/Student conference; desired behavior discussed with student input. The adult involved will immediately re-teach the expected behavior and dispense an appropriate consequence which may include but is not limited to: verbal warning; loss of recess time; removal from group or surroundings, etc. (not documented, no phone call, no consequence)
2. **First Documented Offense** - Teacher/Student conference. Desired behavior discussed and modeled with student input. Possible parental contact (teacher choice). Teacher consequence may or may not be assigned. Documentation on appropriate form as a minor offense within that school day.
3. **Second Documented Offense** - Teacher/Student conference. Desired behavior discussed with student input. Parental contact made within 24 hours. Teacher Consequence assigned. Documentation on appropriate form as a minor offense within 24 hours.
4. **Third Documented Offense** - Teacher/Student conference. Desired behavior discussed with student input. Parental contact made within 24 hours. Teacher Consequence assigned. Documentation on form as a minor offense within 24 hours.
5. **Fourth Documented Offense** - Teacher/Student conference. Desired behavior reviewed. Parental contact made within 24 hours. Documentation on Discipline Referral Form which is then sent to the office as a Major Offense within 24 hours.

This process applies specifically to chronically disruptive students (including talking out of turn, bothering others, consistently off-task, excessive talking, etc.).

Teachers understand that the above discipline documentation concerns the same behavior with the same teacher within a two-week period (10 school days). Teachers need to document the positive interventions they have tried. The teacher will send or e-mail the Discipline Form which

will include all interventions tried and parental contacts made. Every effort will be made to maintain the student in the classroom so as not to lose instructional time. When the administrator handles the situation s/he will remind both the student and the parents of the prior interventions and documentation as listed on the referral form. Further decisions will be made about administrative interventions and consequences, which may include the following: A parent/teacher/administrator conference (if this has not already happened), loss of recess or other privileges. If the behavior involves chronic insubordination, disobedience, and disrespect, the student may be suspended.

This is the school-wide guide that will be used and followed by all Faculty and staff as consistently as possible. It is very important that we all honor and support this plan. The students need to understand that all Faculty and staff not only expect but also require appropriate behavior.

### **Immediate Office Referral**

There are some behavioral situations that warrant an immediate office referral. If an immediate office referral is required, the student should, ideally, be escorted to the office by a staff member with a written referral. If necessary, an administrator will be called to remove the student. Professional judgment by the staff member will be used to determine the severity of the incident and the need for an immediate trip to the office. Examples of behaviors that typically constitute an immediate office referral are as follows:

- Gross disrespect, profanity, fighting or instigating a fight, bullying or harassment, destruction/theft of property, or possession of a weapon.

When a student is sent to the office on referral it is for two reasons:

- Student's behavior warrants an immediate office referral, or
- S/he has reached the Fourth Offense on the referral form.

Either of these two reasons results in one or more of the following administrative consequences:

- Loss of recess/privileges, removal from the classroom ; parent-teacher-principal conference; before or after school detention; in-school suspension; out of school suspension; expulsion

NOTE: Every effort is made to create interventions that will not result in student loss of instructional time. Sometimes, the student behavior is such that an in-house suspension (first choice) or out of school suspension (last choice) is unavoidable. The Administration reserve the right to implement any discipline technique that positively promotes the desired behavior or character trait from the student.

### **On / Off Campus Behavior**

All measures under the school wide Progressive Discipline System will be in effect for on- and off-campus school activities.

## Absences

Frequent absences make it extremely difficult for a student to grasp sequential instruction and concepts presented in the classroom, and it is very frustrating for a child to fall behind in his or her work.

Parent must notify the office prior to 9:00 a.m. the first day the student is absent.

There are two classifications of absences: **excused** and **unexcused**. **Excused absences** pertain to student's illness, or death of an immediate family member.

**Unexcused absences** pertain to vacations, day trips, or any absence not covered by *excused absence*. Students who are going to be absent for two days or more for a family activity must have a **Planned Absence/Family Vacation Request form** on file. These forms are available on the school website or from the front office.

Excessive absences per trimester (5 or more) may result in the parents being called in for an administrative conference. No refunds on tuition are made because of absences.

