

Cornerstone Handbook

CCS Mission Statement

Cornerstone Christian School is a college preparatory school offering quality education in a Christ-centered environment based on the highest moral standards with Biblical principles to equip students for living in today's society in a way that glorifies God.

From the Faculty:

We are honored and happy that you have chosen to partner with us at Cornerstone Christian School. Our primary goal is to provide a challenging education to your child, teaching them to engage society through the lens of a Biblical worldview. Our teachers and staff see Christian education as their mission, stemming directly from our separate encounters with the truth of God and the grace of Christ. We believe Christian education covers more than mere academic excellence. We also hope to attend to your child's spiritual, moral and social education during his or her time here. As faculty and staff, we covet your prayers and support as we work with your children on a daily basis.

To the Parents:

The goal of the student handbook is to provide students, parents and staff a clear and concise statement on basic philosophy, policies and expectations. **Although the handbook is not intended as a definitive statement on these subjects,** it is written to answer the most frequently asked questions about policies. This handbook is to provide **basic guidelines** to enable parents, students and staff to be "of one mind" in our daily privilege of training children to honor God.

ACCREDITATION

CCS is honored to be accredited by the following institutions:

- The Alabama Independent School Association (AISA)
- AdvancEd (formerly SACS)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mark Armstrong

(CCS/Bethel Deacon Liaison)

Katie Smith

(CCS Alumna)

David Oakes

(CCS Parent/Alumnus)

James Johnson

(CCS Parent/Bethel Deacon)

The following are *ex officio*, non-voting members:

Eric Wilson- Financial Administrator

Hal Warren- Pastor of Bethel Baptist Church

ADMINISTRATION

Margaret Pickett

School Director

James Lee

Athletic Director

Laurie Porter

Dean of Students

Christina Benz

Administrative Assistant

Eric Wilson

Financial Officer

Admissions

Cornerstone Christian School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender or national/ethnic origin. Students must score on grade level to be eligible for unqualified enrollment; probationary enrollment is available at the sole discretion of the CCS administration. The school will not enroll students whose special educational or physical needs cannot be met by existing programs and staff.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

A checklist for admissions is available on-line at cornerstonechargers.com. This includes a step-by-step admissions procedure.

REQUIRED FORMS

- Application for Admission.
- Last report card, unofficial transcript, and most recent standardized test results.
- Entrance testing may be required.
- Immunization forms, birth certificate and social security card.

NOTIFICATION

Parents will be notified of the outcome of the admissions process via letter, telephone or e-mail.

ACCEPTANCE FACTORS

- Behavioral record: we need complete disclosure of any past behavior issues. Failure to disclose issues may be grounds for non-acceptance or dismissal.
- Academic record: students should have a 2.0 GPA to qualify for enrollment

- Parent Support: the parents must agree to abide by the standards laid out in the CCS handbook.

AGE REQUIREMENTS

Under the rules of AISA (Alabama Independent School Association), 1st grade students must be six years old by October 1st. This rule applies starting in Pre-K so students will be on track to start 1st grade on target.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

- Married/pregnant students may not attend CCS.
- Students transferring from a non-traditional situation/ home school must provide notarized copy of academic records/transcript.
- Students entering CCS on probation will be provided with a probationary contract, which outlines clear academic/behavioral goals and guidelines for their first semester with us.

DRUG TESTING

CCS reserves the right to host a drug dog on campus and to drug test any student in grades 7-12 at any time; this information may be used to make decisions regarding admission or continued enrollment. This policy is intended to maintain a safe, drug-free environment for all our students.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Student's needs and abilities are considered in all placement decisions. CCS makes decisions in the best interest of both the school and the student; parents may be invited to this conversation, but final decision rests with the school administration.

Please do not make requests for specific teachers.

PROGRESS REVIEW

The most objective indicators of basic progress are standardized test scores and grades. However, general classroom demeanor and willingness to learn are also vital. A student who demonstrates poor progress, poor attitude, and/or lack of interest in learning may be placed on probation, invited to withdraw, or required to complete their education elsewhere.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

The purpose of class is to learn the material. Students with academic deficits may be held back in one or more subjects. These decisions are never made lightly.

In pre-K and Kindergarten, students are assessed to gauge their readiness for the next grade, especially in reading.

Elementary students who fail any subject, or demonstrate cause for concern, (especially in English and Math) may be promoted only at the discretion of the teacher/administration. Further, they may be required to work over the summer to demonstrate readiness to move ahead.

Students in grades 1-8 will not be promoted with more than one F on their final averages.

In grades 9-12, any core semester failed must be repeated or made up through alternative credit, such as distance learning. We do not offer summer school.

All Bible classes must be passed to remain at CCS. Any semester of Bible failed must be made up with 75 hours of community service and school approved Bible study.

All of these policies are designed to ensure that students do not carry a deficit from one year to the next.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

The way colleges look at High School graduates has gone through dramatic changes in the past decade. Colleges have come to expect graduates to have earned Dual Enrollment credits in high school.

Rising sophomores, juniors and seniors are encouraged to take collegiate courses during their tenure at CCS.

It is possible for a student to accumulate enough credits to graduate from High School with an Associate's Degree.

Students must meet with the principal or counselor to be sure all criteria are met to start the process.

FINANCES

CCS relies on tuition and fees to pay our teachers, purchase textbooks, help our church with utilities, and fund the instructional programs. It is never our intent to place a family in an awkward situation; however, we must insist that all families honor their financial obligations to the school in order to protect the school's integrity and its future.

CCS assesses a \$25 returned check fee for all NSF checks. If collection is turned over to an attorney, the parent/guardian is responsible for all legal fees as well as past-due amounts.

TUITION

A tuition schedule is available online or in the school office. Families who withdraw during the school year will receive no records or transcripts until financial obligations are met in full. The only exceptions to this policy are clearly outlined in the CCS Financial Contract. Financial contracts are between our families and our school board; CCS administration does not have the authority to make or break contracts with families outside of the grounds already approved by the board. All tuition must be paid in full up front or serviced through our automated debit system.

