

2023—2024



**Parent/Student Handbook**

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**[www.hillcrestchristian.org](http://www.hillcrestchristian.org)**

**Whatever you do in word or deed, do all  
in the name of the Lord Jesus. – Colossians 3:17**



Welcome EVERYONE!

We are excited to begin another year at Hillcrest Christian School. We are overjoyed that you have chosen Hillcrest for your child's education, allowing us to share their lives as we grow together in Christ.

Hillcrest Christian School can best be described as a community of students, faculty, and parents engaged in education that seeks to prepare students to be effective servants of Christ in contemporary society. We recognize that Jesus Christ is the Lord of that community. In order for this Christian school community to function together, common expectations and regulations are necessary. While total agreement about each rule is impossible, consistent application is expected. Such responsible implementation is a necessary ingredient to maintain a safe community and an appropriate learning environment. We hope that together we can glimpse a vision of Christ's kingdom in our community here. May we, with God's help, experience success and joy in attaining that vision.

The handbook is expected to be read carefully by both parents and students. This information will help you understand what HCS has to offer you, and in addition, what is expected of students and parents in order to have a successful year which will glorify our Lord Jesus Christ!

"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." ~ Colossians 2:6-7

Tom Prather, PhD  
Head of School

Jeremy Nix, MEd  
Principal



## FOREWORD

Hillcrest Christian School is a family of students, parents, and teachers working, playing, worshipping, and growing together. All families and schools need guidelines and rules that make working together possible and enjoyable. It is impossible to cover every circumstance and situation that may arise in a school setting, but the Student Handbook contains guidelines and rules that do apply for Hillcrest Christian School. It is the responsibility of each parent and student to read and understand these guidelines and to inquire of the administration about any matter that is unclear.

The purpose of this handbook is 1) to translate the policies of the school board into guidelines and rules to be followed and upheld, and 2) to inform all family members of those guidelines and rules with the expectation that they will follow them.

Please feel free to call upon the administration and faculty to help answer any questions. An exciting year awaits us! May we remember the admonition of the apostle Paul... "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father." ~ Colossians 3:17

Each student contributes to the character development of his/her school, for they are its ambassadors. The opinions which others form of Hillcrest Christian School are based upon the manner in which its students, parents, faculty, and staff conduct themselves.

Being good citizens of the school at all times, at home or away, is the best policy to follow.

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## MISSION OF HILLCREST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Hillcrest Christian School is dedicated to reaching students for Christ emphasizing academics, excellence, and incorporating Christ-like values in all extra-curricular activities. We endeavor to operate HCS on the following biblical principles found in Colossians 1:9-12:

Operate in a manner worthy of the Lord (v 10)  
Seek to please the Lord in every aspect of the school (v 10)  
Expect growth in character and knowledge (v 10)  
Rely upon the Lord (v.11)  
Cultivate an atmosphere of joyful thanksgiving (v 12)

## ADMINISTRATION

### **Tom Prather, PhD, Head of School**

BS, Mississippi College  
MEd, Mississippi College  
PhD, University of Mississippi

### **Jeremy Nix, M.Ed, Principal**

BA, William Carey University  
MEd, William Carey University  
Leadership Institute, MAIS

### **Beth Hooks, School Counselor**

BS, Delta State University

### **Willis Clark**

Athletic Director

### **Michele Watts, Director**

Cougar Care

## **HILLCREST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We believe the Bible to be the complete, inspired, and authoritative Word of God, without error in the original writings, the standard by which all knowledge is justified and taught and the final authority in faith and life (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4, Colossians 1:16, 2 Corinthians 13:14).

We believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His personal return in power and glory (John 10:30, Matthew 1:22-25, Hebrews 7:26, 1 Peter 2:21-24, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, Acts 1:9-10, Romans 8:34, 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

We believe that the salvation and redemption of lost and sinful mankind are possible only by God's grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (Romans 3:23, Ephesians 2:8-9).

We believe that children and adolescents should be taught in Christian love (Hebrews 12:6, Revelations 3:19).

We believe that all Christians are called to live Godly lives (Colossians 1:9-12, Romans 12:2).

### **NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO STUDENTS**

Hillcrest Christian School, Inc. admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin, and the handicapped to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin or the handicapped in administration of its educational policies, admissions, financial aid programs, athletics, fine arts, and other school-administered programs.

## **HCS PLEDGES**

### **Pledge to the Christian Flag**

I pledge allegiance to the Christian Flag  
and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands  
one brotherhood uniting all Christians  
in service and love.

### **Pledge to the Bible**

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

### **Pledge to the American Flag**

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.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

August 7, 2023	1st Term Begins - 1st Day for students
September 4, 2023	Labor Day - No School
September 5, 2023	Progress Reports - Parent Teacher Conferences (Student Holiday)
September 20, 2023	School Picture Day
September 25-29, 2023	Homecoming Week
October 9, 2023	Columbus Day - No School
October 10, 2023	2nd Term Begins
November 6, 2023	Parent Teacher Conference - Progress Reports (Student Holiday)
November 20-24, 2023	Thanksgiving Break
December 1, 2023	MAIS Teacher's Conference (Student Holiday)
December 18-20, 2023	Semester Exams (60% Days)
December 21, 2023	Christmas Break Begins
January 4, 2024	3rd Term Begins
January 5, 2024	Report Card
January 15, 2024	MLK Day - School Closed
February 5, 2024	Progress Reports - Parent Teacher Conferences (Student Holiday)
February 19, 2024	President's Day - School Closed
March 8, 2024	BJU Biblical Worldview Conference (Student Holiday)
March 10-15, 2024	Spring Break
March 18, 2024	Report Cards - 4th Term Begins
March 22, 2024	Junior/Senior Prom
March 29-April 1, 2024	Easter Break - No School
April 15, 2024	Progress Reports - Parent Teacher Conferences (Student Holiday)
May 3, 2024	Lower School Field Day - Athletic Banquet
May 6-8, 2024	Senior Exams
May 13, 2024	6-11 Grade Awards
May 14, 2024	Senior Awards - Pass the Torch
May 15, 2024	K5 Graduation
May 16, 2024	5th Grade Graduation - Lower School Awards
May 17, 2024	Graduation
May 20-23, 2024	Final Exams (60% Days)

## INTRODUCTION

Hillcrest Christian School holds accreditation through Cognia, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), and the MidSouth Association of Independent Schools

(MAIS).

Through MAIS, the school participates in many extracurricular activities such as Spelling Bee, Art Competition, Science Fair, Academic Betterment Competition, Youth Legislation and other student activities.

### MEMBERSHIP AND TUITION

Admission to the school will be by membership only. The price is \$300 per membership which is nonrefundable and will enable the children in one family to attend the school.

Tuition payment options are as follows:

**Annual Plan** - Tuition payable in full by June 1

**Semi-Annual Plan** – ½ of tuition payable June 1, and ½ of tuition payable December 1

**Quarterly Plan** – ¼ of tuition payable June 1, September 1, December 1 and March 1

**12-Month Payment Plan /10-Month Payment Plan** Tuition payable in monthly installments beginning June 1, (August 1 for K-3) with final payment due May 1

Any draft or payment returned by the bank will result in an additional charge of \$40.00. Monthly tuition payments not paid within ten (10) days of the contract date are considered delinquent. If a monthly tuition payment is not received within ten (10) days of contract date, a late charge of \$25.00 will be added to the account. An additional \$25.00 late charge will be added for each additional month said account is in arrears.

Tuition and fees for August must be paid before a student can begin the fall semester. Patrons whose tuition and/or fees payments are in arrears and delinquent for two (2) monthly payments will have student(s) dismissed immediately from school. Parents of a student dismissed from school for non-payment of tuition and/or fees will be required, before readmission, to pay the entire balance of the tuition and/or fees due plus a re-entry fee of \$50.00 per student.

Final grades, report cards, and transcripts will be withheld while tuition and/or fees are in arrears. All accounts must be paid in full before final exams and end-of-year activities in May. If tuition and/or fees are in arrears, the student may not register until the account is current. The business office does not mail monthly statements concerning tuition payments.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

The following policies are designed to acquaint HCS students and their families and guests with school regulations and policies. These apply to students in the following situations:

1. Students in attendance at school
2. Students on school property
3. Students at school-sponsored activities
4. Students must not be involved in any conduct at any other time or place that has a negative effect on maintaining school order and discipline, or protecting the safety and welfare of others, or endangering the reputation of the school. This includes the use or possession of alcohol or drugs, immoral activity, or involvement with law enforcement.
5. Students must attend chapel each week.
6. Students are required to stand for the National Anthem when played at any function at home or at a visiting school.
7. Students are required to stand and say the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag each morning.
8. HCS does not recognize a student's right to openly protest any school policy or any cause or issue that occurs in world affairs. Students who openly protest or organize a protest/sit-in/walk-out will face serious disciplinary consequences. This includes student sit-ins or student walk-outs. Students attend HCS to be prepared for college and life. These activities take away valuable instructional time and disrupts the school environment and it will not be tolerated.
9. Students are expected to follow the dress code without exception per the student handbook

We have no intention of policing or monitoring students while they are off campus and not engaged in school activities. A student represents Hillcrest at all times and should reflect at all times the character, mission, and purpose stated in these policies.

Attending and being associated with HCS should be an honor and privilege to all of us. Any student who chooses to violate these policies will be subject to disciplinary action or expulsion.

## **CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Hillcrest Christian School has a crisis management plan in effect. HCS is prepared to respond to natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, freezing rain or snow, and fires, as well as man-made disasters, as set forth in the crisis management manual. The HCS emergency management team is in place to ensure a quick response to any crisis that may arise.

## **SAFETY DRILLS**

Fire, lockdown, and tornado drills will be held throughout the year.

## SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Information regarding school closings will be primarily communicated by school administration via texts and/or emails. We will also post information related to school closure on HCS website and HCS Facebook page.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER/EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

In the event of impending inclement weather, please tune in to local radio and television stations for a list of school closings. Information will be provided for broadcast by 6:30 am.

In the event of weather emergency or other emergency situations during school hours, the local radio and television stations will be notified when our school will be closing. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible to pick up their child/children.

## PROBLEM SOLVING PROTOCOL

It is important that the lines of communication between parent/student and Hillcrest Christian School teachers remain open and positive at all times. If a problem arises, the following protocol will be followed in all situations.

**FIRST STEP** - The parent(s) and/or student should immediately contact the teacher or coach who is directly involved with the problem and allow them to handle the problem.

**SECOND STEP** - (If necessary) When the first protocol has been followed, if the problem is not remedied, contact the immediate administrative supervisor (principal or athletic director).

**THIRD STEP** - (If necessary) After the first two protocols have been followed, the administrative supervisor will consult with the head of school.

**FOURTH STEP** - (If necessary) The head of school will consult with the board of directors.

This protocol will encompass all situations. Each step must be properly addressed before advancing to the next level. If at any time a step is bypassed, those involved will immediately be sent back to the appropriate level.

## PARENTAL SUPPORT

Parental support is required in all aspects of Hillcrest Christian School. HCS reserves the right to dismiss students when parents fail to support the administration, faculty, and policies.

Parental/guardian support is required with regard to all aspects of Hillcrest Christian School and is an integral component contributing to the school's success. We request that parents refrain from utilizing any language and/or technology which would have a negative effect on:

- maintaining school order and discipline
- protecting the safety and welfare of other students or staff
- the reputation of Hillcrest Christian School and its students, faculty, and staff

This would include, but is not limited to: emails, texts, tweets or social networking sites. Hillcrest reserves the right to dismiss students when parents, through the stated means or any other, fail to support the administration, faculty, or HCS policies.