## Records of Attendance

Attendance records must clearly indicate every student absence. An absence is defined as any student absence starting with a minimum of a half-day or more during the scheduled school year (Education Code Section 48222 and Section 33190 -- Attendance in Private School in Lieu of Public School Attendance).

### HALF-DAY CUT OFF

#### JK

8:15 am-10:45 am  
10:45 am-1:30 pm

#### 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades

8:15 am-11:30 am  
11:30 am-2:45 pm

#### K

8:15am-10:15 am  
10:15 am-12:30 pm

#### 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades

8:00am-11:30am  
11:30 am-2:45 pm

## Tardiness

Students are expected to be in line or in their seats according to the start times listed above. Beginning the school day on time sets the tone for the whole day. The student is able to settle into the routine relaxed and unhurried. The student who is frequently tardy gets off to a disorganized, unsettled day. Tardy students create a distraction for other students as well as for the teacher, thereby disrupting the classroom team.

**Excused/unexcused tardies:** Excused tardies will be issued for doctor/dentist related appointments when a doctor's note is returned to the office, car problems (i.e.: flat tires, engine trouble, etc.) and local emergencies requiring police to redirect traffic (i.e.: fires, accidents, etc.). All other tardies will be unexcused.

**The parent must sign the student in at the office if arriving more than ten minutes after the school day begins.**

More than four tardies per trimester is considered excessive and will result in a parent communication from the Administration. Excessive tardies will be reflected in the character grade on the elementary student's report card. Tardies in junior high will affect participation points that in turn affect the grade.

## Homework

Homework assignments are given to reinforce learning, to prepare for quizzes and tests, to sharpen skills and to complete unfinished classroom assignments. We encourage parents to review homework daily and make sure that the student is cultivating good work and study habits. Assignments are to be completed by the student neatly and correctly. Parents' help may be necessary to direct and assist the student to arrive at the answer by him or herself. It is inappropriate for parents or other students to give answers to homework or tests.

The target goal for homework is ten minutes per grade (e.g. fourth graders would have 40 minutes of homework). For the primary age students (grades JK-3) homework tasks should take 15-30 minutes to complete. Middle and upper grade students (grades 4-6) may be given proportionately longer assignments. For junior high grades (7-8), daily homework assignments are intended to require 15-20 minutes per subject for the average student. While homework is not necessarily assigned in every subject every day, students will have assignments at least three days a week. (In grades JK-6, homework may not be assigned on Wednesday nights to alleviate conflict with mid-week church services.) Any questions about the nature or amount of your child's homework should be discussed with your child's teacher.

## **Make-up Work**

Contact your child's teacher directly to request make-up work. Teachers will have make-up work prepared for sick students within 24 hours of the parent request. For excused absences, students will have as many days to make up work as the number of days absent. For unexcused absences, all work will be due on day of return. Incomplete work will receive a "zero" grade, but must be completed.

Tests missed because of late arrivals or early departures (other than illness, unavoidable doctor's appointments, and death in the immediate family) will be made up at the discretion of the teacher. If not made up, the grade will be recorded as a zero.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards are designed to communicate the progress of students. They are administered for all grade levels on a trimester basis. At the end of the first and third trimesters, parent conferences will be scheduled to discuss progress. Parents may request a conference with the teacher at any time.

Consideration for a student's promotion is based on the acquisition of basic academic skills and the ability to apply them. Should a student receive failing grades in two fundamental areas (mathematics, reading, language/grammar and spelling) or three failing grades during any trimester, that student will become a candidate for retention.

## **Progress Reports**

In addition to the report cards, students in grades 1-8 will receive a progress report during the first trimester. The teacher will write an explanation for unsatisfactory grades. In subsequent trimesters, progress reports will be issued only to those students with grades of C- or lower. Should the grade not improve, an appointment will be made with the teacher and the parent prior to the end of the trimester to develop a plan for improvement.

## **Standardized Testing**

Students in grades K-8 will be given nationally recognized standardized achievement tests each spring. A copy of the test results will be sent to parents and a copy will be placed in the student's cumulative folder. Parents should make sure that their children receive proper rest and nourishment before taking this battery of tests in order to perform to their highest ability.