NEED-BASED ASSISTANCE

CCS offers a tuition model based on family need through a third-party company. For more information, contact Eric Wilson at the school.

PAST DUE ACCOUNTS

When a family's tuition account is past due, the following steps will be taken:

30 days: Access to all student grades and records terminated until account is current.

60 days: Student barred from participating in all extracurricular activities/field trips.

90 days: Student dismissed from CCS; account turned over to collections.

Students with past-due accounts are not eligible for re-enrollment until satisfactory arrangements have been made. Seniors with past-due accounts are not eligible to participate in graduation, receive a diploma, or receive transcripts until all accounts have been cleared.

OPERATIONS

HOURS

K3-K5: Full-day 8:00-2:45

1st – 6th Grades: 8:00-2:45

7th-12th Grades: 8:00-2:55

MORNING ARRIVAL

Students should not arrive before 7:30, when the building will be opened. Grades K3-6 grade should report to the lunchroom; grades 7-12 should report to the gym until they are dismissed to homeroom/1st period. Kindergarten and pre-K parents

may accompany their children to the classroom for the first two days of school; after that, we ask that they drop off and leave them in the lunchroom to ease the transition.

AFTERNOON PICKUP

All elementary students will be sent to After-School Care at 3:00. In grades 7-12, non-driving students who aren't under the direct supervision of a teacher or coach will be told at the start of school where they should report. CCS assumes no liability for students who remain on our campus inside or out after school is over, unless they are being supervised in After-School Care.

AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

After-School Care (ASC) charges a rate of \$5.00 per hour. Families have the option of paying \$175 per month for monthly access. ASC runs from 3-6 p.m. After 6 p.m. parents are charged at a rate of \$5 per child for every minute they are late. You are encouraged to call ahead and let the ASC worker know you are having an emergency and running late.

PICK-UP, PARKING AND HIGH SCHOOL DRIVERS

Drop-off and pick-up procedures are explained each year at Open House. Parents leaving their vehicles in the morning must make sure they are parked in a parking spot, not parked under the drive-thru.

Please maintain a speed of less than 10MPH in our parking lot. Drivers who fail to observe this safety request may be denied permission to bring their vehicle on our campus.

Students who drive to school will be assigned a parking location on the first day of school. Each student driver will fill out a driver permission form, providing their vehicle make, color, and tag number. Proof of insurance is required for all student drivers. Student drivers should not loiter in or around their vehicles once they arrive at school.

Students must receive permission to drive to school-sponsored events from both their parents and the school.

Any student who leaves or takes another student off-campus without permission will have their driving privileges on our campus revoked for the duration of the semester/or year.

STUDENT RECORDS

Health records, grades, test scores, conference reports and disciplinary notes make up most of these records. A copy will be provided upon request to families whose financial obligations have been met. The transcript will include the full high school record of grades, as well as any standardized test scores required by colleges. CCS alumni who request transcripts will be charged \$3 to cover the cost of mailing and processing. Any transcript given to a parent or student is unofficial, unless the school seal is affixed.

CCS will release records upon the written request of an authorized official of another school system. No school records other than a transcript defined above will be released to a student's parent/guardians or any agency other than the other school. The confidentiality of school records will be maintained. The professional staff may have access to school records by consulting with an administrator. Parents may view records in the school office with an appointment.

Records and transcripts will not be released for students who have outstanding balances in any area.

TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

Most textbooks are provided as part of tuition. These books are CCS property, and must be returned or replaced. Damage to books will result in the full replacement price being assessed. In some courses, students may be required to purchase additional textbooks/supplies, or pay additional fees to cover supplemental instructional material.

CCS does not furnish supplies (such as paper, pen, pencils, etc.) to students. They may be purchased from our office. A list of necessary supplies for each grade is available in the school office.

LOCKER POLICY

All high school students, and some elementary students, will be assigned a locker. Locks not rented from CCS will be removed with bolt cutters. School locks that are damaged or lost will need to be replaced with a \$25 fee.

The school reserves the right to search any locker at any time for any reason. Items deemed inappropriate will not be allowed to remain in lockers, and may be confiscated by the school and not returned. Students may not swap locks or lockers, or claim lockers not assigned to them.

We would love to say everyone that is around us is 100% honest, but sadly that is not the world we live in. CCS is not responsible for items left in an unlocked locker or locker room. Please leave valuables at home or under lock and key.

VISITORS

Visitors are welcome at CCS, as long as they don't distract from our school day. School-aged visitors will typically only be allowed to visit for lunch; if they need to visit all day, they should request permission from the administration. To be welcome on our campus, and to avoid being asked to leave, all visitors should:

1. Call at least 24 hours in advance.
2. Be sure they're dressed appropriately for a school environment.
3. Check in at the front office and get a visitor pass.

LUNCHROOM

Questions about the menu should be directed to the lunchroom manager.

CCS provides a limited number of microwaves for student use. At this time, we are unable to provide refrigeration. Students must be able to prepare their food

on their own, if they bring it from home; there is not adequate time for teachers to prepare each student's lunch in our short lunch periods.

Lunches should be ordered and prepaid, although we may sell any extras that we have each day. CCS does not allow students to purchase lunch or snacks on credit. No refunds will be given on lunches not served due to absences, early checkouts or forgotten orders. Refunds will be given if the school is dismissed unexpectedly.

ALL DIETARY RESTRICTIONS AND /OR FOOD ALLERGIES SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO LUNCHROOM STAFF, THE FRONT OFFICE AND THE STUDENT'S TEACHERS.

CHAPELS AND ASSEMBLIES

CCS students engage in regular chapels. These are required events and should be missed only for unavoidable reasons. Parents are invited to attend chapel at any time, although we do ask that you call ahead to let us know you are coming.

Students who skip chapel will meet with administrator and future plans for the student may include assigned seating or other reasonable requirements.

LIBRARY

Students are encouraged to use the CCS library for reading and research. Students with overdue or damaged books will be assessed a fee or lose their privilege of checking out books. Keeping a book in our library does not necessarily mean that we endorse or promote the ideas or content of the book.