## PRAYER

In keeping with the HCS Mission Statement and Statement of Faith, we recognize that prayer is a foundational and essential element of the Christian faith and is an integral part of every aspect of school life at Hillcrest, including morning devotionals, assemblies, sports events, student meetings, the beginning of classes each day, and many other activities.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

All participants, players, coaches, and fans in attendance at any extracurricular event or activity should demonstrate good sportsmanship and conduct themselves at all times in a Christian manner. HCS is dedicated to providing an atmosphere that promotes leadership, teamwork, and comradery among fellow players as well as officials and opponents. Yelling or insulting players, coaches, and referee during tryouts, practice, camps, or games, etc. will not be tolerated. Any actions that discredit or dishonors HCS or our Christian policies are unacceptable. Offenders will be dealt with and appropriate action will be taken by HCS administration. Individuals who are ejected from a game or an event face a penalty from the MidSouth Association of Independent Schools, including but not limited to, a fine, suspension from future MAIS functions, or both. In addition, HCS may be placed on probation or suspended from participating in MAIS functions.

*“The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior and integrity permeate our culture. The values of good citizenship and high behavioral standards apply equally to all activity disciplines. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Further, an awareness is expected of the impact of an individual’s influence on the behavior of others. Good sportsmanship is viewed by the National Federation as a concrete measure of the understanding and commitment of fair play, ethical behavior and integrity.”*

— MidSouth Association of Independent Schools

## SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

It is the intent of Hillcrest Christian School to maintain an environment free from sexual harassment of any kind. Therefore, ANY sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct (including but not limited to touching, comments, gestures, etc.) of a sexual nature amounting to or constituting harassment are prohibited.

Complaints of violation of this policy may be made to the administrator, or other person designated by the administrator, without fear of reprisal. All complaints will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. This policy in no way limits or precludes anyone from pursuing any relief afforded by state or federal law.

Hillcrest Christian School assumes a zero-tolerance policy regarding any form of inappropriate relationships between our staff and students. Further, any allegations of inappropriate relationships or victimization of students will be confronted immediately and reported to appropriate authorities and parents of any students involved.



In addition, HCS will provide training and regular reminders to teachers regarding inappropriate relationships. Also, we will provide clarification and identification of such inappropriate relationships to students who are victims and make counseling available for students relating to any allegations.

### **TOBACCO PRODUCTS**

The use or possession of tobacco or tobacco-like products (including e-cigarettes, vape sticks, and/or vaping products) is prohibited at Hillcrest Christian School and includes all school property (buildings, fields, and transportation) and school functions on and off campus.

### **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

Drugs and alcohol are prohibited at all times. Consistent with our basic principles, HCS will take advantage of every opportunity to educate students regarding their moral, legal, and ethical responsibilities to refrain from the use of illicit substances. Moreover, we believe that our drug and alcohol policy should demonstrate love and compassion for students who have failed to discipline themselves in regard to the use of the substances; on the other hand, we also intend to uphold strict prohibitions relating to the use of drugs and alcohol by our students. To do otherwise would compromise those standards of morality to which we aspire, neglect the rights and even the safety of other students, and ultimately demonstrate a lack of concern for those individuals who violate the rules.

Students are prohibited from using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs on school property at all times. Moreover, students are prohibited from using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while they are engaged in any school related or school-sponsored activity, wherever such activity takes place.

HCS does not approve or sanction the use of alcohol or illegal drugs by students while they are not on school property and not engaged in school-sponsored or school-related activities. While we have no intention of policing or monitoring what students do while they are off-campus and engaged in non-school activities, disciplinary action will be taken if drug or alcohol abuse is confirmed.

HCS students in grades 7-12 are subject to random drug/alcohol testing conducted on campus by an independent drug testing facility throughout the school year. In addition to random testing, HCS administration retains the right to request a test for a specific student at its discretion.

### **WEAPONS**

NO weapon of any size or type, including, but not limited to knives, firearms, hunting weapons, or any instrument which could be classified as a weapon, will be allowed in the possession of any individual (all ages) while on HCS property. Possession means: on one's person, or in a purse, briefcase, backpack, desk, vehicle, or any other location on school property. Any student found with a weapon in their possession will immediately be suspended. Any student displaying, using, or threatening to use any weapon, or any instrument that could be classified

as a weapon, will be subject to expulsion from HCS without a release from the membership/tuition contract and may face legal action. If a parent/guardian or any other visitor on the school campus is found with a weapon in their possession, appropriate action will be taken, which may include contacting law enforcement, legal action, and/or banning violators from coming on campus.

## **POLICIES FOR LOWER AND UPPER SCHOOL**

### **AGE REQUIREMENTS**

K3 child must be 3 years old before September 1<sup>st</sup> for K3.

K4 child must be 4 years old before September 1<sup>st</sup> for K4.

K5 child must be 5 years old before September 1<sup>st</sup> for K5.

1<sup>st</sup> Grade child must be 6 years old before September 1<sup>st</sup> for 1<sup>st</sup> Grade.

*(Please note: All children must be potty trained by the time they begin attending school.)*

### **HEALTH CERTIFICATE / IMMUNIZATION**

Upon your child's admission to HCS, we require that you provide an immunization card required by state law, which can be obtained from your doctor. All students in K-3 through 12<sup>th</sup> grade must have an up-to-date immunization record in their files.

### **MARRIAGE AND PREGNANCY**

In our opinion, the environment that is most conducive to the school activities and educational curriculum of Hillcrest Christian School is better maintained with students who are outside of the restrictions and obligations of marriage and parenthood.

These are certainly honorable and appropriate parts of adult life; however, we feel that students in our learning environment are growing up and should be segregated from those undergoing these pressures. In this respect, the policy of Hillcrest Christian School is as follows:

Students who are or have been married will not be accepted for enrollment. Students who are married before or during the school term will be dismissed from Hillcrest Christian School upon knowledge of such marriage by the administration.

Parents (either the mother or acknowledged father of a child or children) will not be accepted for enrollment at Hillcrest Christian School. In the event the administration suspects that a female student is pregnant and the pregnancy is denied, the administration may request that the student's parent/guardian provide consent for the student to submit to a pregnancy test to be administered by a physician's office.

Upon the administration's knowledge of the pregnancy of a student enrolled at HCS, the prospective mother and acknowledged prospective father will be dismissed from Hillcrest Christian School until the child is born. The school will work with the said parents to discuss possible re-enrollment into school.

## GENDER AND SEXUALITY

As a Christian school. Consequently, HCS incorporates Biblical views of marriage and gender into every aspect of how the school is run. Specifically, the School's view of marriage is that God has established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive relationship between one man and one woman and that all intimate sexual activity outside the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise, is immoral and therefore sin (Genesis 2:24-25; Exodus 20:14, 17, 22:19; Leviticus 18:22-23, 20:13, 15-16; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 1:18-31; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 15-20; 1 Timothy 1:8-11; Jude 7). The school's biblical view of gender is that God created the human race male and female and that all conduct with the intent to adopt a gender other than one's birth gender is immoral and therefore sin (Genesis 1:27; Deuteronomy 22:5).

As a Christian institution, based on biblical principles, we respect those whose moral views diverge from the school's biblical views, and the school seeks to embody the gentle and patient love of Christ for all. HCS will make institutional decisions related to student admission and retention, employment hiring and retention, and other matters.

## WITHDRAWAL

Requests for withdrawal from school must be submitted to the business office in writing and must include the reason for withdrawal. Voluntary withdrawals, as well as withdrawals due to suspension or expulsion, release the person(s) responsible for payment from contractual financial obligations only as set forth in the enrollment contract that is in force at the time of the withdrawal. **Additionally, tuition or fees paid in advance are non-refundable.** Hillcrest Christian School reserves the right to deny readmission to any student who withdraws. No student will be considered for readmission unless they are in good standing academically and behaviorally.

## ATTENDANCE/SCHOOL DAY

**LOWER SCHOOL STUDENTS** (K-3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) will report to the cafeteria if they arrive at school before 7:30 am. A teacher will be on duty from 7:10-7:30 am for the supervision of students and will be on duty in the afternoon until 2:55 pm. **STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN PICKED UP WITHIN 10 MINUTES OF DISMISSAL TIME WILL BE SENT TO COUGAR CARE AND NORMAL COUGAR CARE FEES WILL BE ASSESSED.**

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO THE WELL-BEING OF A STUDENT TO BE AT SCHOOL AT LEAST TEN (10) MINUTES BEFORE CLASS BEGINS.** EACH STUDENT NEEDS TIME TO UNPACK AND GET SETTLED FOR THE DAY.

**UPPER SCHOOL STUDENTS** will be dropped off or must park their cars immediately. Students not allowed to sit in cars, on or around the campus at any time during school hours. Teachers will be on duty from 7:30am-3:30pm each day for the supervision of students. **STUDENTS MUST BE PICKED UP AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY, OR THE END OF THEIR LAST CLASS, OR THE END OF THEIR LAST SCHOOL ACTIVITY.** STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO STAY ON CAMPUS AFTER THEIR CLASSES OR ACTIVITIES ARE OVER. **ANY 6<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE NOT PICKED UP ON TIME WILL BE SENT TO COUGAR CARE AND APPLICABLE FEES WILL BE ASSESSED.**

### Full-Day class time schedules:

K3 7:45-11:30	1 <sup>ST</sup> – 4 <sup>TH</sup>	7:45-2:40
K4 7:45-11:45	5 <sup>TH</sup>	7:45-2:55
K5 7:45-2:30	6 <sup>TH</sup> – 12 <sup>TH</sup>	7:45-3:10

### SCHOOL VISITS

**Parents and guests must request a visitor's pass from the lower or upper school office as soon as they arrive on campus.**

**LOWER SCHOOL** - Parents, please feel free to consult with the school office regarding any problems or questions that concern your child. Should you need to consult with the teacher, please contact them through the office if needed and the teacher will be notified. Please do not visit with the teachers before school, during class, recess, or loading duty times without an appointment. You are free to eat lunch with your child on their birthday.

**UPPER SCHOOL** - If it is necessary for a visitor to go to a classroom, a visitor's pass must be secured from the office. No teacher may admit a visitor into a classroom without written permission from the principal. Any campus visitor who has not been properly cleared by the principal's office will be considered a trespasser and dealt with accordingly.

### UPPER SCHOOL ABSENCES

- Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students and is necessary for successful accomplishment in school. It is important that students be in school and on time every day.
- Attendance will be checked daily and can be verified by the parent by 8:30 a.m. through FACTS/RENWEB. Although the principal's office will randomly check students who are reported absent, Hillcrest Christian School cannot be responsible for students who leave home in the morning and do not report to school.
- **The school reserves the right to determine if a student's absence is excused or unexcused.**
- Absence due to personal illness, serious illness in the family, or death in the immediate family, will be considered excused.
- Absences due to college visits, athletic events, off campus student organization meetings, or any activity the administration deems school related, will be considered excused.
- When a family finds it necessary to be away from school for an extended period of time (up to five school days), parents must submit to the administration a written request for consideration in order for absences to be excused. The request should be submitted as early as possible, but no later than five school days *prior* to said absences. A maximum of five days throughout the school year may be deemed excused for such absences, provided the student has not exceeded the total number of allowed absences.

