

DISCOVERY



CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

2017-2018

Parent/Student Handbook

“Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.”

Deuteronomy 31:6



This handbook is for parents and students of DCS. Parents are encouraged to teach their children to live happily and submissively within this handbook’s guidelines. Nitpicking criticism, to which any set of rules is susceptible, creates a spirit of unrest in children. Although the following guidelines are institutional preferences, they are not optional. Students are expected to comply with the guidelines within and parents are expected to support and monitor compliance. It is inappropriate that complying students, teachers, or administrators be distracted from the educational process, due to someone failing in his or her commitment to follow these guidelines.

Contact Information

111 Wesley Circle
 Florence, MS 39073
 601.891.0608
 601.891.4041 (Fax)

Email: discoverychristianschool@gmail.com
 Website: discoverychristianschool.org
 Find us on Facebook

2017-2018 School Calendar	
August 9, 2017	First day of school
September 4, 2017	Labor Day- Student Holiday
October 11-13, 2017	Fall Break-Student Holidays
October 16, 2017	2 nd term begins
<i>October 17, 2017</i>	<i>1st Term Report Card</i>
November 20-24, 2017	Thanksgiving-Student Holidays
December 1, 2017	Professional Development Day-Student Holiday
December 21, 2017	Reduced Day-After school Program closed
Dec. 21, 2017-Jan. 3, 2018	Christmas-Student Holidays (Students return Thursday, January 4, 2018)
January 4, 2018	3 rd Term begins
<i>January 9, 2018</i>	<i>2nd Term Report Card</i>
January 15, 2018	Martin Luther King Jr. Day- Student Holiday
February 19, 2018	President’s Day-Student Holiday
March 9, 2018	Reduced Day-After school Program closed
March 12-16, 2018	Spring Break-Student Holidays
March 19, 2018	4 th term begins
<i>March 20, 2018</i>	<i>3rd Term Report Card</i>
Mar. 30-Apr.2, 2018	Easter-Student Holidays
May 18, 2018	Last Day of School-Reduced Day

DCS Mission Statement

It is the mission of Discovery Christian School to provide a Christ-centered education which enables students to discover and glorify God, to pursue excellence in education with the Bible and Jesus Christ as our focus, and to equip students for daily living and eternal life.

DCS Vision Statement

Our vision is to develop a Pre-K-12 school that is highly regarded for its academic excellence, and fosters Godliness and character that creates a life-defining impact on our students.

History

In 2011, Wendi Teten and Michele Thames founded Discovery Christian School. The school began with an enrollment of twenty-four students and three staff members. They met in the back of Restoration Church in Florence, MS. Grades K4 through sixth were offered in multi-level classrooms. The 2012-2013 school year grew to fifty-one students and seven staff members while continuing to meet at the same church. Seventh and eighth grade as well as music were added to the classes offered. In the third year, 2013-2014, enrollment once again doubled to ninety-nine and moved to the former campus of Wesley College in Florence, MS. In 2016-2017 enrollment grew to over 200 students. They were thrilled to graduate their first class of seniors during that school year. As they enter their seventh year, the athletic program has grown to include boys and girls basketball, cheerleading, archery, baseball and girls soccer. Along with Restoration Church, DCS has purchased the thirty-three acre property and has great plans for the future. They are excited to see God move in this school and in the hearts of DCS families and students.

Accreditation

Discovery Christian School is accredited by the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). School credits from DCS are recognized nationwide from all public and private schools.

School Governance

Discovery Christian School operates as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. DCS is governed by a board of directors who are responsible for the operations of the school. The board establishes school policies and manages its general affairs. It acts as the overseer of the school mission and its strategic decision-maker, formulating long-range policies whose fulfillment is delegated to the administrators, as is the day-to-day well-being of the school.

The Board of Directors is currently comprised of six members who establish policy, set goals, and evaluates the affairs of the school. The board consists of the following:

Joe Germany - President
Wendi Teten

Kristi Adcock
Michele Thames

Freddie Brown
John White

Our Beliefs

As a school based on Christian principles, we strongly believe in each student developing and maintaining a strong sense of moral responsibility. Proper social, physical, and moral behavior is expected of all students. Lifestyles or behaviors that are in violation of Biblical teachings will not be tolerated and will result in expulsion from school.

Statement of Faith

Discovery Christian School is founded on biblical principles and our beliefs as stated in this handbook. DCS is in a partnership with Restoration Community Fellowship, Inc. and as such agrees with and operates in alignment with the same Statement of Faith.