CLUBS, ATHLETICS, AND SERVICE

School years are a time when many interests should be cultivated. Under the direction of the faculty, special interest clubs, service organizations, and athletic teams may be organized each year. Parents with special talents and interests are encouraged to make themselves available for these organizations.

Any extracurricular activity is under the direction of the leadership of the faculty sponsor or team coach; direct all questions and resolve any differences at that level before promoting it to the administration.

ASBESTOS-FREE FACILITIES

CCS was inspected in the Fall of 2012 and declared asbestos-free by RainCrow Environmental.

CELL PHONES/TABLETS/DIGITAL DEVICES

Students today are “digital natives” and their world is very different from even a generation ago. Although CCS does not prohibit students from carrying phones/devices, they are not allowed to be used in class without teacher permission. Devices of any kind may be confiscated if being used inappropriately during class. This includes using a phone for non-educational purposes while class is in session.

Under NO circumstances should a CCS teacher, student, or guest be photographed or videotaped without their knowledge or consent. Students who capture such images, especially if they are posted online, are subject to severe disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

When a device is confiscated by a teacher, the school may return it to the student, require a parent to pick it up, or mail it to the student’s home COD. The school assumes no responsibility for the safety of confiscated devices once they are taken up.

The school provides adequate phone lines to allow students to reach parents (and vice versa) under most circumstances.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Fall pictures will be taken and parents have the right to purchase or decline the photographs.

SCHOOL OFFICE

The school office is open from 7:45 to 3:30 on regular school days. Parents may schedule appointments with teachers or administrators by calling the office or emailing the teacher directly. Students or parents should never contact a teacher at home, on a cell phone, or interrupt the school day.

Lunches, homework, books, uniforms, etc. may be dropped off in the office to be delivered to the student. Please do not interrupt classroom time for these matters.

School phone and computers are intended for business or educational use. Students are permitted to use them when available and needed. Office printers are not intended for students to print out homework or assignments.

LOST AND FOUND

The school assumes no responsibility for misplaced or improperly stored items. Lost and found items will be placed in the Front Office. If not claimed after a reasonable time, such items will be donated.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

During inclement weather, school closing or delays will be announced as soon as reasonably possible. In most situations, the announcement will not be made until the morning of the school day. All closing/delay decisions are made with safety of our school family in mind.

When the school is closed for inclement weather, all school-sponsored events for the day--- including practice and evening activities--- will be cancelled, unless otherwise notified.

The only official media to report school closings/delays are the school's website (cornerstonechargers.com), Facebook page, and school-wide email.

Typically, we will also call information to ABC33/40 and FOX6.

We are currently under the policy that states when Shelby County School System closes/delays/early dismissal, Cornerstone will be closed/delayed/dismissed as well.

ATTENDANCE

Alabama State law requires students aged 7-16 to attend school; beyond age 16, possession of a driver's license in our state is contingent upon school attendance. CCS is required to keep daily records of attendance and tardies on file. Any failure to follow state guidelines will require a report to the truancy office.

The goal of these policies is to satisfy the state's legal requirements, protecting the integrity of our school & the education of our students.

ABSENCE/TARDY VERIFICATION

Attendance is a must; a student who is not in the classroom simply cannot learn as effectively as a student under the instruction of a teacher. In addition, Cornerstone is obligated to our accrediting agencies to verify that our grades are given in alignment with AISA, AdvancEd and Alabama state standards.

While Cornerstone is not a public school, we are held to some basic expectations of the state guidelines.

It is the responsibility of the parent and child to ensure that excuses are provided up the return of school. Any absences not cleared up by an excuse will be classified as unexcused if it not handled *within 2 days of return of school*. Notes produced at the end of term to clear up attendance for exam exemptions will not be accepted. All absences must be cleared within the first days of a student's return.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In grades K5-8 students may have no more than 20 TOTAL absences for the year. Any student whose absences exceed the 20 will have to go before the administration and school board for approval. Consequences for exceeding 20 may result in a repeat of the grade. In order for a student to be counted present for the entire day, a student must attend 3.5 hours of the school day.

In grades 9-12 credits toward graduation are being earned and attendance is based on a semester basis. Instead of a yearly total of 20, now attendance is not

to exceed 10 absences per semester regardless of what classes are missed. In the past the policy has been if you missed one class 10 times, but now it is a cumulated total of 10 per semester.

Tardies also play a role in attendance. Every 3 unexcused tardies will be converted to equal 1 unexcused absence.

COLLEGE VISITS

This a privilege reserved for junior and seniors. Juniors and seniors are allowed two, 1-day college visits per year. A written request must be made to the administration at least 4 days prior to the visit. This should be a serious visit, not a vacation day. Students should either go with a parent or have a college official verify the visit.

College visits cannot be made in December or May.

EXEMPTION FROM ABSENCE POLICY

In some cases, students may violate the school's attendance policy through no fault of their own, and should therefore be excused from consequences. It should be clearly stated that CCS believes these cases are exceedingly rare. Nonetheless students who feel they fit this category may apply for exemption in writing and know this will go before the school board for approval.

EXCUSED ABSENCES/TARDIES

1. Parental note. Reason for absence must be acceptable to be deemed excused.
2. Death in family
3. Illness/injury with doctor note
4. Educational Opportunity (schedule in advance)
5. Court/Driver's Test
6. Religious Observance (provide documentation)
7. Medical/Dental appointment (provide excuse)
8. Pre-approved absence- must be requested in writing to administration at least 4 days in advance. These requests may be denied if a student is close

to exceeding state allowable days or request is simply unacceptable. Even a pre-approved absence, while excused, may have a bearing on exam exemptions for grades 7-12.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES/TARDIES

1. No note, undocumented
2. Suspended from school
3. Traffic
4. Other reasons as determined by office staff/administration

TARDY TO SCHOOL

Part of preparing our students for life is teaching them to be on time. A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in his assigned class/area when the bell rings for that class/day to begin. Three unexcused tardies in a grading period will convert to an unexcused absence. This may jeopardize exam exemptions and will be added to total absences for the year/semester.