- A student who is absent from school for any length of time, even for a part of the day, is required to bring a note from one parent or guardian or a physician's excuse to the office when they return to school. The student must check in with the office before attending class. The note must include the student's name, date of absence, and the exact reason for the absence. The administration will determine if an absence is excused or unexcused.
- All absences must be excused the week prior to nine weeks testing or semester exams. No excuses for 1<sup>st</sup> semester will be accepted after January 31.
- If a student forgets to bring the parent or guardian note or physician's excuse, an unexcused absence will be issued; however, with presentation of the proper note within two school days of the absence, the absence will be amended as excused. Students are responsible for showing the excuse form to each teacher, each period.
- Any student who is absent (excused or unexcused, but excluding absences for school-related activities) 10 days in any given semester will have his/her absentee records reviewed by school administrators. (This is also interpreted as ten or more absences in a specific subject.) A parent and the student will be required to meet with the administrators to discuss the reasons for the absences.
- Any student who is absent more than twenty days of a full year course or ten days of a semester course may forfeit the right to be promoted and/or may not receive credit for that course regardless of the grades earned. Absences due to school-sponsored activities are not counted in this total.
- Physician documentation will be required when excessive absences are determined by the school.
- HCS reserves the right to determine if excessive absences warrant dismissing a student.
- Dismissal from HCS will not release the financial responsibilities of the membership/tuition contract.

#### **UPPER SCHOOL MAKE-UP WORK**

- **It is always the responsibility of the student to make up missed assignments. Failure to do so will result in zeros for tests and daily assignments.**
- If the student does not have access to the assignments, please call the office by 11:00 am so that assignments may be picked up in the office between 2:00 pm and 3:10 pm.
- If a pattern of habitual absences during scheduled tests is recognized, a student will be warned, then will forfeit all opportunities to make up the test or tests missed. A grade of zero will be given for each test missed.
- If work is missed during the last week for a reporting period, that work must be made up and graded before report cards will be issued in those subject areas. The principal and teachers involved will determine the need for an extension of established make up time. It is the student's responsibility to contact each teacher about making up work.

## EXCUSED ABSENCES

### DUE TO SCHOOL-RELATED EVENTS

Students involved in these activities know they are going to be absent all day or part of the day prior to the absence. They are responsible for getting their assignments. If a test is assigned prior to the absence and **no additional material is given**, the student must take the test the day he/she returns to school. All other assignments are due when the student returns to school. Failure to do this will result in the student receiving a zero on assignments or tests.

### EXCUSED EXTENDED ABSENCES

Students should request any available assignments from his/her teachers prior to the absence; however, teachers will not be responsible for having assignments available for five days, since material covered in classes can vary from day to day and teachers may have to amend their lesson plans. All assignments will be due and tests completed within three days after the student returns to school in the case of this type of excused absence.

### ALL OTHER EXCUSED ABSENCES

- Students who have an excused absence (non-school related) will be permitted a period of time equal to the duration of their absence to make up missed assignments. For example, if a student misses two days, the student will be permitted two days to complete the missed assignments. Failure to do so will result in zeros for tests and daily assignments.
- For extended excused absences (over a week) due to serious or chronic illness, the teacher may allow additional time.

## UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- Students who have an unexcused absence will receive a zero-daily grade for that day.
- If a student has an unexcused absence and misses a test, the student must take the test when he/she returns to school **and the final test grade.**

## LOWER SCHOOL ABSENCES

**Parents are reminded it is their right to dismiss their child; however, the school reserves the right to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused.**

Any student who is absent more than twenty days of a full year course or ten days of a semester course may forfeit the right to be promoted and/or may not receive credit for that course regardless of the grades earned. Absences due to school-sponsored activities are not counted in this total. Any student who is absent ten days in any given semester will have his/her absentee records reviewed by school administrators. (This is also interpreted as ten or more absences in a specific subject.) A parent and the student will be required to meet with the administrators to discuss the importance of school attendance and the reasons for the absences. Physician documentation will be required when excessive absences are determined by the school. Hillcrest Christian School reserves the right to determine if excessive absences warrant dismissing a student. Dismissal from HCS will not release the financial responsibilities of the membership/tuition contract.

Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students and is necessary for successful accomplishment in school. Therefore, it is important that students be in school and on time every day. Daily attendance will be checked daily and can be verified by the parent by 8:30 a.m. through FACTS/RENWEB. Absences from school are classified as excused or unexcused. Absence due to personal illness, serious illness in the family, or death in the immediate family, will be considered excused. **From time to time, a family may find it necessary to be away for an extended period of time. For these absences to be considered excused, parents must submit in writing a request to the principal at least five school days prior to said absences.** A maximum of five days throughout the school year may be excused for this purpose, provided the student has not exceeded the allowed number of absences.

**LOWER SCHOOL MAKE-UP WORK** - Illness or unexpected absence: If a student misses class work, or homework due to unexpected absences, he can make up the work. The teacher and student will discuss the amount of time allowed for makeup, which will depend on the reason and length of absence. **If a student is out for more than one day, it is the parent's responsibility to obtain assignments from FACTS/RENWEB. If an assignment cannot be completed (i.e., study guide, worksheet) because the student does not have access to the work, the parent should call the office and request these assignments by 11:00 a.m. to be picked up at the end of the school day.** In the event of a non-school related planned trip, where a student will be absent for a period of 1+ days, the parent must contact the teacher in advance of the absence in order to arrange for missed work to be made up before or during the trip. All make-up work must be turned in the first school day following the absence in order to receive credit.

**LOWER SCHOOL MISSED TESTS** - **If a test is assigned prior to an absence and no additional material is given, the test must be made up the day the student returns from the absence.** If a pattern of **habitual absence** of scheduled tests is recognized, a student will be warned, then will forfeit all opportunities to make up the test or tests missed. A grade of zero will be given for each test missed.

#### **TARDINESS**

**LOWER SCHOOL STUDENTS** will be considered tardy at 7:50 a.m. They must report directly to the office to receive a tardy slip. Excessive tardiness will result in disciplinary action. Evidence of repeated tardiness will result in one or more of the following:

- Saturday detention with a student/parent/administrator conference
- In-School suspension
- Out- of-school suspension

**Students will be charged with one (1) unexcused absence for every five (5) tardies for each class period affected by the tardies. The resulting unexcused absence carries a daily grade of zero (0).**

**It is imperative that students get to class on time.** If a student or group of students is detained by a teacher or coach and is caused to be late to another class by the detainment, it is the responsibility of that teacher to write a tardy note for the student. **The office will not write excuses in those situations.**

**UPPER SCHOOL STUDENTS** will be considered tardy at 8:00 a.m. All students are expected to report to school and to each class on time. Students who are tardy to first period until 8:30 a.m. enter the class and the teacher will issue a tardy in FACTS/RENWEB.

Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. must report to the upper school main office to receive a tardy and admit slip to first period. Tardies are unacceptable. Evidence of repeated tardiness will result in one or more of the following:

- Saturday detention with a student/parent/administrator conference
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension, and
- Loss of exam exemption(s) in every class

**Students will be charged with one (1) unexcused absence for every five (5) tardies for each affected class. The resulting unexcused absence carries a daily grade of zero (0).**

**It is imperative that students get to class on time.** If a student (or group of students) is detained by a teacher or coach and is late to another class by the detainment, it is the responsibility of that teacher to write a tardy note for the student. **The office will not write excuses in those situations.**

### **DISMISSALS**

Parents are reminded it is their right to dismiss their child; however, the school reserves the right to determine if the absence is excused or unexcused.

**LOWER SCHOOL** - All students are expected to remain at school until the end of the school day (see school day schedule). Please check out by 2:15 p.m. if necessary for doctor appointments, sickness, or family emergencies. Your child will not be permitted to leave school with anyone other than parents or someone you have designated by note to the school. If your child is going home with someone different, and you know it before he leaves home, please send a note; otherwise, the school must be notified by phone.

**UPPER SCHOOL** - The office will issue dismissal slips by written note or phone prior to the beginning of the school day. **No student is allowed to leave school without permission of a principal or his designee.** If a student becomes sick at school, they are to report to the the office for permission to go home. With the exception of illness and emergencies, no student will be given permission to leave school without a request from his/her parent or guardian. In the event the student does not drive, the student must wait in the high school office for a parent or



legal guardian to pick him/her up.

Students who are dismissed and then return to school must sign out when they leave and then back in upon their return to school in the office. The dismissal slip should be signed by the parent, guardian, or doctor and returned to the office when the student signs in.

These measures are required so that HCS will be able to give an account of where students are at any time during the school day. This information is particularly important in case of emergency needs within a family or truancy issues. **We request parental cooperation in helping us enforce this policy by providing valid reasons for dismissal.**

### **PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

In order for a student to compete, practice, or be involved in any extracurricular activity, the student must be present for all classes on their schedule that day. Circumstances such as school functions, medical appointments or a death in the family are exceptions to this rule. A doctor's excuse which verifies the date and time of the appointment must be submitted to the school office upon returning to school and prior to participating in any extracurricular activity.

The following MAIS policies will apply to students involved in extracurricular activities:

- To be eligible for either semester of a school year, a student must have accumulated four major units (credits) or passed four major courses the previous semester or during summer school.
- A student who is ineligible the first semester can become eligible for the second semester provided he/she passes four major subjects during the first semester.
- Transfer students must meet eligibility requirements immediately upon enrollment in HCS or prior to representing Hillcrest in activities where eligibility requirements apply.

### **HILLCREST ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION**

- At 4.5 weeks, grades of all athletes will be reviewed, if the athlete is failing (*F*) in one or more classes, they will be placed on academic probation.
- At 9 weeks, if probationary athlete is still failing (*F*) one or more classes, they will become ineligible for athletic participation on academic grounds until rectified or restored.
- HCS will review ineligible athletes two (2) weeks after ineligibility and can restore eligibility if student has made appropriate corrective actions.

## **ACADEMICS**

### HCS GRADING SYSTEM

A	90 – 100
B	80 – 89
C	70 – 79
D	65 – 69
F	64 and below

Hillcrest will convert the final numerical average to a 4.0 scale. HCS will continue to use the 100-point numeric average to determine valedictorian, salutatorian, honor roll, honor societies, and other school organizations that have grade requirements for membership.

Students who are in AP will receive a weight of 1.10, and students in advanced classes will receive a weight of 1.05.

	Regular Class	Honor Class	AP Class
A =	4.0	4.5	5.0
B =	3.0	3.5	4.0
C =	2.0	2.5	3.0
D =	1.0	1.5	2.0

### HONOR CERTIFICATES

**LOWER SCHOOL** - Honor roll and principal's list certificates will be presented to first through fifth grade students at the end of the school year.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S LIST / HONOR ROLL** - The administrator's list will consist of those students who have a grade average of 90 or above in each subject area at the end of each nine weeks. The honor roll will consist of those students who have a grade average of 80 to 89 in each subject area at the end of each nine weeks.

### CONFERENCES

Impromptu conferences, telephone calls to the teacher at home, discussion of grades and/or behavior during class, traffic patrol and campus duty by the teacher do not result in productive exchanges. Conferences should be scheduled as follows:

**LOWER SCHOOL** - Please do not walk into the classroom before, during or after school and expect to discuss your child with the teacher. Conferences may be set up by calling the office for a definite day and time, and the teacher will present all grades, papers, etc. to the parents. Please call the office (601) 372-0809 at least one day in advance of the desired conference to set up teacher/parent conferences.

**UPPER SCHOOL** - All conferences with parents must be scheduled before school, after school, during the teacher's conference period, or during break. Parents are requested

to schedule conferences by calling the counselor's office at (601) 372-0149.