Spiritually the school strives:

- To lead students into a personal, saving relationship with Christ as Lord and Savior by presenting the Bible regularly.
- For students to know, understand, and apply God's Word in daily life.
- To develop a desire in our students to know and do the will of God.
- To teach students consistent Christian living and service through local and global outreach.
- To help students articulate and defend their Biblical worldview and Christian faith while having a basic understanding of opposing worldviews.
- To encourage students to be empowered by the Holy Spirit and pursue a life of love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, humility, and self-control
- To encourage students and families to be actively involved in a local, Bible-believing church.
- God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female.
- The term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union and intimate relationships between them should only take place within the covenant of marriage to each other.

Academically the school strives:

- To promote high academic standards by instilling initiative, a good work ethic, and reliance on God
- To prepare students in all academic disciplines, ensuring students are proficient in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking
- To encourage the development of good study habits
- To foster intellectual inquiry, utilizing skills to question, solve problems, and make wise decisions
- To demonstrate how to utilize resources, including technology, to find, analyze, and evaluate information in a discerning way
- To encourage lifelong learning
- To teach students to become independent learners
- To prepare and encourage students to further their education beyond high school, seeking God's will for their lives

We believe spiritually:

- The Bible is God's word and our instruction book for life
- In one God, creator of all things
- Jesus Christ is God's son and gave His life so that we can eternal life and abundant life
- Salvation is a free gift obtained by God's grace alone through personal faith alone in Christ's atoning work alone
- The Holy Spirit empowers us to live a life that pleases God and ministers to others
- The church is commissioned by God to reveal His word, His worship, and His ways to the world
- Satan is a personal, spiritual adversary of God and His followers
- God has a purpose for our lives and we should seek it
- There will be a final judgment at which God will assign all people their eternal destinies

We believe academically:

- Promoting high academic standards by instilling initiative, a good work ethic, and reliance on God
- Preparing students in all academic disciplines, ensuring students are proficient in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking
- Encouraging the development of good study habits
- Fostering intellectual inquiry, utilizing skills to question, solve problems, and make wise decisions
- Demonstrating how to utilize resources, including technology, to find, analyze, and evaluate information in a discerning way
- Encouraging lifelong learning and striving for students to become independent learners
- Preparing and encouraging students to further their education beyond high school, seeking God's will for their lives.

We believe:

- Leadership authority is given and ordained by God (Romans 13:1)
- Leaders must be servants (Luke 22:25-26, John 13:13-16)
- Leaders must have a teachable spirit (Proverbs 19:20, 27)
- Leaders must model right behavior (Titus 2:7-8)
- Leaders must evaluate themselves (2 Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 6:4)
- Leaders regularly examine thoughts and motives (2 Corinthians 13:5; Psalm 139:23-24)
- Leaders use authority to nurture and serve (Ephesians 4:12; Romans 13:4)

Admission Requirements

Discovery Christian School is an independent Christian School, providing a traditional, academically sound, Bible-based education. Our reputation for high academic and discipline standards makes us happy to extend the opportunity to have quality Christian education for your children.

Enrollment at DCS is a privilege, not a right. Parents and students must understand that continued enrollment and reenrollment of their children is dependent on their support of the school, its staff, its policies, and its philosophies, and its statement of faith. They are expected to adhere to the school policies as established by the Discovery Christian School Board of Directors as published in this handbook.

Students wishing to attend DCS must meet admission requirements as stated below. The administrators of DCS will use discretion to determine if a student meets the requirement of admission on a case by case basis.

The DCS admission process consists of the following:

Step 1: Complete a New Student Application

Step 2: Provide the following documents:

- a. A copy of the birth certificate and social security card
- b. A Certificate of Immunization (Original Form 121 compliance)
- c. A copy of most recent standardized tests results (current school)
- d. A copy of most recent report card (current school)

Step 3: Return **ALL** requested information along with the \$25.00 application fee (a non-refundable fee). This may be dropped off during school hours (M-F, 7:30-3:00) or mailed to DCS, 111 Wesley Circle, Florence, MS 39073. Incomplete application packets will not be accepted.

Step 4: After a review of your application, you will be notified if your child has been selected to continue the admission process. At that time an appointment for a family/student interview will be scheduled. Should your child be denied admission, you will be contacted as well.

Step 5: Students that are granted admission should then submit the \$100.00 registration fee. To complete the registration process, the \$350 curriculum fee must be received within two weeks of notification of acceptance. Admission is complete when parent/legal guardian have paid all required fees/tuition and have signed the DCS Enrollment Contract.