Tardies to class will go on individual class basis and will converted to unexcused absences if 3 are accumulated in a grading period.

MAKE UP WORK

Teachers will work with students to catch up any missing assignments due to excused absence or excused tardies. Work missed during the period of unexcused absence and unexcused tardies will not be allowed to make up.

CURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY

In most situations, students who do not attend at least half of the school day will be barred from participating in school events that evening.

This policy is based on the simple premise that a student who is too sick to attend school is also too sick to play sports.

ABSENCE/TARDY VERIFICATION

It is the responsibility of the parent and child to ensure that excuses are provided at the office upon return to school. After 2 days of student return, if no note has

been provided, the absence/tardy will remain unexcused permanently. All worked missed for unexcused absences will be given a zero.

Students who have an excused absence should visit any teacher/class they missed and collect any missed assignments missed on the day they return to school even if that class is not meeting the day they return to school.

CHECKING IN AND OUT

All students checking in or out must go through the front office. Drivers who fail to check in or out will face loss of driving privileges. Any student who needs to leave campus should notify the front office. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for any makeup work missed before they check out if possible. If checking in late, the student should go to any class missed and get make up work they day of the tardy. **Students may not check out to eat lunch off campus unless part of a sanctioned outing.**

INJURY AND ILLNESS

ILLNESS

Students with a fever (99.0 or higher), students who are vomiting, and students who show signs of undiagnosed illness (rash, pink eye, etc.) must be kept home or picked up from school with symptoms present. Students should always be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

EXCUSES

Students are expected to provide a doctor's excuse upon return after an illness. The school will use its discretion in limiting the number of parental notes we will accept to excuse absences, especially when major coursework is being missed.

INJURY

In the event of a major injury, paramedics will be called immediately, and then parents will be contacted. Please be sure that the office has a current list of phone numbers and emergency contacts at all times.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Any student diagnosed with a contagious/communicable disease that is listed by the Alabama Department of Public Health as a “notifiable disease/condition” may not attend classes until cleared by a medical doctor. A list of these conditions is on file in the office. Any student who cannot attend class due to such conditions will be offered a home course of study to continue classwork until he is cleared by a doctor. CCS has adopted the AISA policy concerning the recommended precautions against the transmission of blood-borne pathogens and diseases.

MEDICATION

All medications (prescription, alternative, over-the-counter) MUST be distributed through the office. Students may not medicate themselves on our campus. Please bring the medication with the Medicine Authorization form filled out to the office. Prescription medication should be in the original bottle with pharmacy label. (Your pharmacy will provide you with a school bottle if you request it)

Any student given medication by our office must first have parental permission.

REQUIRED REPORTING TO DHR

All school personnel are required by law to report any alleged or suspected abuse, neglect, or threats of harm/suicide to Shelby County DHR. School personnel are instructed to immediately notify an administrator if they hear or suspect any of the above.

We encourage parents to address this issue at home with their children, to ensure they understand the magnitude of such comments. The school is not legally allowed to assume a child was not serious, or only joking, when abuse, neglect, or self-harm is alleged.

Once DHR has been contacted, the school cannot legally contact parents without DHR consent.

ACADEMICS

GRADING SCALE/PROMOTION

CCS operates on a 10-point grading scale and a 4-point GPA scale. Final grades are recorded numerically on permanent record folders. Each year, students in grades 9-11 should earn a minimum of 6 credits in order to be classified at the next grade level. Students cannot earn more than 8 credits per year. High school students may withdraw from a specific classes/ amend their schedule without penalty until the meeting of the 6th class. At that point, withdrawal from class is not an option. If the students fail to attend the class, they will be assigned a failing grade.

AWARDS DAY

At the end of the spring semester, students are honored on Awards Day. Some awards are strictly numerical; others are chosen by teachers. The Charger Award is given to one boy and one girl in grades 7-12, and to one student in each grade 1-6. The Charger Award is selected by the staff, based on criteria such as integrity, work ethic, compassion, school spirit, love of learning and Christian character. Any other period awards ceremonies will be announced by grade level teachers.

ACADEMIC CLUBS

Some students may be invited to join an academic club based on overall GPA and standardized test scores. Such clubs may include National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, Junior and Senior Beta. Once invited, parents and students will be notified, and students will be inducted in accordance with the club traditions. A small monetary due may be assessed for members. These clubs often are involved in service projects and academic competitions.

MAKE UP WORK

Make-up work is the responsibility of the student. It is scheduled at the teacher's discretion. Any work a student was assigned before their absence is due immediately upon their return. Failure to have work ready upon return, or to complete new make-up work in the time assigned by the teacher, will result in a zero. In general, we recommend that teachers allow two days to complete make-up work for each day the student missed. It is to be pointed out this is measured in days, not the number of times the class meets.

FIELD TRIPS

Most CCS field trips are required as part of class instruction, and as such, cannot be missed. Parents and students should recognize that it is impossible for a teacher to "make up" a missed field trip; as such, students may be given zeroes for any work associated with the trip at the teacher's discretion.

Parents will receive notice of upcoming field trips, along with the cost and dress codes. Student not properly attired for a trip will not be allowed to participate. Teachers and administrators reserve the right to deny field trips to any student with repeated documented classroom behavior problems.

Chaperone Guidelines:

1. Students should remain in the assigned vehicle for the entire trip.
2. Drivers must follow the route and agenda assigned by the teacher.
3. Chaperones should "count off" the students each time they enter and exit the vehicle.
4. As a rule, siblings are not allowed on field trips.
5. On returning to campus, drivers should remain with their students until the teacher arrives.
6. Chaperone must be willing to serve as an authority figure and act as a reasonable adult.
7. Chaperones should reflect CCS ideals on field trips, especially regarding the music, television and conversation students are exposed to while in their charge.

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards are delivered electronically at the end of each quarter. A student's progress may be viewed at that time through our online system Renweb; however grades are constantly in flux throughout the quarter as assignments are graded and entered. Parents should be advised that the staff are instructed that grades must be up-to-date at the end of weeks 3, 6 and 9.