## **Grading Policy**

MHCS has developed and instituted a uniform grading system that is grade appropriate. The following is an explanation for the various levels.

## Preschool

Please refer to MHCS Preschool Handbook.

## JK-K Benchmarks

This grade level uses a “benchmarks” progress report at each trimester that tracks the students’ accomplishments of age-level appropriate tasks and behaviors.

## Grades 1-3

O = Outstanding

G = Good

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

## Grades 4 - 8

A+	=	Excellent effort	98 – 100%
A	=		93 – 97%
A-	=		90 – 92%
B+	=	Above average effort	88 – 89%
B	=		83 – 87%
B-	=		80 – 82%
C+	=	Average effort	78 – 79%
C	=		73 – 77%
C-	=		70 – 72% <sup>o</sup>
D+	=	Below average effort	68 – 69%
D	=		63 – 67%
D-	=		60 – 62%
F	=	Failure	0 – 59%

## Modified Program Grading

Grades will reflect a modified program or curriculum when appropriate, and an addendum to the report will detail those grades.

# Honor Roll Requirements

## FIFTH & SIXTH GRADES

**HIGH HONORS** **3.75-4.00** and student must earn *Outstanding* or *Good* in all areas of *Christian Virtues and Social Growth* on the report card

## JUNIOR HIGH

**3.75-4.00** and student must earn *Excellent* or *Good* in all *Citizenship* grades on the report card

**HONORS**

**3.50-3.74** and student must earn *Outstanding* or *Good* in all areas of *Christian Virtues and Social Growth* on the report card

**3.50-3.74** and student must earn *Excellent* or *Good* in all *Citizenship* grades on the report card

## **Parent - Teacher Partnership (PTP)**

The PTP serves as a support to the students, parents, Faculty and staff with the purpose to be educational and philanthropic. Any parent or legal guardian of a student will automatically become a member. The intention of the PTP is to coordinate many of the school's volunteer positions and activities and to support school spirit.

The officers are elected positions. Volunteers are needed throughout the year for support. Refer to the website or contact the school office for information and contacts to become part of the many volunteer activities at the school.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

In accordance with the Scripture, this policy balances the principles of Matthew 18:15-17, the God-given right of parents (Deut. 6:5- 7 Eph. 6:4) and the role of State authority (Romans 13:1-7). Matthew 18 calls for the process of restoration of the believer to commence first if applicable, then in response to Romans 13 recognizes the State's legitimate right of notification. Notification of proper authorities must not be construed as betrayal of the parents' trust. Restoration results in forgiveness but doesn't remove the consequences of a violation of a state statute. Neither parental rights nor religious freedom was ever intended to give refuge to abusive parents. It must never appear to either the parent or the state that the school will allow our freedoms to be used as a "cloak of maliciousness" (I Peter 2:16).

The following policies and procedures follow established Biblical principles. All conferences and procedures are to be thoroughly documented and in conjunction with California Penal Code 11166.

The policy for reporting suspected child abuse or molestation must be handled as follows:

1. Report all suspected child abuse or molestation directly to the administration.
2. If necessary, the Administration may authorize school personnel to interview and/or examine the student and document the findings.
3. The Administration will inform the Department of Child Services.
4. The Administration reserves the right to meet with any of the involved parties, protecting their anonymity.



## Miscellaneous

### Parties

Birthdays will be celebrated within the classroom to teach the students to honor one another. Invitations to parties outside of school may be passed out at school providing each child in the class receives one. The exception is if it is an all-girl party or an all-boy party.

Christmas and Easter are Christ-centered celebrations. Decorations, supplies and activities are to be in keeping with our faith. These, as well as end-of-the-year parties, are school wide. Please contact teacher before any treats or party items are brought to school.

### Lost and Found

Please label all clothing and student items. MHCS is not responsible for personal belongings that are lost or stolen. Articles found will be stored for collection. Items will be donated to charity if not picked up. Notice will be given prior to disposal of lost items.