### **GUIDANCE SERVICES**

The guidance program exists to facilitate the growth and development of students as they progress through school. The counselor confers with parents and students concerning scheduling, academic achievement, test data interpretation, college and career decision making and personal counseling. Guidance services are an essential part of the educational program. The guidance program is designed to complement both instruction and administrative functions. Students are encouraged to see the counselor anytime a need arises.

Conferences will be scheduled with students throughout the school year.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS/ REPORT CARDS**

**LOWER SCHOOL** – Teachers will be required to post all test grades within 3 days of the test. A student's grades may be viewed online at any time on FACTS/RENWEB. Parents will receive notice on the school website at the end of 4-1/2 weeks to check their child's progress. The final 9 weeks grade will also be posted on FACTS/RENWEB. Parents will also receive notice on the website when 9 weeks grades are posted.

**UPPER SCHOOL** – Grades will be determined as follows: Major test grades, which are averaged separately, will count two-thirds of the term grade, and daily grades will count one-third. Nine weeks tests will count 20% of the grade for that particular grading period. Exams will count for 20% of the semester grade. Teachers will be required to post a minimum of two grades per week and all test grades must be posted within 3 days of the test. Parents may view the student's progress and 9 weeks grades on FACTS/RENWEB.

Viewing of online grades may be blocked due to the following: tuition and/or books fines (textbooks and library books); athletic and/or band uniforms that have not been turned in, or other outstanding fines. If unable to access FACTS/RENWEB, parents should contact the school immediately.

## CLASS PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

### LOWER SCHOOL

Students who fail one or two major subjects (Reading, Language or Math) for the year will be required to successfully complete and pass a summer program. The summer school program must be provided by or approved by HCS. Students who fail a minor subject must complete summer work as assigned by administration. Failing any three subjects typically results in the retention (failure) in the current grade.

### Grades 6 - 8

Students who fail one or two major subjects (English, Math, Science, or History) will be required to repeat the course or successfully complete and pass a summer program. The summer school program must be provided by or approved by Hillcrest Christian School. Students who fail a minor subject must complete summer work as assigned by the administration. Failing three subjects typically results in retention of the student in the present grade.

### Grades 9 - 12

If a student fails a major subject, he/she must repeat the subject the following year or repeat the subject in an accredited summer school. **Tutoring does not replace make-up work in courses failed.**

If a student fails a course for the year but has a passing grade for either of the semesters, he/she must repeat the entire course (not just the semester failed).

If a student fails a course that is not offered in summer school (i.e., Bible), or cannot be taken online, the faculty at Hillcrest Christian School may assign independent study material to be completed during the summer. This work must be completed to the satisfaction of the faculty member, and he/ she will assign the final grade.

Seniors must be enrolled in academic classes for the first five periods of each day. No required subjects for the upcoming year may be taken in summer school without direct permission from the administration.

## MISSIONS

### STUDENT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

Students in grades 9 through 12 will be required to earn ten (10) service hours for each high school year attending HCS to graduate.

Students may begin earning service hours June 1 for the upcoming school year. Students may select their own community service projects and may earn community service hours through services in approved on-campus and off-campus activities. HCS will partner with local community organizations to develop service opportunities. HCS clubs and organizations will provide service-oriented projects and supervised off campus activities. Students will be encouraged to select community service opportunities that will be meaningful experiences in a supervised and safe environment. Project documentation forms must be submitted and approved in order to receive service hours credit. Hours will be awarded as follows:

- One hour will be credited to each student who serves one hour with any HCS partner agency or any community service organization approved in advance by the Student Community Service Program coordinator.
- One hour will be credited to each student who serves one hour in an approved on-campus service. Students may earn no more than four hours each year from such activities.
- Any day-long (minimum of six hours) ministry activity associated with a student's church will be credited as two hours for that day.
- Students may earn credit by participating in short-term mission trips (i.e., one to two weeks in duration). Students will be credited with two hours for each day of the mission trip, subject to a 6-hour maximum per trip. Because students must earn their hours through a variety of community service opportunities, students may earn a maximum of 6 hours for mission trips.
- Credit hours for community service opportunities not specifically addressed above will be approved by the Student Community Service coordinator on a case-by-case basis.

All service hours must be approved, authenticated, and documented on forms provided by HCS. Students should contact the counselor for additional information and forms.

## HCS COMMUNITY STANDARDS

### HONOR CODE

The purpose of the honor code is to create an atmosphere of trust, honesty, and integrity with mutual respect among administration, faculty, and students. A community can live together only where the basic beliefs of honor are the foundations of the community. These principles are instilled in our students from first grade.

At HCS, every student implicitly acknowledges an understanding of and a willingness to support the honor system. The honor code is in effect during school hours and at all school functions and covers violations of disrespect, dishonesty, and disobedience. infractions include all forms of cheating, lying/misrepresentation, stealing, disrespect directed toward HCS faculty, students, or staff, vandalism, plagiarism, repetitiveness dress code violations, and inappropriate language. A student should understand the seriousness of an infraction of the honor code.

**Cheating** – Cheating is defined as giving or receiving help on any pledged assignments. Cheating also includes the passing of test information to students who have yet to take the tests.

**Lying/Misrepresentation** – Lying is the intentional misrepresentation of facts to a member of the faculty, administration, or fellow student. Forgery is a misrepresentation.

**Stealing** – Stealing is taking or borrowing, without permission, anything that is not rightfully one’s own. This includes anything that is another person’s or HCS property.

**Disrespect** – Disrespect is a lack of respect or esteem demonstrated verbally, in writing, or in behavior.

**Inappropriate Language** – Inappropriate language includes cursing or vulgar language.

**Vandalism** – Vandalism is the willful or malicious destruction or damage of property other than one’s own. Destruction or damages caused by pranks are included.

**Plagiarism** – Plagiarism is the act of taking the ideas, writings, and works of another individual and representing them as one’s own (copying homework, term papers, etc.).

**Dress code Violations** – Repetitive violations of the dress code is the disregard or failure to comply with dress code Policies.

### **HONOR CODE ENFORCEMENT**

**LOWER SCHOOL** – The lower school administration works closely with lower school faculty to make sure the established codes of behaviors, dress, and honor are communicated to students and are enforced.

**UPPER SCHOOL** – The honor council is responsible for enforcing the honor code in grades 6-12. The honor council will consist of class presidents in grades 9-12 and the honor council advisor. The student body president will serve as the chairman of the honor council. The class president from grade eight (8) will serve as an honorary member. **Honor council proceedings are held in the strictest confidence. A violation of this confidence is a violation of the honor code.**

## HONOR CODE PROCEDURES

A student may report an honor code violation in one of these ways:

- A student may report an honor code violation by either a) asking the offender to turn himself in to the honor council; or (b) by reporting the alleged incident to a teacher, the honor council advisor, or the principal.
- A teacher will report the alleged incident to the honor council advisor or principal.
- The honor council advisor will report the alleged incident to the principal.
- The honor council advisor and/or the principal will conduct an overview of the alleged indecent.

Once sufficient evidence has been collected or the offense has been acknowledged by all persons involved, and proper documentation has been made, the following steps will be taken:

- An honor council advisor or member will notify the student of the incident and the meeting date with the honor council. It is the responsibility of the student to notify his/her parents.
- The honor council advisor will assemble the council with all deliberate speed.
- The honor council will review the incident and hold a hearing with the alleged violator.
- The offender(s) will be given an opportunity to explain the circumstances to the council members, who will ask questions. When the council feels they have a thorough understanding of the facts, they excuse the offender(s) and begin deliberations.
- The honor council will deliberate, consider, and agree upon a recommendation for corrective measure or penalty. The recommendation must be agreed upon by the council members and will be presented in writing, along with a summary of the situation to the principal and/or administrator.
- Recommendations by the council will be reviewed and are subject to approval by the principal and/or administrator. The principal will advise the offender of the council's final decision.

## 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> GRADE DRESS CODE

The basis for the HCS dress code is the spiritual and moral guidelines of Godliness and cleanliness. Students are expected to observe certain standards of hygiene, sanitation and personal appearance. Students will be expected to dress appropriately at **all** school functions. Parents should make a special effort to see that their children conform to the HCS dress code. Dress code will be checked daily during the 1st period.

The HCS dress code is intended to provide guidelines for students in determining appropriate dress. The dress code does not in any way diminish the discretion school officials have in determining the appropriateness of student attire. **In the event a student is technically in compliance with the dress code, but school officials determine**

**that a student's attire or appearance is immodest or inappropriate, school officials will take appropriate corrective action.**

When it is determined that a student is in violation of the dress code, the parents or legal guardian may be called to bring proper clothing or the student may be sent home to make any needed alterations. Students who miss class may receive an unexcused absence, which carries a daily grade of zero for each missed class. Such unexcused absences will also prevent the student from participating in extracurricular activities for that day.

All HCS students are required to wear uniforms with an approved HSC logo. There are a variety of uniform clothing items available, as detailed in the HCS/Dennis website for purchase or from the onsite resale store located in the lower school. Students may wear a combination of any grade-appropriate and gender-appropriate approved uniform pieces. The uniform, as adopted, may not be altered or changed in any way.

Dress code violations will not be tolerated. Below are possible discipline levels for repeated dress code violations during the school year.

- Two Dress code violations will result in 1 Saturday detention
- Three Dress code violations will result in 4 Saturday detentions
- Four dress code violations will result in 1 day of in-school suspension
- Five dress code violations will result in 4 days of in-school suspension
- Six dress code violations will result in 4 days of out-of-school suspension

### **HCS GENERAL DRESS CODE / K3 – 12<sup>th</sup> GRADE**

- **UNIFORMS MUST BE DENNIS, PARKER BRANDING ONLY.** However, resale items/previously purchased Tommy Hilfiger branded items are allowed.
- All garments must be hemmed.
- All clothing items must be properly fitted.
- The length of girls' skirts and skorts must be no more than 3 inches from the top of the knee.
- Pants, shorts, skirts, and skorts must be worn above the hips.
- Approved belts (black or brown only) must be worn with all pants and/or shorts that have loops or that are designed to be worn with a belt.
- Boys' shirts must be tucked into pants or shorts.
- Jackets, fleeces, sweatshirts and/or sweaters must have the HCS logo on them
- Approved athletic teamwear will only be allowed on game days.
- Girls' hair accessories must complement the uniform.
- Hair should be neat, clean, well-groomed, not hampering vision. Boys' hair must be cut to a proper length above the bottom of the ears on the side, not to fall below the eyebrows in the front, and not to exceed the collar of a shirt in the back. Unusual hairstyles or coloring are prohibited. Parents will be notified when there is a violation of the dress code related to length of hair, hairstyle, or coloring of hair. If the student does



not take corrective action to comply within (5) school days of the notification, the student will be prohibited from attending school and time missed will be counted as unexcused. Work cannot be made up. Missed work will receive a zero grade.

- Male students are allowed to have facial hair no longer than 1" in length as long as it remains trimmed and groomed. Facial hair includes a mustache, goatee, or beard. Acceptable facial hair does not include sideburns without being connected to other facial hair. If a male student does not keep his facial hair trimmed and groomed, the student will lose the privilege of having facial hair and will be required to be clean shaven.
- Male students will not be allowed to wear earrings, nose rings, tongue rings, or gauges. Female students will not be allowed to wear nose rings, tongue rings, or gauges.
- Muscle shirts, sleeveless sweatshirts, fishnet football jerseys, and shirts with printed pictures of rock groups, alcoholic advertisements, or distasteful printings are not allowed.
- Male students are required to wear shirts at all times, except closed athletic practices.
- Body art (i.e. body piercing and tattoos, etc.) is prohibited.
- Neither boys or girls are allowed to wear any head coverings of any type in the buildings. Head coverings include but are not limited to hoodies, scarves, hats, caps, wraps, and athletic-style headbands.
- Neither boys or girls are allowed to wear any bandana of any color in their hair, in their pocket, or on their person.
- Blankets are not acceptable articles of clothing inside the building, classroom, gym, or band hall.
- Homecoming maids must wear appropriate length dresses to school on Friday of Homecoming Week and shall be approved by the principal or headmaster.
- On Friday jean days, students will be allowed to wear full length jeans with no rips, frays, or tears and a HCS logoed shirt or sweatshirt.
- HCS sporting events and activities will follow Friday jean day dress code requirements.