Grades are viewable through Renweb at any time. Passwords should be obtained through the office.

FAILURES

Occasionally, students at CCS may fail to demonstrate passing competence in a course. The school will make a recommendation of online credit recovery at the student's expense, or re-taking the course on CCS campus. Contact the counselor or director within one month of receiving a failing grade for instructions.

Students in grades 1-8 cannot fail more than 1 course for the year and move to the next grade. Even if only one course is failed the school reserves the right to require summer remediation in the subject failed to move to the next level.

Kindergarten is the bedrock of a child's education. CCS supports the teacher in decisions of the need to repeat on occasion. While repeated any grade is unpleasant the K5 year is vital to set the platform for future success. Socially, K5 is the best time to hold a child back if they need that extra year to gain full success.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

CCS administers the:

SAT-10/OLSAT to all students in grades 2,4,6 and 8

PRE-ACT may take the place of SAT-10 for 8th grade

PSAT to 10th and 11th graders

ACT: CCS administers the ACT on campus in the fall and again in the spring; additionally we encourage students to begin taking it during their junior year.

Students who do not take the ACT are not eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian honors, as the ACT is a component of that determination.

VALEDICTORIAN/SALUTATORIAN

To earn these honors, students must attend CCS for the four semesters preceding graduation. Valedictorian and salutatorian honors will be calculated at the close of the fall semester, results will be announced during the 3rd quarter.

VALEDICTORIAN/SALUTATORIAN: Only students receiving an Advanced Honors Diploma are eligible to receive this honor. The valedictorian/salutatorian is determined by GPA. In the event of a tie the ACT score may be figured in. Numerical averages will be carried out to the thousandths place. The valedictorian will give the valedictory address at graduation while the salutatorian will speak at Baccalaureate.

EXAMS

Semester exams will be given in all core courses in grades 7-12. Elective exams will be given at the teacher's/administration discretion.

Exams will count as 20% of the semester average. Exam exemption is available to seniors with an "A" average and no more than 4 excused absences or a "B" average and no more than 3 excused absences during the current semester. Any accumulation of 3 unexcused tardies in a quarter is equal to an unexcused absence also removing exemption status.

HOMework

School is a student's full-time job. Our teachers strive to avoid assigning excessive homework, but at times homework is necessary. Major projects may require more work at home but these are typically scheduled much further in advance.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PE is a part of every elementary student's day. All high school students must pass one year of PE in order to graduate. PE uniforms expectations will be outlined by

the individual PE coach. Students who fail to participate in or dress out for PE should expect to see their grades dropped accordingly.

INTERNET USE

We live in a world of exploding technology and our students are digital natives. CCS strives to teach students to use technology responsibly. Students and parents must sign the acceptable use policy sheet to be allowed to use our network. Misuse of computers/devices will result in discipline or loss of privileges. Students can consider their use of the internet to be “misuse” if they would be embarrassed before God, their teacher, and/or their parents to see what they are viewing or doing online at a given moment.

GRADUATION

Graduation is an honor reserved for students who have successfully completed a CCS course of study. Students without the necessary credits for graduation will not be permitted to participate in graduation ceremonies.

Students will be assessed a graduation fee to cover the cost of the ceremonies. Senior pranks or acts of vandalism may result in expulsion or barring from graduation exercises at the discretion of the administration. Fines to cover damages may also be assessed prior to release of any transcripts.

STANDARD DIPLOMA

Bible/Electives	4.5 credits
English	4 credits
Social Studies	4 credits
Math*	4 credits
Science**	4 credits
Foreign Language	1 credit
Physical Education	1 credit
Computer	½ credit
Fine Art	½ credit
Health	½ credit
TOTAL	24 credits

*Math must be complete with 4 credits including Geometry and Algebra II

**Science must include Biology and at least one physical science

ADVANCED HONORS DIPLOMA

For the Advanced Honors Diploma, students must fulfill all diploma requirements with these modifications:

1. Completion of 2 years of foreign language (same language)
2. Math must be complete through Pre-Calculus
3. Science must include Biology and Chemistry
4. ½ credit or 75 hours of school and community service (documented)
5. Completion of 26 credits

ALUMNI

CCS is extremely proud of all our alumni. The list below represents some of the colleges and universities that have granted our alumni degrees. In addition to these colleges, we also have representation in every branch of the Armed Forces.

<i>New York University</i>	<i>Samford University</i>
<i>Beeson Divinity School</i>	<i>McWhorter School of Pharmacy</i>
<i>Harrison School of Pharmacy</i>	<i>University of Alabama</i>
<i>Auburn University</i>	<i>Brown University</i>
<i>Mississippi State University</i>	<i>Belmont University</i>
<i>University of Montevallo</i>	<i>Harding University</i>
<i>Lee University</i>	<i>Huntingdon College</i>
<i>Troy University</i>	<i>University of North Alabama</i>
<i>University of South Alabama</i>	<i>Southwest Baptist University</i>
<i>Mississippi College</i>	<i>Faulkner University</i>
<i>Spring Hill College</i>	<i>University of Alabama – Huntsville</i>
<i>University of Mississippi</i>	<i>Tuskegee University</i>
<i>Jacksonville State University</i>	<i>South Union State Community College</i>
<i>Universidad del Rosario (Bogota, Columbia)</i>	
<i>Palabra de Vida (Buenos Aires, Argentina)</i>	
<i>Virginia College</i>	<i>Judson College</i>
<i>Jeff State Community College</i>	<i>Central Alabama Community College</i>

DISCIPLINE

CCS trains its students to strive to **live above reproach**, showing respect for God, country, family, faculty, and fellow students. Discipline is necessary in the school environment to promote academic success and safety. Students who fail to

cooperate spiritually, morally, or scholastically will jeopardize their privilege to attend CCS.