### Telephone

Telephone calls are answered between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Any other time you may leave a message on our voice mail. Students are not allowed to use the school phone unless it is an emergency and permission is given by a staff member.

## Community Emergencies

Should the schools in the Saddleback Valley or Capistrano Valley Unified School Districts close due to extreme weather conditions or a natural disaster, Mission Hills Christian School will also be closed. Telephone calls will be made directly to families if possible; if not, provisions and plans are prepared to house the student body for two days if necessary.

What should a parent do in case of a school lockdown emergency or an earthquake?

1. Know that the school will communicate with the parent / guardian through *ParentAlert*, an automated telephone message system.
2. The parent / guardian should wait for a second call from *ParentAlert*. (It is imperative that you do not come to the campus until you receive an all-clear call.)
3. Do not call the school since this could block the phone system causing teachers to be unable to call the office. Also, keep in mind that in the case of natural disaster the phone system could be out of order.
4. When you receive the second *Parent-Alert* all-clear text to come to school to pick up your child, do not park on campus but in the local commercial area at Calle Corta & Aventura and walk to the school. The upper parking lot will have a designated holding area for the safety of students. It is vitally important that we dismiss each student according to our Crisis and Safety Plan.

## **Personal Property**

Cell phones, all electronic devices, and all other forms of personal property are discouraged on school premises and at all school- sponsored activities.

Students bringing such equipment to school shall not turn on or remove personal items from their backpacks at any time while on campus. Communications between parent and student during school hours must be made through the school office. Exceptions will be addressed with the Administration.

Enforcement of this policy shall include the immediate confiscation of the item to be returned to the parent only and potential disciplinary action for the student. MHCS is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged property in the possession of a student. Students may, as necessary, check a cell phone in with their teacher until the end of the school day.

Students in grades 7-8 and their parents will be required to read and sign the MHCS Cell Phone and Electronics Policy.

## **Skateboards & Rollerblades**

Skateboards and rollerblades are not to be brought or ridden on the school campus at any time.

## **Requirement of Physical Education**

Physical Education is a required subject for graduation by the California State Educational Code (200 minutes every two weeks); students without the necessary attendance requirement (6 classes every two weeks), unless released by medical authorization, might be subject to remedial action that would include activity before or after school. Students released from P.E. for academic make-up, study lab, medical appointments or non-school sports programs may be subject to remedial action.

## **Nutrition Break and Lunch**

A time is set aside, midmorning each day, for a nutrition break. We encourage food with good nutritional value. Gum, candy, cake, cookies or drink with high sugar content, snacks with shells such as peanuts, sunflower seeds, etc. are not allowed. (Nuts/seeds without shells are acceptable.) Red and purple drinks are unacceptable.

Students are prohibited from chewing gum on campus. Beverages may not be brought in glass containers.

## **Teacher Communication**

### **E-mail**

Parents have the ability to contact their child's teacher via e-mail at any time. Faculty and staff e-mail addresses use the following format: first name initial and last name @missionhillscs.org (e.g.

[larmstrong@missionhillscs.org](mailto:larmstrong@missionhillscs.org)). Every attempt will be made to return e-mails within 48 hours. Please refrain from contacting staff via phone or text.

The school general e-mail address for miscellaneous requests and questions is [larmstrong@missionhillscs.org](mailto:larmstrong@missionhillscs.org).

### **MHCS Website**

The Mission Hills Christian School website ([www.missionhillschristianschool.org](http://www.missionhillschristianschool.org)) provides information for parents and students. Parents may view individual class information and student grades (for specified grade levels) through ParentsWeb. A ParentsWeb account is created by clicking RenWeb ParentsWeb on the website homepage. Questions regarding ParentsWeb may be directed to Lisa Espinoza at [lespinoza@missionhillscs.org](mailto:lespinoza@missionhillscs.org).