### **FOOTWEAR**

ADMINISTRATION WILL DETERMINE IF A PARTICULAR STYLE AND/OR COLOR OF FOOTWEAR IS APPROPRIATE.

- **CROCS ARE NOT ALLOWED**
- **SANDALS ARE NOT ALLOWED**
- OPEN-TOED SHOES ARE NOT ALLOWED  
No flip-flops, slides, shower shoes, beach shoes, or other open-toed footwear is allowed
- NO Pointed-toe footwear of any kind is allowed
- NO five-toed shoes are allowed
- Fashion shoelaces are not allowed
- Heels may be no higher than 2 inches measured at the back of the shoe
- Shoelaces must be tied

- Socks must be solid white, gray, black, or blue

## **6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> GRADE DRESS CODE**

### **GIRLS UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>**

- Any combination of HCS approved apparel for girls for 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade (Dennis, Parker, Tommy Hilfiger polos must be worn).
- Solid color (gray, black, or royal blue) t-shirts (or turtlenecks in cold weather) may be worn under dress shirts or polo shirts. HCS polo must be worn under a sweatshirt, jacket, fleece, or any other outer garment.
- Khaki pants shall be flat or pleated fronts. NO FORM FITTING or JEGGINGS can be worn and the length shall meet the heel of the foot.
- Skirts can only be worn with leggings must be solid white, gray, black, or blue
- Skorts may be khaki, plaid, or gray and can be worn with leggings of above colors.

### **BOYS UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>**

- Any combination of HCS approved apparel for boys 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade (Dennis, Parker, Tommy Hilfiger polos must be worn).
- Solid color (gray, black, or royal blue) t-shirts (or turtlenecks in cold weather) may be worn under dress shirts or polo shirts. NOTE: HCS polo must be worn under a sweatshirt, jacket, fleece, or any outer garment.
- Khaki pants shall be flat or pleated fronts. NO CARGO TYPE PANTS ALLOWED.
- Plain black or brown belt

## **K3-5<sup>th</sup> GRADE DRESS CODE**

### **GIRLS UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS K3-5<sup>th</sup>**

- Any combination of HCS approved apparel for girls for K3 – 5<sup>th</sup> grade (Dennis, Parker, Tommy Hilfiger polos must be worn)
- Solid color (gray, black, or royal blue) t-shirts (or turtlenecks in cold weather) may be worn under dress shirts or polo shirts. NOTE: HCS polo must be worn under a sweatshirt, jacket, fleece, or any other outer garment
- Khaki pants shall be Flat or Pleated fronts. NO FORM FITTING or JEGGINGS can be worn and the length shall meet the heel of the foot
- Skirts can only be worn with leggings must be solid white, gray, black, or blue of color (no lace)
- Skorts may be khaki, plaid, or gray and can be worn with leggings of colors listed above

### **BOYS UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS K3 – 5<sup>th</sup>**

- Any combination of HCS approved apparel for boys K3-5<sup>th</sup> grade (Dennis, Parker, Tommy Hilfiger polos must be worn)

- Solid color (gray, black, or royal blue) t-shirts (or turtlenecks in cold weather) may be worn under dress shirts or polo shirts. NOTE: HCS polo must be worn under a sweatshirt, jacket, fleece, or any outer garment.
- Khaki pants shall be flat or pleated fronts. NO CARGO TYPE PANTS ALLOWED
- Plain black or brown belt

## COUGAR MANNERS

During Chapel or Assembly Programs:

- When coming into the gym or other assembly areas for a program, enter quietly and remain quiet during the entire time there.
- Give your full attention to the speaker.
- Do not disturb or distract those around you by making comments.
- Never boo, whistle, or stomp your feet regardless of your opinion of a program.
- Do not read or do any type of work during any program.
- Sitting attentively at all times is expected—no slouching.

During Break or Lunch:

- Respect the place of others; never crowd or try to get ahead of others.
- Be refined in your table manners.
- All students are expected to place trash in the provided containers when completing break and lunch.

In the Classroom:

- Cooperate with the teacher and other students in every class activity.
- When you need to talk, keep your voice in a conversational tone. Refrain from talking while someone else is talking.
- Always be prepared when you go to class and maintain the habit of expecting to work.

In the Library:

- Be considerate of others in the library. Maintain a quiet atmosphere for those who are reading and studying.
- The librarian is in charge.
- Develop an appreciation for books and develop a respect for them as valuable properties of our school.
- Follow policies and procedures when using the library computers, including the Internet policy.

**All HCS cougars, always (the three B's):**

1. BE ON TIME.
2. BE PREPARED.
3. BE RESPECTFUL.

## NETWORK/INTERNET USAGE POLICY

All of the technological resources at Hillcrest Christian School are to be used in a

manner that respects and protects the well-being of the school. All files in the computer labs and library will be reviewed by appropriate school officials without prior notice. This includes checking the history of all Internet visits made on each computer. Computers at the school are to be used for academic purposes only with the following policies:

- Each computer will be assigned a number and all teachers must have their classes fill out a sign-in sheet with their name corresponding to the computer they are using.
- No student may use a computer without an authorized teacher present. This includes before school, during break or lunch or after school. If a student does not have access to a home computer and must complete a school assignment, a computer usage form must be completed. The student is responsible for acquiring a signature from the teacher, principal and librarian (no exceptions).
- Students may not attempt to modify the appearance or operation of any computer. This includes copying or installing software of any type. Every computer must remain in its default configuration.
- Games unrelated to course curriculum are not allowed.
- A student using the Internet may visit only teacher-approved sites. The use of the Internet to obtain and view inappropriate material is strictly prohibited.
- Computer resources are not to be used to copy any copyrighted material or software. Students may not download, install, copy, or remove software from the computer.

A student who fails to abide by these policies will have his or her computer privileges revoked and will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

### **STUDENTS AND GUEST TEACHERS**

Courtesy to guest teachers is a vital way to build good school-community relations. Students should treat guest teachers as they would a guest in their home. The guest teacher assumes the role of the teacher and should be treated accordingly. Students who are uncooperative, disrespectful, and/or disturbing to the guest will be disciplined.

### **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

It is important that each student realizes his/her responsibility in helping to keep the buildings and campus clean and as attractive as possible. Students who damage any school property intentionally or through neglect on his/her part will be required to pay for the damage. The student will also face additional disciplinary action.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

A book fee is charged per student to help defray the school's cost of textbook purchases. It is the student's responsibility to take care of her/his textbooks. Use of book covers is encouraged. Students will be fined for excessive damage done to the face and contents of textbooks. Any book lost or damaged by a student must be paid for before another book will be issued. The cost of the book will be determined by the

cost for the school to replace the book.

### CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

The purpose of education is to aid young people in preparing themselves to live their adult lives at a maximum level of productivity, self-awareness, happiness, self-control, and in harmony with their community. It is imperative that students develop a perceptive awareness of high standards of behavior. This will enable young people to make an easy transition from childhood into the world of adulthood.

The primary responsibility for the conduct of a student rests with the student and his/her parents. Administrators and teachers will hold students accountable for any disorderly conduct at school and at school-sponsored activities.

Hillcrest Christian School reserves the right to take any disciplinary action that is deemed appropriate to correct disciplinary problems. It should be understood by students that inappropriate behavior will result in some type of disciplinary action. Hillcrest Christian School's philosophy on discipline is based on the following scriptures:

*Proverbs 13:24*

*Proverbs 22:6*

*Proverbs 29:15*

*Proverbs 19:18*

*Proverbs 22:15*

*Proverbs 29:17*

The administrators are authorized to institute appropriate disciplinary action; including, but not limited to those areas covered in this handbook.

### SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

Students may not use any type of technology at any time or place that has a negative effect on:

- Maintaining school order and discipline
- Protecting the safety and welfare of other students or staff
- The reputation of Hillcrest Christian School and its students, faculty, and staff

### DISCIPLINE

- **IN-ROOM DISCIPLINE**- Disciplinary cases will be handled by the individual teacher in harmony with their own methods and abilities consistent with the policies of HCS. **LOWER SCHOOL** methods of discipline will include: time-out, missed recess, corrective writing. **UPPER SCHOOL** methods of discipline could range from reprimands to assignment of detention. These could include, but are not limited to: missing morning break, lunch room clean up, writing an essay (which will state what the student did, why they did it, why it was wrong, and will include 3 references from the Bible per infraction), and/or Saturday detention. Examples of modest misconduct are: chewing gum, excessive talking, inappropriate language, coming to class without books/supplies, being out of a desk without teacher permission.

- **TUESDAY AND THURSDAY DETENTION** - Work detail detention will begin at 3:30 pm. and will last until 4:30 pm. **All students will come prepared for work.** You will meet your detention instructor in the main foyer. All work assigned will be completed. No one will be allowed to leave before 4:30 pm.

Tardiness for detention will result in either/or additional time served or in-school suspension. Reasons for detention will include but not be limited to the following: disrespect, unexcused tardiness (4), skipping school (1st offence 4 days of Saturday detention), dress code violations, cell phone violations, inappropriate language, and failure to comply with classroom decorum.

- **IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION** - Students will be isolated from other students and will be assigned academic work in each subject area. Work should be completed by the end of the school day. SS carries a daily grade of zero, which cannot be dropped. All tests missed may be made up at make-up test times. ISS Rules: An ISS student is to report to the designated in-school suspension area at 7:00 a.m. The student is to bring all assigned textbooks to the ISS area. The student is to remain in the designated suspension area until the monitor comes to get him/her. The student will not be allowed to talk or visit with other students.

Students assigned to ISS will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities for the day or part of a day served. No student will be penalized for two (2) days of extracurricular activities when serving two part-day ISS. In the event that a student needs to serve two (2) part days of ISS, the student will miss the extracurricular activity for the day that the majority of the ISS is served. Failure to follow these rules could result in additional disciplinary action.

Reasons for in-school suspension will include but not be limited to the following: excessive unexcused tardiness (8), skipping school (2nd offense is 3 days in-school suspension), cheating, plagiarism, disruption of school function, disrespect, insubordination, insulting language or behavior, obscene language or gestures, malicious mischief (intentional), use or possession of tobacco, or tobacco-like products, indecent display of affection, use or possession of fireworks, explosives.

- **ADMINISTRATIVE PARENT CONFERENCE:** A student who displays continual inappropriate behavior will meet with their parents and the Lower or Upper School principal along with the head of school. A behavioral agreement plan will be established between the student and administrators outlining the probation period, expected behavior and consequences. This agreement will be signed by the student, the parent(s), and administration.
- **OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:** A student may receive an out-of-school

suspension from an administrator. Absences due to OSS are considered unexcused and will result in a grade penalty. A grade of zero will be given for each class missed during the time of suspension. No opportunity to make up tests will be given.

Reasons for out-of-school suspension will include but not be limited to the following: extreme unexcused tardiness (12), disrespect of school authorities, fighting, harassment, intimidation or threats, vandalism, theft, damage to property, use or possession of alcohol, and truancy (intentionally being absent from school without a legitimate excuse or skipping a class, whether the student leaves campus or not).