STUDENT STANDARD OF CONDUCT

CCS will strive to provide an environment conducive to the spiritual growth and development of young people. Conduct based on the following Biblical imperatives is necessary to provide such an environment. The school, therefore, requires that each student:

1. Refrain from cheating, stealing, swearing, indecent language, threatening or intimidating others, using or selling tobacco products, alcoholic beverages and narcotics, pornography, premarital sex, negative peer pressure, listening to music and/or wearing apparel that has negative or violent innuendoes that shape thoughts and values.
2. Maintain Christian standards in courtesy, kindness, honesty, morality, modest attire, always acting in a very orderly and respectful manner.

Students are expected to abide by these standards throughout their enrollment, **whether at home, school, or elsewhere.**

ELEMENTARY POLICIES

Classroom Discipline

Teachers discuss classroom rules and expectations at the beginning of the year. Conduct grades will reflect a student's behavior during the school day.

Additional Consequence

Minor infractions of individual classroom rules will be dealt with by the teacher in each classroom. More serious behaviors, such as the following violations, however, are subject to documented discipline procedures and may be referred to the Dean of Students or the Director:

1. Teasing, harassing, or making fun of others
2. Inappropriate touching, hitting, biting, pinching, throwing rocks.
3. Vulgar or unwholesome language.

4. Showing disrespect for anyone in authority.
5. Fighting, stealing, cheating and lying.
6. Refusal to follow instructions.

These and other serious offenses may result in suspensions. Repeated offenses could lead to expulsion.

HIGH SCHOOL POLICIES

Teachers will go over specific discipline procedures at the start of the school year.

Based on the nature of the infraction, disciplinary action can be placed in one of the following categories:

- Mild- generally administered by the teacher
 - Moderate-administered by the teacher and/or Dean of Students
 - Serious- administered by the Dean of Students and/or Director
 - Very Serious- administered by the Director with the possible advice and approval of the School Board.
1. Mild disciplinary cases will be handled by the teacher. Mild discipline could range from reprimands to detention. Mild infractions could include, but are not limited to: unexcused tardy, food/drink in class, failure to return unprepared for class, disruptive behavior, etc.
 2. Moderate discipline may be handled by the teacher or the Dean of Students. Moderate discipline could range from a detention to an in-school suspension. Moderate infractions include, but are not limited to: repeated misbehavior, disrespect, cheating (which will also result in a zero on the test or assignment), offensive language or offensive behavior.
 3. Serious discipline involves the Dean and/or the Director. At this level, a suspension for one or multiple days may be given. Suspensions generally will occur on the day following parent notification of the matter. Suspensions are considered unexcused absences and therefore will result in academic consequences. Serious infractions include, but are not limited to: fighting, lying, flagrantly abusive language or bullying, harassment, cheating, plagiarism, going to vehicle without permission, skipping class or

lunch, skipping chapel or skipping school, leaving school without permission or following proper procedures for checking out, possession or use of tobacco products or alcohol, possession of drugs or pornography, misuse of computers/internet, repeated misbehavior, misuse/abuse of school property (including lockers), vandalism, disrespectful attitude.

4. Very Serious discipline is expulsion, which is permanent dismissal from school. The Board may be involved in the decision to expel a student. Once the parents are notified of such a decision, they may appeal the decision in writing to the Director within three days. A student may not attend classes during the appeals process. A student who has lost the privilege to attend CCS may not be permitted to attend school related events. *A student who has been expelled may be required to wait one year the fall following the one-year anniversary of the expulsion. Readmission will be taken under consideration by the Administration and the School Board.*

Expulsion may occur for the following actions:

- ✚ Possession or use of any un-prescribed drugs, or the misuse of any prescribed drugs, on or off school property- Students who choose to return at a later time to CCS who have dismissed for drug abuse will be required to enroll in a drug counseling or rehabilitation program, and may be required to submit to periodic drug testing. Periodic reports will be made from the program counselor or director to the Director of CCS.
- ✚ Selling or supply prescribed or illegal drugs.
- ✚ Repeated violations of discipline that have resulted in suspensions.
- ✚ Failure of parents to cooperate with the school in the discipline of their children.
- ✚ Leaving campus without permission.
- ✚ Harassment or threats.
- ✚ Hazing.
- ✚ Assault or battery of a teacher.
- ✚ Moral misconduct.
- ✚ Dishonesty.
- ✚ Stealing.

- ✚ Possession of a weapon of any kind.
- ✚ Pornographic materials.
- ✚ Intentional plagiarism.
- ✚ Other extreme actions deemed to be very serious by the Administration/School Board.

LOCKER ROOM BEHAVIOR

Behavior in the locker room areas is to follow all of the rules laid out in this handbook. Normally, a locker room is a more “laid back” atmosphere, but that does not excuse the breaking of any rules.

Any witnessed misbehavior must be reported to the Athletic Director or appropriate coach.

DETENTIONS

At this time CCS does not have a regular detention schedule. We reserve the right to set a detention time for behaviors that warrant this consequence. Once a detention time has been set the student must comply. If for any reason a student cannot make the scheduled time, a parent must notify the school to arrange and alternate time. Detentions may not be postponed more than once.

SUSPENSIONS

Suspensions are not given lightly. They are counted as an unexcused absence, which means that they automatically negate any possibility of exempting semester exams, and any assignments or tests given during the suspension period will be counted as a zero.

EXPULSION

In the event that a student is expelled from CCS, that student has the right to petition the Director/Board for a reconsideration of the circumstances as outlined in the “very serious” section above. Expulsion from CCS may result in denial of admission of the expelled student into other school for some period of time.

The school reserves the right to report serious offenses that may constitute a violation of criminal laws to the proper authorities and to press charges against the student if the situation should so warrant.

BEHAVIORAL PROBATION

A student who has exhibited discipline problems may be placed on behavioral probation. The administration determines the behavioral probation with input from the faculty. During the period of probation, the student must demonstrate significant conduct improvement. Failure to show marked improvement may result in the student's forfeiture of the privilege to attend CCS. The purpose of such probation is to motivate the student to demonstrate self-discipline and to function within the school community in a cooperative manner. The administration will assess whether CCS can be successful in helping a student to achieve success.