Discovery Christian School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin. Our school mission is one committed to children, and our staff is a loving, nurturing one. It is always difficult when a child is not accepted. There are times, however, when children have special needs that DCS cannot meet. Therefore, it would not be in the best interest of the child to place him/her in a school setting where they might not be successful. Some of those areas include the following:

- a. Academically, DCS has a curriculum that is rigorous in nature. If a child is below average in ability, or if a child has moderate to severe learning disabilities, DCS may not be the best school of choice. DCS does not have a special education component, due primarily to budget, personnel, and space restraints.
- b. If a child has behavior problems that adversely affect the learning of others or takes an inordinate amount of time, DCS is likely not the best school setting.
- c. If a child has a serious medical condition or has specific medical needs that can't typically be met in a standard classroom setting, it might not be in the child's best interest to attend DCS.
- d. In fairness to the child, if he/she has been professionally tested and evaluated for learning disabilities, behavioral concerns (such as ADD, ADHD), or a medical condition, the result of those tests should be made available to the school at the time of application or when they become available.

Afterschool Program Services

In an effort to serve the needs of working parents, an after-school care program is offered from 2:30-6:00 each school day. Supervised care of students in grades Pre-K4-6th grade is offered at a reasonable cost to parents that corresponds with the DCS School Calendar. The program is offered on full school days from the first day of school until the last day of school in May. After-school care is not available on the December, March and May half days We offer full-time or drop-in enrollment. Parents must select an enrollment plan. Contact the school office for more information.

Athletics

Participation in any extracurricular activity is regarded as a privilege rather than a right. The following eligibility requirements are required of any student wishing to participate in any extracurricular activity:

- The student's behavior must be compatible with the school's Student Conduct/Discipline Policy. Any discipline infraction that warrants being sent to the administrator's office or contacting parents would result in a suspension of the student from the next game/event. Two such incidents during a season will result in a student's permanent removal from the activity.
- A student who is ineligible due to low grades or behavior infractions will be suspended from participating in games/events until conditions are improved (see Student Athlete Handbook). He/she is required to participate in all preliminary activities (i.e, practices and preparation times) and is expected to attend games/events.
- A student must be present for one half of the school day in order to participate in any athletic event (practice or game).

Coaches as well as the Athletic Director will monitor the attendance and eligibility of their students in coordination with classroom teachers. A student's academic and behavioral standing will be monitored on a regular basis. Students wishing to compete in athletics must obtain a valid physician's approval in order to participate. Proof that this has been done must be provided to the coach prior to the first event of the season each school year or the student will not be allowed to participate. All athletes must be covered by medical insurance by their parents. Athletes are responsible for all equipment and uniforms checked out to them. In case of destruction or loss, the athlete will be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement.

DCS expects its coaches, players, parents, and students to represent the school in a manner that is respectful of others and brings honor to God at all times. Parents are not to approach coaches, players, or other parents during games or practices in a threatening or hostile manner. If this occurs, the parent will be asked to leave the event or appropriate authorities contacted if necessary. If a parent continues this repeated behavior, then the child of the parent may be asked to leave DCS. If a parent wishes to have a discussion with the coach over an issue, then a conference needs to be scheduled. Conversations or conferences with coaches should not take place until twenty four hours after the sporting event. There must be proper respect given to the players on both teams and for the visiting crowd, treating them as we would like to be treated. The school expects appropriate consideration to be given to all officials and to their legitimate position of authority over the game. Another team's players, coaches, and fans are not enemies, but are opponents in a competitive event. Taunting or intimidating participants, officials, or coaches is disrespectful, unfriendly, and not Christ-like. This type of behavior will not be tolerated. Should the school incur a fine from MAIS based on the behavior of a spectator, the fine will be the responsibility of said spectator.

See the *Student Athlete Handbook* for more information concerning athletics.

Attendance

School attendance is required by DCS, its accrediting agencies, and by Mississippi law. Research has shown that a high correlation exists between regular attendance and student success at school. For the general welfare of all students, for each to do well, and for all to benefit from the educational opportunities available, a student must be in school and have a good attendance record. Students are expected to be present and punctual at school each day and are responsible for attending all classes and making up missed work due to an absence. Work missed due to absences will need to be made up at home within three days of returning to school after an absence. Please make arrangements to pick up your child's assignments and books on the third consecutive day of absence. Please schedule all medical and dental well visits and checkups after school hours. Students may not miss more than 20 days in a school year, whether excused or unexcused, in any class and receive credit. This is an MAIS and DCS guideline. Exceptions may be granted by the board only in extreme medically related situations.

Excused/Unexcused Absences:

Absences will be considered excused for the following reasons only:

- Illness-with note from parent or doctor
- Involvement in an accident
- Bereavement/funeral in the immediate family
- Medical appointments
- Participation in school-approved programs outside the school
- Pre-arranged absences for which administrative approval has been given

All other absences will be counted as unexcused. Unexcused absences include but are not limited to vacations, visiting friends or relatives, hair or photography appointments, hunting, shopping, or any other reasons unacceptable to the school administration.