- **EXPULSION:** A student may be expelled for the remainder of the year upon recommendation by the administrator to the membership committee of the board of directors. A student who has been expelled may be readmitted only by appearing before the admissions committee with his/her parents and applying for readmission for the following year. Reasons for expulsion will include but not be limited to the following: use of possession of drugs; possession of weapons; hitting, striking or threatening school personnel. Once a student is expelled from school they are no longer allowed on school campus or at any HCS events or activities.

#### **INVOLVEMENT WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS**

- Any student involved with law enforcement officials of any kind and found guilty of a misdemeanor other than a traffic violation will be placed on student conduct probation. Student conduct probation means that for the remainder of that semester, misconduct of any kind, including disrespect, by the student involved, will not be tolerated. Misconduct may result in expulsion.
- A repeat offense involving law officials will result in expulsion.
- Any student charged with a felony is subject to expulsion by the administration. Any student found guilty of a felony will be immediately expelled from Hillcrest Christian School.

***NOTE: This handbook does not and cannot address every situation, question, or problem that may arise. Any situation, question or problem that arises and is not covered in this handbook will be left to the discretion of the administration.***

#### **THREATS, INTIMIDATION, HARASSMENT, and BULLYING**

HCS strives to provide a safe, comfortable environment for all students. Our desire is to maintain an environment on our campus where all students feel welcome and safe from threats, intimidation, harassment, and bullying. Mississippi State Law Code Section 37-11-20 addresses intimidation, threatening or coercion of students for the purpose of interfering with attendance of classes. This law can be applied to a student where a

student does not want to attend school or is afraid to attend school because they are being threatened, bullied, harassed, or intimidated. HCS will enforce a **zero tolerance** policy concerning threats, intimidation, harassment, and bullying.

The staff and administration will evaluate situations that involve threats, intimidation, harassment, or bullying. After a thorough investigation of each situation, the administration will take the necessary steps to maintain a safe environment for all students. The evaluation process will involve talking with all students involved in the alleged threats, intimidation, harassment, or bullying.

Parents of students in grades K3-12th are strongly encouraged to talk with their children about actions and words that imply threats, bullying, or harassment. When a threat is made, it will not be taken lightly. Saying, "I'm sorry" or "I didn't mean it" will not be accepted as an excuse. Statements such as "I'm going to kill you", or "I'm going to get you", or "I'm going to hurt you" will be taken seriously! Students involved in this type of behavior will be disciplined and could face expulsion from HCS. They should be instructed at home not to act aggressively toward other students or make any statements similar to those mentioned above. This type of behavior is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

HCS has protocols addressing the above-mentioned behaviors and will be followed when necessary. Our goal is to provide a safe, friendly, orderly environment with the assistance and support of our parents.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES / ILLNESSES**

All students returning to school after contacting a communicable disease (including, but not limited to, chicken pox, strep, pink eye, etc.) must present a medical release from the doctor's office or health department before they may be admitted to class.

### **SCHOOL-SPONSORED TRIPS / ACTIVITIES**

The administration of Hillcrest Christian School believes in the educational value of school-sponsored trips (field trips) and strongly encourages students to participate. If students are provided transportation to a school activity, the student will ride to and from the activity in the transportation provided. (This might include school-owned buses, vans, or cars, but it may also include rented vehicles or designated parent vehicles.) Students may ride from an activity with their parents when cleared with the trip sponsor. However, no students will leave an activity with anyone (including boyfriend, girlfriend, friends, sister or brother) unless their parent or guardian is physically in the vehicle in which they are to travel. All exceptions must be cleared with an administrator.



## MISCELLANEOUS

### LOST AND FOUND

All unclaimed articles will be donated to a local charity at the end of the school year.

**LOWER SCHOOL** - Lost and found articles will be taken to the lost & found bookshelf in the main hall. **To eliminate the loss of so many articles, please put your child's name in each of his/her jackets and other items of clothing which may be removed at school.**

**UPPER SCHOOL** - Lost and found articles will be taken to the office. Unclaimed articles will be donated to a local charity at the end of the school year.

### MESSAGES / DELIVERIES FOR STUDENTS

Messages for **ALL** students are only accepted and delivered when it involves an emergency or a ride home. HCS does not accept deliveries for students. This includes: flowers, gifts, etc.

### INAPPROPRIATE PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

Toys, playing cards, spinners, electronic devices (i.e., iPods, MP3 players, handheld video games, computer games, etc.) and musical instruments (excluding band instruments, and chapel instruments) may not be used during school hours anywhere on campus. Such items will be taken from students and kept in the principal's office. HCS is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

## LOWER SCHOOL POLICIES AND INFORMATION

### ACADEMICS

The lower school consists of K-3 through grade 5. The basic program centers on Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Bible, and Social Studies. K-3 through grade 5 are self-contained. Grades 6, 7 & 8 are departmentalized and rotate throughout the day. Throughout the lower school, emphasis is placed on building vocabulary, developing critical thinking skills, and challenging the student to reason logically. Art, physical education, music, computers, and library enhance the lower school's curriculum. Students gain enrichment from field trips and resource speakers.

We feel we have a very balanced curriculum. While teaching, we also stress language development, visual discrimination, motor skills, and auditory activities.

### CURRICULUM

K3                      Program encourages social, spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth and development.

K4	Phonics, Numbers, Language Development, Colors, Shapes, Writing, Bible
K5	Phonics, Math Concepts, Time Concepts, Money Concepts, Writing, Bible, Reading
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Reading, Phonics, Math, Language, Spelling, Bible, Science, Social Studies, Handwriting
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	Reading/Glossary, Phonics, Math, Language, Spelling, Bible, Science, Social Studies, Writing
3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Bible, Language, Math, Reading, Spelling, Social Studies, Science, Writing

### EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The following activities are provided to enhance the educational experience of Hillcrest Christian School students:

Class field trips	Dance	Cougar kittens & cubs
Assembly programs	Breakfast with Santa	Field day
Special art projects	Holly Jolly workshop	Sports teams
	Christmas charity projects	

### P. E. CLASS

All students are expected to participate in P.E. Class. A doctor's excuse or note from parents should be sent to the P.E. teacher if a student cannot participate in P.E. activities. Tennis shoes must be worn for P.E. class. This is a safety precaution.

### DAILY PAPERS

KINDERGARTEN: Your child will be given the papers he/she has done each day before going home. Please take time to look at them and discuss these papers with your child. Again, this is a way of enforcing the concept to your child that his/her school activities are important. There may be comments or suggestions on the papers which will help your child. We ask for your cooperation in carrying them out.

### SCHOOL RULES

**1st - 5th GRADE:** Weekly papers will be sent home on a specific day of the week as designated by the classroom teachers. These are to be corrected by the student, then signed by the parent and returned to the teacher the following day.

The lower school introduces the honor code and instills the values of trust, honesty and integrity. The lower school does not function under an honor council; however, the principles of the honor code still apply.

- Students are asked to walk when going from one area to another on campus. Running can cause accidents and even serious injuries.
- Students are not to bring electronic devices to school. Recess will be used for

free play and exercise games.

- Gum chewing will **not** be allowed in any of the school buildings or on campus.
- If lunch is left at home, put your child's name on it, take it to the office, and it will be given to your child.
- If a child is to be dismissed early, please send a note to the child's teacher to inform her of the early dismissal. If an emergency need for dismissal arises, please call the office and let us inform the teacher that the student will be leaving early.
- If your student is to go home with someone else other than his/her usual ride, please inform the teacher of the change in plans. This will help us in protecting the students from leaving school with someone unexpectedly.

### **FIELD TRIPS / MEDICAL INFORMATION**

Field trips will be announced as they are planned. Parents or guardians must complete and sign a notarized medical information form for your child which will allow us to provide medical attention if the need arises.

### **SICKNESS**

Parents or guardians are urged to keep their child at home if he/she shows signs of illness. This is for his/her own good as well as for the protection of the other children. If your child becomes ill at school, you will be notified. Should he/she have a contagious disease, please notify the teacher immediately so the other parents can be notified. If your child has been absent because of a contagious disease, including strep, please bring a note from the doctor saying that he/she is no longer contagious. Your child must be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school.

### **MEDICATION**

Medication cannot be administered to your child by their teacher. Often, if you explain the situation to your doctor, he will reschedule the medication so that you can give it to him at home.

### **TELEPHONE**

Students will not be permitted to use the school telephone except in case of an emergency. The student must have a permission slip from the teacher in order to use the phone. The use of cell phones (including smart watches) is not permitted during the school day. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in confiscation of your cell phone or smart watch.

### **SNACKS**

Each child will bring a snack for a midmorning break. On birthdays, parents may send cupcakes for the children, but arrangements with the teacher must be made in advance. They will be served at the regular snack time. Do not send party hats or favors. A special napkin is permissible.

### **LUNCH**

Nutritious, affordable lunches are provided by HCS. Students may bring their own home-prepared lunch if they desire. Delivering or bringing food from outside retail sources is not permitted at any time unless prior permission has been granted by the administration.

### **PLAYTIME**

We will be going outdoors each day except when the weather does not permit. If there is some reason your child cannot be outdoors, please send a note. Otherwise, all the children will go outside. We encourage the students to participate in outside play.

### **COUGAR CARE**

Year-round cougar care will be available for HCS students grades K-3 through 8<sup>th</sup>. All students will go to after-school care if they are not picked up at dismissal time. Lunch may be brought from home or can be ordered through the cafeteria. HCS is a closed campus after 3:30 pm daily. Sixth–eighth 8<sup>th</sup> grade students not involved in a school-sponsored activity must go to teen care at 3:10 p.m. A supervised homework study hall will be held Monday through Thursday from 3:10 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Rates for after-school care may be obtained from the school office. Payments for after-school care will be paid directly to the day care office or the business office. Payment for after-school care will not be accepted with tuition payments. Parents of 6<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> students assigned to teen care by administration will be charged the appropriate fee.

## **UPPER SCHOOL POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

### **ACADEMICS**

The junior high school (grades 6 - 8) provides a transitional period for academic and social growth between the lower and upper school. The required courses are English, History, Math, Science, Bible, Computer, Study Skills, Writing Skills, and Keyboarding. Elective courses are offered to enhance the curriculum. Advanced courses may be taught beginning in the 8th grade (requirements must be met before placement is made).

The high school consists of grades 9 through 12. The curriculum is college preparatory. The academic goals are proficiency in written and oral English, the ability to use math concepts, an understanding of history and science and an appreciation for the fine arts. Advanced courses are available for students of above average ability and motivation. Advanced placement courses are offered to enable qualified students to work on the college level, with potential of earning college credit. College credit is based upon the score achieved on the advanced placement exam given each May. Credit hours vary from college to college.

### COLLEGE PREPARATION

The primary academic mission of Hillcrest Christian School is to prepare students for college admission. Students are required to apply and be accepted to at least one college to meet HCS graduation requirements.

Curriculum planning must include one (1) unit of a foreign language, one (1) unit of computer, one (1) Advanced elective or 2nd year of foreign language, and one (1) unit of fine arts. It is also strongly recommended that college bound students take a math course their senior year.

Entrance requirements vary at each college and university. The guidance office maintains current materials from many public and private colleges and universities. This information is available for the perusal of students and parents. The guidance counselor is available to assist you in finding this information. It is the student's responsibility to confer with the guidance counselor to keep abreast of entrance requirements for the college/university they plan to attend.