CCS reserves the right to deny admission or re-admission to any student whose actions demonstrate that it is not in the school's best interest to admit that student.

SEARCHES/DRUG TESTING

CCS strives to provide our students with a Godly and safe environment in which to learn. In an effort to achieve this environment, CCS reserves the right to inspect a student's locker, car, book bag, purse, or any other item that is thought to possibly contain items which are illegal or against school policy or the law. We further reserve the right to ask any student in grades 7-12 to submit to a drug or alcohol test with or without advanced notice. Any student found with positive results or who refuses to be tested may be subject to expulsion at the discretion of the Administration and/or the Board. Periodically, the Shelby County Sheriff's Department will be asked to conduct searches using their canine unit.

CONDUCT ON SCHOOL-SPONSORED TRIPS

The same standard of conduct required of students at school is also required of them on school-sponsored activities. Conduct that disrupts or tends to embarrass

the school, its reputation, witness or overall goals will not be tolerated. Suspension or expulsion can occur for such infractions.

CELL PHONES/DEVICES

Students are allowed to have cell phones/devices with them at school; however, these devices must be put away during class unless otherwise instructed by the teacher. Any device used during undesignated times may be confiscated. It may be picked up at the end of the day in the school office. The second time a device is turned over to the office, it will only be released to a parent or guardian. If parents need to contact their children during the day, they should call the school office not ask their children to break the rules. Phones are available in the office in times of need or emergency. *If there is an unusual situation and parents feel it necessary that students be able to access their phone, the parents need to contact the administration to obtain permission for the student to do so.* Athletes who need to communicate with parents concerning changes in athletic schedules may do so during class after the teacher give approval.

AT NO TIME SHOULD A CELL PHONE/DEVICE BE USED TO RECORD (VOICE OR PICTURE) AN INAPPROPRIATE CONVERSATION OR PICTURE. If this behavior is caught, it falls into the “very serious” category of discipline.

HIGH SCHOOL DRIVING

In order to maintain a secure and safe campus, all automobiles driven to school by students MUST fill out a driving form. No student vehicle can remain on campus without filling out this form. Information to be supplied to the school would include: driver’s license #, car tag #, insurance information, make and color of the vehicle. These records will be maintained in the front office, any updates decals/stickers on/in their cars.

Driving privileges will be suspended for a length of time determined by the administration for reckless driving, going to cars during school day without permission, or parking in inappropriate places. A student’s driving privilege will be revoked permanently for repeated offenses.

DRIVING POLICY

Students will be allowed to drive vehicles to school as long as they:

- ✚ Observe necessary precautions of safe driving both on and off campus
- ✚ Park their cars in the designated student parking areas
- ✚ Observe speed limit on campus of 10mph
- ✚ Observe the correct traffic flow pattern

Students who drive motorcycles are also expected to conform to regulation pertaining to motor vehicles. Motorbike are NOT to be ridden across the ground of CCS.

Students are not allowed to sit in vehicles upon arrival of school.

Violators of driving regulations will be subject to disciplinary action, including loss of driving privilege. This includes students parking in areas to which they are not assigned.

DRESS CODE

The dress code of CCS is designed to reflect 3 principles:

1. No student has the right to dress in a way that will distract other students from learning.
2. Learning to dress appropriately to fit the life situation is an essential component of maturity.
3. A school dress code should reflect Biblical principles of modesty and Christian maturity.

CONSEQUENCE

Students who arrive at school out of code will not attend class until the situation is resolved to the satisfaction of the classroom teacher and/or administrator. Any missed work will be given a grade of zero, as our dress code is clearly laid out in this handbook and therefore deviations from it are unexcused.

There will be no credence given to arguments that “other students got away with this.” The fact that one dress code violation went unnoticed does not excuse future violations, any more than one unsolved robbery excuses all future robberies.

IN ONE SENTENCE

Students of Cornerstone are expected to arrive and remain neat, modest, and respectful in attire appropriate to a mixed-gender, K-12 environment.

GENTLEMEN

1. Shirts: T-shirts, polos, button-ups, sweatshirts or sweaters. Note that tank tops are not permitted.
2. Pants: Khakis, dress pants, blue jeans, dress shorts, or denim shorts. Shorts must be modest- usually no more than 4 inches above the knee.
3. Hair: Neatly groomed with eyes, ears and collars visible. Longer hair may be worn but must be pulled up to meet the above criteria. Extreme or outlandish hairstyles are not permitted; it's advisable to seek permission before spending money on one. Dye must be a natural human hair color. Gentlemen must be clean-shaven.
4. General Principles: All clothes must fit appropriately. No clothes may contain offensive or inappropriate material (and remember we have 3-year olds in our halls). All attire must be modest. Gentlemen may not wear earrings on campus or to school events.

LADIES

1. Shirts: Blouses, T-shirts, polos, button-ups, sweatshirts, or sweaters. Note that tank tops are not permitted.
2. Pants: Khakis, dress pants, blue jeans, dress shorts, or denim shorts. Shorts should be modest: generally, no more than 4" above the knee. Legging may be worn under very specific guidelines. Tops over leggings must be mid-thigh in length and be of the tunic style. Oversized t-shirts are NOT acceptable legging covering.
3. Dresses: skirts or dresses are to be no more than 4" above the knee when standing up straight (including slits, adjustment for high heels).
4. Hair: neatly groomed with eyes visible. Extreme or outlandish styles are not permitted. It's advisable to seek permission before spending money on one. Any dye must be a natural human hair color.

5. General Principles: All attire must be modest – no exposed back, belly, cleavage or undergarments. Ladies are allowed 2 earrings per ear while on campus.

ALL-INCLUSIVE DRESS CODE PRINCIPLES

1. Clothing from other high schools should not be worn at CCS.
2. Rips and frays in clothes must be covered.
3. Modesty should be observed at all times.
4. Team uniforms/warm-ups may be worn with permission from team coach.
5. Shoes must be worn at all times in the buildings.
6. Athletic shoes must be worn for PE.
7. Hats/toboggans are not allowed in the building. They will be confiscated and not returned. At this time Friday's are reserved as "Hat Day" where hats can be worn.
8. Tattoos may not be visible.
9. Ear gauges are not allowed; however if gauges exist, the student must use a gauge cover.
10. It is recommended that each student keep an alternative set of clothes in their vehicle/locker so that, in the event of dress code issue, lost class time can be minimized. It is always better to ask first than to be sent home to change.