## **PAL (Parochial Athletic League) Sports Program**

MHCS is a member of the PAL ([Parochial Athletic League](#)) whose major emphasis is on maintaining a Christian attitude of sportsmanship, honesty, respect, teamwork, and responsibility. Participation is open to all 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

	<b>FALL</b>	<b>WINTER</b>	<b>SPRING</b>
<b>BOYS</b>	Flag Football	Basketball	Co-ed Soccer, Volleyball, Track (Gr. 1-8)
<b>GIRLS</b>	Volleyball	Basketball	Co-ed Soccer, Softball, Track (Gr. 1-8)

Tryouts are held at the beginning of each season. Practices are held at the end of the school day during the season with one (or two games) played per week. League play determines seeding for playoff competition that leads to the championship for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Sportsmanship is emphasized throughout the league.

MHCS athletics provides an opportunity by which all the talents God has given students can be used and developed.

There is a student participation fee per sport that goes toward league fees, referees, equipment/fields, awards and uniforms. Fundraising opportunities are necessary to offset the cost of the sports program.

### **Athletic Eligibility**

Students who desire to try out for any sport in the MHCS Athletic Program must have a 2.0 GPA. During the season, athletes may be considered ineligible or be placed on probation based on one or more of the following:

- Failure to maintain a 2.0 academic GPA
- More than one behavioral detention earned in a given quarter or sport season
- “F”s in any subject

### **Athlete of the Year**

MHCS honors one male student athlete and one female student athlete for excellence in athletics during the school year. The criteria for selection and voting are as follows:

#### **Selection Criteria**

- 8<sup>th</sup> grade student
- Participation in at least two [2] sports
- GPA >2.5 and excellent citizenship
- Sport team participants in 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades

#### **Voting Criteria**

- Exhibits athletic skills in a team framework
- Inspires teammates to perform better
- Demonstrates motivational leadership
- Models good sportsmanship
- Exhibits Christ-like values in a competitive environment

## **MHCS 2017-2018 Personnel Listing**

### Administration

Mr. Larry Ahl	Principal/Head of School
Pastor Mike Foell	Pastoral Care
Mrs. Lisa Espinoza	Admissions Director
Mr. Joe Chebat	Development Director
Ms. Eileen Hollison	Curriculum Director

### Support Staff

Mrs. Lynda Armstrong	Office Manager
Miss Jessica LaBruna	Communications Specialist
Mrs. Joanne Lee	Bookkeeper
Mrs. Stephanie Longcob	FACTS Accounts Manager
Mrs. Ellie Ward	Library & Records
Mr. Dominic Rodriquez	Facilities Director
Mrs. Dayna Graveline	Office Staff
Ms. Wendy Northrup	Office Staff
Mrs. Frances Williams	Office Staff

### Faculty

Miss Linda Faulkner	Preschool Director
Mrs. Joni Carruthers	Preschool
Mrs. Gail Quickle	Junior Kindergarten
Mrs. Paola Blakenship	Junior Kindergarten
Mrs. Mary Jane Merritt	Kindergarten
Mrs. Dana Knauer	First Grade
Mrs. Carrie Gulino	Second Grade
Mrs. Jenny Vande	Third Grade
Mrs. Julia Bernier	Fourth Grade
Mrs. Sharon Ploesser	Fifth Grade
Mr. Mike Margy	Sixth Grade/7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Bible
Pastor Mike Foell	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Bible
Mrs. Jeannine Jilbert	Junior High (Math)
Mrs. Kari Koeff	Junior High (Science)
Ms. Eileen Hollison	Junior High (Language Arts)
Mrs. Jodi Dale	Junior High (History)

### Departmental Staff

Pastor Jason Carson	Junior High Worship
Mrs. Tracey Desmond	Junior High Theatre Arts
Mrs. Dawnell Viole	Athletic Director / P.E.
Mrs. Yvonne Erkelens	Spanish
Mrs. Amy Meng	Music/Art
Mrs. Danielle Akradi	Technology
Ms. Lindy Seely	Resource Specialist

JK Aides

Mrs. April Roche

JK

Mrs. Ana Wenstrom

JK

Outdoor / Care and Recreation

Mrs. Lorene Preziosi

Outdoor Director

Mrs. Lucy Jones

Assistant Outdoor Director

Mrs. Lisa Legg

Outdoor Aide

Mrs. Ale Iniguez

C&R Director