### COLLEGE DAYS FOR SENIORS

Seniors will be allowed time out of school to visit colleges or universities outside of the greater Jackson area to help them determine their level of interest in attending. Signed forms (by college officials) need to be returned to The office on their first day back to school. Such visits must be cleared by the counselor at least one week in advance.

### SCHEDULE CHANGE POLICY

Any change in a student's schedule is subject to space availability and approval from the counselor and principal.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

Hillcrest Christian School requires a minimum of twenty-four (24) credits for graduation from the twelfth grade. In order to participate in graduation exercises, all graduating seniors must satisfy all graduation requirements as detailed in the Student Handbook.

English	4 units	9 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup> , & 12 <sup>th</sup>
Math	4 units	Required: Algebra I & II, and Geometry, and 1 optional math

Science	4 units	Required: Biology I, Chemistry, & 2 optional sciences
History	4 units	Introduction to World Geography/Mississippi Studies, World History, US History, Economics/ Government
Bible	2 units	
Foreign Language	1 unit	
Advanced Electives	1 unit	Options: Second year of foreign language Advanced World Geography 5 <sup>th</sup> year Math 5 <sup>th</sup> year Science 5 <sup>th</sup> year English
Technology	1 unit	
Fine Arts	1	Music Appreciation, Art, Survey of Fine Arts, Band
Electives	2 units	
Total	24 units	

To qualify for advanced courses, students are expected to meet the following criteria:

- Be recommended by their teacher from the previous year in that subject area.
- Have a 90 academic average **and** scored at the 90th percentile or higher on achievement tests in that subject area.

Note: Students who do not meet stated criteria may appeal to the guidance counselor (with parents) for admission into advanced courses.

### **EARLY GRADUATION POLICY**

Students may earn credit for graduation by taking MAISnet online courses as long as those courses meet all requirements for Hillcrest graduation. Prior approval of any online course must be secured from the Hillcrest School administration. To graduate with a Hillcrest diploma, the last two credits earned must be obtained at Hillcrest in accordance with MAIS guidelines.

### **DUAL ENROLLMENT/DUAL CREDIT AT APPROVED COLLEGES**

Dual enrollment/dual credit is a program that allows high school students to simultaneously earn college or vocational credit toward a post-secondary diploma at a Mississippi public institution that will also count as a credit toward a high school diploma.

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

Students must have:

- Completed a minimum of 14 core high school units OR earned a minimum of 30 on the ACT
- Earned a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale, or better on all high school courses as documented on an official high school transcript.
- Obtained an unconditional written recommendation from their high school principal and/or guidance counselor. A specific form will be provided for that purpose.

#### **Requirements:**

- It is the responsibility of the student to meet admission requirements and pay all required fees required by the college institution for credit. All costs including textbooks are the responsibility of the student/parent. No financial aid is offered to dual enrolled students.
- The student will be expected to follow the attendance policy at the institution and will suffer all financial and academic penalties that accrue for tardiness, absence and/or withdrawal.
- Students are still required to take their full course load at Hillcrest. (Juniors must take 6 classes and senior must take 5 classes). No class can be substituted for a class currently taught at HCS. (A student may not take English Comp I in place of Senior English). The HCS schedule supersedes the college course schedule.
- If a student wants to drop out of the college course, he or she must obtain a signed form

for this purpose from the counselor to take the college where the official drop action will occur.

- The grade earned at the institution will be the grade for dual credit at the high school. The grade shall become a part of the grade point average and affect class ranking.
- A 3-hour class shall be equivalent to 1 credit Carnegie unit applied toward high school graduation requirements.

### **RANKING OF SENIOR CLASS / HONOR GRADUATES**

Senior class rank is based on the numerical grade point average of eight semesters, grades 9 through 12 (8th grade courses which earn Carnegie units, i.e., Algebra I, and a foreign language, will be added to the student's GPA). In order to qualify for Valedictorian or Salutatorian, a student must attend HCS for their entire junior and senior years and must have attended a recognized accredited school (ACSI, Southern Association, or MAIS) while earning Carnegie units toward graduation. They must also have taken three years of high school science (minimum of Physical Science, Biology I, Chemistry I) and three years of high school math (to include Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II).

To qualify as an honor graduate, a student must have a cumulative numerical average (grades 9-12) of 90 to 94 and above. To qualify as a high honor graduate, a student must have a cumulative numerical average (grades 9 - 12) of 95 and above. The valedictorian will be the honor graduate with the highest numerical average for grades 9 -12, and the salutatorian will be the honor graduate with the second highest numerical average for grades 9 - 12. (Numerical average includes grades for 8th grade advanced classes which receive Carnegie units toward graduation)

HCS students who qualify and choose to enroll in advanced courses will be given extra consideration when determining class rank. Advanced course averages will carry extra weight which is figured into the overall GPA and numerical averages at the end of the year. Final grades on report cards will reflect the weighted grade for advanced and for advanced placement courses.

### **EXAMS AND EXEMPTIONS**

Students in grades 6-12 will be required to take mid-term and semester exams. Both exams (mid-term exam and final end of the course exam) are comprehensive from the beginning of the semester. Students in grades 6 - 11 may be exempt from any final end-of-year exam in any class in which they have a 90 or above average and no unexcused absences for the entire school year. Seniors will be exempt from a semester class exam if they have a 90 or above grade average and no unexcused absences in that semester class and will be exempt from final exams if they have a 90 or above grade average and no unexcused absences. School- related absences will not count against a student in determining eligibility for exemption.

**No student will be allowed to take semester/final exams prior to the scheduled exam times.**



## TEST SCHEDULES

**Ordinarily, no HCS student will be required to take more than two major tests in any given school day period.** However, due to extraordinary circumstances, (i.e. holidays, short weeks, or special occasions) it may be necessary for a student to have more than two tests on a given day. In order to develop continuity in the testing program, a schedule will be developed to ensure certain tests on appointed days. Major tests do not include any test which counts as a daily grade. Remember, proper communication will solve a multitude of problems. **It is the responsibility of students to work with teachers to make up for all missed tests.**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday Wednesday Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>English/Writing</b>	<b>Math/Foreign Lang Electives/Science</b>	<b>History</b>

## CLASS OFFICERS, HONOR ORGANIZATIONS, AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Students participating or nominated for positions of honor must adhere to the rules and guidelines of the school and each organization, including, but not limited to academic excellence, exemplary behavior, and they must portray the moral and Christian values of Hillcrest Christian School.

Students who seek or are nominated for these positions should not have any disciplinary incidents on their records. Disciplinary action of members may exclude him/her for a period of one year from honors such as student council, honor society, Mu Alpha Theta, etc. A second incident shall permanently exclude him/her from these honors.

Each class, grades 8-12 will elect a president, vice president, and secretary/treasurer. Students must have attended HCS at least one school year and must carry an overall *B* average to qualify as a nominee. Students who choose to run for office must obtain and complete an application to verify that the above-stated qualifications are met.

No student will be allowed to *try out or run* for cheerleader, student council officer, or any position or to participate in any extracurricular activity during the summer months or for the ensuing year unless they are pre-registered for that ensuing year.

To qualify for *Mr. Hillcrest* or *Miss Hillcrest*, a student must have attended HCS for two years and must have maintained a *B* or *above* overall average through the last grading period of his/her senior year. Since *Most Likely to Succeed* and *Most Intellectual* reflect academic achievement by implication, a *B* overall average is required for nominees who seek these positions. This average must be maintained through the last reporting period of their senior year.

## STUDENT COUNCIL PURPOSE AND POLICIES

The purpose of the student council is to share students' ideas, interests, and concerns with faculty and administration. They often help raise funds for school-wide activities, represent the school at social events, and spearhead community projects and school reform. Administrators

and faculty recognize Student Council as the official student voice. Student council officers should seek to represent the ideas and opinions of the majority of their classmates whenever possible. Planning, decision-making, communicating, and working as a team are the most important skills for officers. As the school's leaders, student council members establish goals, delegate responsibility, and give directions to their peers in order to execute tasks successfully. In short, the student council seeks to create a better school experience for all students. Hillcrest used to hold popular elections for the next year's student council officers. However, to maintain the dignity of these positions at HCS, school policy was changed in 2014. The current process for electing student council officers is as follows:

- Students who want to run for office must be pre-registered for the next school year and must have attended Hillcrest for at least one year.
- Candidates for office must fill out an application, responding to various essay-style questions.
- Students and their parents must sign a form which states their understanding of, and agreement to follow, expectations regarding behavior and duties.
- Each candidate must be recommended by at least one faculty member.
- The advisor will work with administration to check the overall grade average (must be at least 80 or above) and to ensure that candidates have no disciplinary issues.
- **Outgoing senior class/student body officers will read student essays and then discuss and vote, choosing the officers for grades 8 through 11.** Junior class officers will move into the role of senior class/student body officers for the next school year.

The student council operates as autonomously as possible. Faculty and administration will work primarily to ensure that school rules and community laws are followed and to handle monetary issues. Similarly, student council members should only seek the help of parents for the purpose of physical tasks, such as building and decorating.

#### **Officers for each class, grades 8 – 12:**

President, vice-president, and secretary/treasurer. The senior class will also choose a chaplain to represent the student body from among students who run for office.

#### **Responsibilities of HCS student council in a typical school year:**

- Welcome new families and give tours of the campus
- Choose Homecoming theme and dress-up days, assign and collect class dues, organize float building times and locations, assist with games and parades
- Organize holiday giving project
- Organize teacher appreciation activities/gifts
- Other assigned duties

#### **11<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Council Officer Additional Responsibilities:**

- Plan and host annual beauty pageant (fundraiser for prom)
- Plan, organize, and decorate junior/senior prom

### **12<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Council Officer Additional Responsibilities:**

- Organize choosing of class color, flower, song, etc.

### **HCS CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY**

From the constitution of the National Honor Society: *“The purpose of this organization shall be to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in the students of secondary schools.... Membership in local chapters is an honor bestowed upon a student. Selection for membership is by a Faculty Council and is based on outstanding scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities.”*

At the end of each school year, the honor society sponsor will calculate overall averages for students in grades 8 through 11. The only subjects counting toward eligibility are the 4 major subjects (English, history, math and social studies) and Bible class; students who have a 90 or better overall academic average will be considered for membership. Furthermore, candidates must have attended the school the equivalent of one semester.

We do not maintain a junior high chapter; therefore, upcoming seventh graders and eighth graders are not qualified for membership. This decision was made due to the fact that they have not yet had the opportunity to join clubs or to hold leadership positions to meet the requirements.

Those students will then be given an activity information form at the beginning of the next school year which must be accurately filled out and returned to the sponsor by the required date. **NO STUDENT WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR MEMBERSHIP WHO DOES NOT TURN IN HIS OR HER FORM BY THE DUE DATE**, since personal responsibility is taken into consideration as a condition for membership.

Students must have the recommendation of at least two faculty members. Faculty will be asked to evaluate—based on service, leadership, and character—whether or not students should be considered for membership.

**Service:** This quality is defined through the voluntary contributions made by a student to the school or community, done without compensation and with a positive, courteous, and enthusiastic spirit.

**Leadership:** Student leaders are those who are resourceful, good problem solvers, promoters of school activities, idea-contributors, dependable, and persons who

exemplify positive attitudes about life. Leadership experiences can be drawn from school or community activities while working with or for others.

**Character:** The student of good character upholds principles of morality and ethics, is cooperative, demonstrates high standards of honesty and reliability, shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others, and generally maintains a good and clean lifestyle.

Once all forms have been reviewed by the sponsor and approved by the administration, students will be notified by letter if they have been accepted for membership.