I PETER 3: 2-5

"Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight."

One of the primary reasons we have a dress code is to minimize distraction and allow students to focus on principles of primary importance.

INTERPRETATION/CHANGES TO CODE

Generally, we will ask a lady to deal with issues of ladies' modesty (and vice versa) to minimize discomfort on the part of our staff and students.

All dress codes are subject to interpretation. On our campus, the first interpretation comes from the classroom teacher. If the student disagrees with the teacher's interpretation, they should present their case to the administrator. If they disagree with the administrator, they should comply for the day, to avoid missing classwork, and present their case to the CCS Board in writing so that future conflict can be avoided.

The alternative to a relaxed and general dress code, as presented in the handbook, is school uniforms. Our goal is to minimize the amount of time our staff spends on dress code.

Changes to the dress code may be proposed to the administrator in writing.

ATHLETICS

We believe that athletic involvement and physical activity are an important part of learning.

We also believe in our sedentary culture it is vital that our students learn to enjoy physical activity. However, it is important to note that our school exists for the purposes of academic learning; sports are always a secondary consideration for our administration, faculty and students.

ELIGIBILITY

CCS competes in the Alabama Independent School Association; therefore, eligibility questions should be directed to our athletic director, as AISA eligibility guidelines shift from year to year.

For CCS purposes, we reserve the right to deny athletic eligibility to students who demonstrate serious behavioral or academic deficiencies, as defined by our stand and administration.

BOOSTER CLUB/BUDGET

The athletic budget is no contained in the CCS budget, and tuition dollars generally do not go to CCS athletics.

When Activity Fees are assessed, the Booster Club may receive a portion of those fees in order to cover each student's admission to home games.

The Booster Club consists of parents and friends of the school working to fund our athletic program and improve our facilities through fundraising and projects. It also schedules concession and gate workers for each sport. Parents are required to follow Club guidelines as a condition of their child's participation in each sport.

FORMS/FEES

All athletes must have a physical examination form on file prior to participating in tryouts, practices, or athletic events. Additionally, all CCS athletes must have a parental consent form on file before participating in CCS athletics.

There are Sports Fees associated with each sport at CCS, to enable us to pay the necessary bills to fund our athletic programs. These fees are due upon tryout/first official practice. Student-athletes with unpaid fees may be barred from participation in practices, games or awards ceremonies. Fees may be paid up front or attached to tuition billing through our relationship with FACTS.

INSURANCE

Student accident insurance is provided for all students participating as a member of an intramural or interscholastic athletic team.

ATHLETIC RULES AND DISCIPLINE

The school administrator and athletic director are in overall control of the athletic program. They, along with the coaching staff, govern the conduct and expectations for our student-athletes. Practice and game schedules will be provided as soon as possible for each sport; typically, game schedules and directions are available in the school office.

Coaches are directly in charge of all practices and games. As a matter of principle, our coaching staff will discuss individual athletic progress with the athlete or parents, but will not discuss matters related to playing time or game-time decisions. All decisions about who will play, when, and for how long, are made by

individual coaches. We ask that parents respect the coach-player relationship by not interfering in these matters.

It is never acceptable to question a coach on the sideline in public—before, during or after a game—unless student safety is involved.

QUITTING A SPORT

As a matter of policy, a student who quits a sport after the first ten practices (or first game) for any reason other than injury will be barred from all athletic participation for one calendar year. This policy is non-negotiable. Any uniform/spirit pack fees will still be due; sports fees may be prorated at the discretion of the coach and athletic director.

SUMMER WORKOUTS

Summer workouts are a required part of CCS athletics. Students who refuse to follow summer workout guidelines will be barred from participation in CCS athletic programs. It should be noted that participation in athletics is an entirely separate matter from academics; therefore, students barred from athletic competition will not be permitted to violate the terms of their tuition contract with the CCS school board.

ATHLETIC CONFLICT RESOLUTION

All athletic concerns should be initially addressed at the level of the individual coach. Where possible, concerns should be brought by players, rather than parents, as part of Cornerstone's mission to teach students to manage their own affairs.

If resolution cannot be obtained at this level, it should proceed to the athletic director, who may involve school administration in conflict resolution.

Beyond the athletic director, issues may be brought to the CCS Director, and then to the school board, in that order.

SPORTSMANSHIP

CCS is a school dedicated to Christian principles. We believe these principles must govern not only our academic lives, but our athletic lives as well.

To that end, we ask that students, parents, and spectators at CCS athletic events refrain from to the following activities:

1. Calling out players (by name or number, for our team or the opponent) in a negative light.
2. Embarrassing, harassing, or threatening coaches.
3. Generally acting in a fashion unbecoming to the witness of Christ.

An attitude of good sportsmanship is expected from CCS fans as well as our staff and students. Additionally, it is mandated by the regulations of the AISA. This sportsmanship rule is based on state law. CCS athletes, fans or parents who violate the practice of good sportsmanship may be fined or disciplined by the school or the AISA.

The following policy is taken directly from AISA regulations:

“Cornerstone Christian School and the AISA will not tolerate or condone demonstrations of poor professionalism or sportsmanship by parents, fans, or coaching staff—especially displays which lead to altercations and/or forfeiture. CCS, the AISA athletic committee, and the AISA state board will take a very firm and rigid stand in matters of this concern.

Any person guilty of unsportsmanlike involvement with players, coaches, officials, fans, and/or others before, during and after any AISA interscholastic event may be fined \$500 and the school(s) represented by the involved may be placed on a minimum of one-year probation and receive additional sanctions.”

Parents should also be advised that Alabama state law has clear guidelines regarding harassment and/or threats directed to coaches, players, or officials during games or practices.