All candidates will sign a regulations sheet, which details requirements to maintain membership status and must also be signed by their parent or guardian and then returned by the due date. Candidates must then participate in an induction ceremony in order to become members of the honor's society.

Each member will be required to pay a small fee so that the HCS chapter may continue to be part of the National Honor Society. Hillcrest does not maintain membership in the MidSouth Association of Independent Schools (MAIS) Honor Society.

### **HOMECOMING**

Homecoming maids will be chosen among young ladies who have attended HCS for at least one semester prior to the current year. The following number of maids will be voted on by the members of each class:

Seniors:	3 class maids + 1 football maid
Juniors:	2 class maids
Sophomores:	2 class maids
Freshmen:	2 class maids

All maids' dresses (for both the parade and for the ceremony) must be school appropriate and must be approved by the student council sponsor.

Maids are responsible for finding their own convertibles for both the parade and pre-game ceremony.

### **CAMPUS AND CARS / PARKING ON CAMPUS**

Automobiles (and other vehicles) driven to school by students are to be parked and vacated immediately.

All students must park in the student parking area. **Do not park in the faculty parking lot.** Students shall not sit in cars, on or around the campus at any time during school hours. **Students may only go to their cars with administrative approval.**

Lockers are provided for students to secure lunches, books, or other items. Do not

use your car as a locker. All students must have a valid driver's license, and vehicle(s) must be insured to drive on campus. (A learner's permit is not considered a license.)

**Students should use extreme caution when driving on campus.** Any student observed scratching off, squealing tires, or speeding (above 10 MPH) on campus will be considered a serious violator and will be disciplined. Cars should not be moved after they are parked. If deemed necessary, students who violate driving privileges may not be allowed to bring their automobile on the school campus for a specified period of time.

**Students will not be allowed to place signs or bumper stickers of a derogatory nature on their automobiles. If students place these signs or stickers on their automobiles, they will be required to remove them or not bring their automobile on campus. Students may also face additional disciplinary action.**

### LIBRARY

The library is an integral part of the educational program of the school. Students may come to the library during break, and/or study hall periods. Students are encouraged to make effective use of the books and materials for both course requirements and recreational reading.

- An atmosphere conducive to study must be maintained at all times.
- Students may have no more than three (3) books checked out at one time.
- Books are checked out for a two-week period, and are renewable for two-week intervals.
- Fines are charged at the rate of \$.10 per day. The fine is not to exceed the cost of the book. Weekends and holidays are not included.
- Overdue books and fine lists are brought up-to-date at the end of each month.
- Reference books and computers may be used in the library for research. These items may not be checked out by students.
- All students must be cleared with the library at the end of both semesters and all materials either turned in or paid for prior to taking exams.
- All meetings to be held in the library should be scheduled in advance with the librarian.

### CHALLENGE OF MATERIALS

If a parent has a problem with material that is required, a written statement must be presented to the leadership council. The council will review the information and decide whether or not the material needs to be removed or revised for the student. We will not make any revisions when it comes to Christ-centered material due to another world religion. All material used must be approved prior to use which means that exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

### CHAPEL/ASSEMBLIES

All students and teachers are expected to attend chapel and assembly programs. Teachers will provide supervision. Students who talk or who are disruptive during this time will be disciplined.

## **DAILY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Students, teachers, parents or organizations desiring to have announcements made should send an email to the student council sponsor by 7:45 a.m. All announcements should be brief.

## **TELEPHONE**

Students will not be permitted to use the school telephone except in case of an emergency. The student must have a permission slip from the teacher in order to use the phone. The use of cell phones (including smart watches) is not permitted during the school day. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in confiscation of your cell phone or smart watch.

## **HCS PLAGIARISM POLICY**

The faculty at HCS is committed to teaching students how to become ethical users of information and ideas. It is our responsibility not only to educate students in the research process and mechanics of writing and proper documentation, but also to hold these students accountable for honest work. Whether an assigned project is in a visual, written or spoken format, students are expected to accurately reference all sources of information consulted for the project.

Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offense and will not be tolerated by HCS or any other institution of higher learning. It is an expectation that all departments and students adhere to and enforce this policy.

### **Definition of Plagiarism**

- Copying another person's ideas and/or works, whether intentional or not, in whole or in part, from a print or non-print source, and using those ideas or works as one's own
- Deliberate and/or consistent lack of proper documentation and citation in the project or paper
- In-text documentation that is not reflected in the Works Cited page

### **Teacher Responsibilities**

HCS teachers are to provide the following at the beginning of the paper or project:

- An assignment sheet with detailed instructions
- A rubric outlining assessment at all points of the process and for the final product
- Clear guidelines regarding acceptable amounts of help from peers or other adults

### **Teachers are also responsible for:**

- Assisting students who are having difficulty in the location and evaluation of information;

- Assisting students in how to manage time and deadlines throughout the research process
- Conferencing with students on formatting and composing the project or paper

### **Student Responsibilities**

- Submit authentic work
- Follow the project instructions and deadlines assigned by the teacher
- Ask questions and seek help from appropriate persons (teachers, the librarian, peers)
- Follow the MRA Research and MLA Style Guide per teacher direction
- Cite in-text or in-project sources correctly and accurately
- Format Works Cited pages correctly and accurately

### **Plagiarism Violations**

If a teacher has sufficient reason to believe that a student has plagiarized, the teacher must determine the level of plagiarism according to the criteria below. A committee composed of the head of schools, principal, Assistant Principal, department chair, and teacher involved then has the option to meet to determine what actions, if any, will be taken.

### **Degrees of Plagiarism**

1. A first-degree violation may occur due to ignorance or inexperience on the part of the student. An example of plagiarism at this level may involve a student's using a paragraph or a few lines of text without citing the material properly; however, most of the paper is the student's own work.
 

Recommended procedures for first-degree violations are outlined below; any one or more procedures may be chosen:

  - A make-up assignment at a more difficult level.
  - A grade reduction on the original assignment.
  - Notify parents of the violation.
2. A second-degree violation is considered a more serious plagiarism offense. Examples of this violation include use of one or more paragraphs of another's ideas and/or works without correct citation. Incorrect citations may often take the form of improper paraphrasing. Although some of the work is the student's, it is evident that much of the work has been taken from other sources and not referenced.
 

Recommended procedures for second-degree violations are outlined below; any one or more procedures may be chosen:

  - A grade reduction on the original assignment.
  - A letter in the student's academic file detailing the offense.
  - Notification to National Honor Society advisor, if appropriate.
  - Disciplinary action taken by Administration, including parent notification.
3. A third-degree violation is a severe case of plagiarism and indicates the majority of a student's work has been taken from another source or sources

and not referenced. An example may be the use of a purchased term paper or other materials as one's own. Also, this violation may involve improperly acquiring information and/ or intentionally altering it, i.e. citing sources that are not actually sources. In addition, a third-degree violation occurs when a student has been found guilty of plagiarism in a prior instance. In this instance, a committee meeting will be held to discuss what will happen.

Recommended procedures for third degree violations are outlined below; any one or more procedures may be chosen:

- A recommendation that no credit be given for the original assignment.
- A letter in the student's academic file detailing the offense.
- Notification to National Honor Society advisor, if appropriate.
- Disciplinary action taken by Administration, including parent notification.

### **CELL PHONE/SMART WATCH/ELECTRONIC DEVICES/TELEPHONE PRIVILEGES**

Cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices can be disruptive to the educational environment and are not permitted to be turned on or to be visible at any time during the school day. If a cell phone, smart watches, or other electronic devices is seen or heard during the day, it will be taken from the student and may be picked up by the point in accordance with the policy below.

This policy applies to all school functions held indoors including but not limited to chapel, assemblies, drama performances, etc. A telephone is available in the lower school office for lower school students and in the main office at the receptionist's desk for upper students to use before school, during applicable breaks, lunch, and after school, should they need to use the phone. Students are NOT to be dismissed from class to use the phone.

### **ELECTRONICS INFRACTION MEASURES**

#### **1<sup>ST</sup> OFFENSE**

Cell phone/electronic device is taken from student  
Parents are notified of violation  
\$100 fine and phone must be picked up by parent in the front office

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> OFFENSE**

Cell phone/electronic device is taken from student  
Parents are notified of violation  
\$200 fine and phone must be picked up by parent in the front office

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> OFFENSE**

Cell phone/electronic device is taken from student  
Parents are notified of violation  
Phone must be picked up by parent in the front office and student loses all electronic privileges.



Laptops, tablets, or other technological devices that can be used in the classroom for educational purposes will be allowed for those purposes only and must be approved by the classroom instructor. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in the device being taken from the student in accordance with the same policies listed above.

## **AHERA COMPLIANCE NOTIFICATION**

In accordance with AHERA regulations school districts are required to perform several activities with regard to asbestos in schools. These activities include an initial asbestos inspection and development of a management plan. The management plan addresses how identified asbestos containing materials (ACM) will be handled (abated or managed in place).

As part of the management plan, schools are also required to provide notification to all parents, teachers, and employees of our ongoing management of ACM's.

To provide continuing management of the asbestos in our schools, all asbestos containing materials (ACM) are inspected every six months. Any changes are being recorded in a surveillance report as part of the management plan. A copy of this surveillance report, along with a copy of the management plan, and all supplementary information is located and is available for review in the Local Education Agency (LEA) Designee Office located at 4060 South Siwell Road, Jackson, Mississippi.

## BELL SCHEDULES

<i>REGULAR BELL SCHEDULE</i>			
MIDDLE SCHOOL		HIGH SCHOOL	
FIRST BELL	7:55	FIRST BELL	7:55
HOMEROOM	8:00-8:25	HOMEROOM	8:00-8:25
FIRST PERIOD	8:29-9:19	FIRST PERIOD	8:29-9:19
BREAK	9:24-9:44	SECOND PERIOD	9:23-10:13
SECOND PERIOD	9:49-10:39	BREAK	10:18-10:38
THIRD PERIOD	10:43-11:33	THIRD PERIOD	10:43-11:33
LUNCH	11:37-12:12	FOURTH PERIOD	11:37-12:27
FOURTH PERIOD	12:16-1:06	LUNCH	12:32-1:02
FIFTH PERIOD	1:10-2:00	FIFTH PERIOD	1:12-2:02
SIXTH PERIOD	2:04-3:00	SIXTH PERIOD	2:06-3:00
<i>ACTIVITY/CHAPEL BELL SCHEDULE</i>			
MIDDLE SCHOOL		HIGH SCHOOL	
FIRST BELL	7:55	FIRST BELL	7:55
HOMEROOM	8:00-8:25	HOMEROOM	8:00-8:25
FIRST PERIOD	8:29-9:19	FIRST PERIOD	8:29-9:19
CHAPEL	9:21-9:51	CHAPEL	9:21-9:51
BREAK	9:51-10:16	SECOND PERIOD	9:56-10:43
SECOND PERIOD	10:21-11:08	BREAK	10:43-11:08
THIRD PERIOD	11:12-11:59	THIRD PERIOD	11:13-12:00
LUNCH	11:59-12:29	FOURTH PERIOD	12:04-12:51
FOURTH PERIOD	12:34-1:21	LUNCH	12:51-1:20
FIFTH PERIOD	1:24-2:12	FIFTH PERIOD	1:25-2:12
SIXTH PERIOD	2:16-3:00	SIXTH PERIOD	2:16-3:00

## PARENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have read the policies and procedures set forth in the 2023-2024 Hillcrest Christian School Parent / Student Handbook and that I will support the enforcement of those policies and procedures.

PARENT/GUARDIAN:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent / Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Please print name

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please print student names and grades below:

\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_