When a student arrives at school after an absence, he/she is required to provide a written note signed by a parent or guardian explicitly stating the reason for the absence. If a student fails to bring a written excuse by the second day following his/her return, the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

Homebound Student Status Due to Illness:

If, due to extended illness or recovery, a student is not able to physically attend school, a period of time will be granted to accommodate the student's needs. The initial period of time will be 10 school days. The maximum period of time allowed will be 20 school days. If more time is needed, the administrators will review the documentation provided by the parents to justify extending the homebound status. Parents/guardians will be responsible for regular communication with teachers and the daily drop off/pick up of assignments. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal of the student. Students with homebound status are still bound by the terms of the enrollment contract.

Health:

Please do not send a child to school who appears to be ill. After an illness, a student should remain home until his/her temperature has been normal (98.6 or below) without medication for 24 hours. Any student becoming ill at school will be assessed by the teacher and/or office personnel and will be sent home only if necessary. Students will not use their cell phones to make "sick calls" to parent.

Tardy policy:

Arrival after 7:55 a.m. will result in a tardy. Three tardies per class will equal one absence. More than twenty absences per class will result in failure of the class and require repeating the class/grade. Tardy students will wait in the school office as to not interrupt devotion time. The office staff will escort tardy students to their class.

Birthdays

DCS recognizes that children are blessing. A student may celebrate his/her birthday at school by bringing a special treat for the class with prior approval by the teacher. We ask that parents mail invitations when having parties unless all children (boys and girls) in the class are invited.

Car Rider Procedures

Should any parent need to enter the building during arrival and dismissal times he/she must not obstruct the flow of the traffic. Parking is allowed at either end of the main building. All other times parking is available in front of the main building. Each family will be issued a car rider number. Please display this number from the rearview mirror. This procedure ensures the safety of your child. Cars without the number displayed in the pickup vehicle will be asked to park and come to the office to show identification.

Morning:

Student drop off begins at 7:30 when staff members report to the front of the building. **Do not drop off any student unless a staff member is present.** When unloading, parents are to remain in a single line and should follow the directions of the staff members on duty. Students should exit their car on the right side in front of the Administration building, walk straight to the sidewalk then proceed to the entrance of the building of their homeroom class. No cars should pass others unloading for any reason.

Afternoon:

When picking up, parents are to acknowledge and follow the directions of the staff members on duty.

K4-5th grade procedures:

- Students will dismiss at 2:30. All cars picking up students after school will enter the campus from the west entrance onto Wesley Circle. We will form two lines and load in front of the Administration building.
- Remain in your car and a staff person will escort your child to the car.
- After your child/children are loaded please watch the staff and exit the loading area as directed. Should you need to buckle your child's seat belt or car seat you should pull to the parking area in front of the new Eastside building. **DO NOT HOLD UP TRAFFIC TO SECURE SAFETY BELTS.**
- Elementary students not picked up by 2:45 will be sent to after school for a charge of \$10.00 each occurrence.
- Parents with students in both elementary and secondary dismissal times will need to exit campus then may proceed to form on the west side of campus beginning at the gazebo (may also park in gravel parking lot).

6th – 12th grades procedures:

- Students will dismiss at 3:10. All cars picking up students at dismissal will enter the campus from the west entrance onto Wesley Circle beginning at 3:00. If you arrive before 3:00, you will be asked to leave and come back. No parking is allowed unless you are coming in the building. We will form two lines and load in front of the Administration building.
- Remain in your car and a staff person will monitor your child as they proceed to the car.
- Secondary students not picked up by 3:30 will incur a late fee charge of \$25.00.

Parents who have children in BOTH the lower and upper grades will pick up your child at the designated time. Should you need to come in the building after school please park by the buildings on either end of the campus and not in front of the administration building.

Cell Phone/Media Use

Elementary/Middle Students (K4-5th grade)

- Students are not allowed to use any type of mobile devices including ipods, tablets and cell/smart phone. The use of these devices is prohibited during school hours.

High School Students (6th-12th grade)

- The general rule for students during school hours is no use of mobile devices without permission from the teacher. When no permission has been given, phones should be **off** and out of sight. If the phone is seen or heard when permission has not been given, the teachers will give a warning for the first occurrence, and after that will confiscate the phone and deliver it to the principal. The student will have to pay a fee of \$25 to regain possession of the phone. Repeated offenses will result in the student losing mobile device privileges for the remainder of the school year.
- Regarding proper use of the devices, mobile devices are considered technology items, and therefore fall under the acceptable use policy that all families sign each year. As a general rule, students should seek to use all technology in a way that is God-honoring.
- School administrators reserve the right to search and/or seize any mobile devices in which there is reasonable suspicion. If there is a pass code lock on the device, the student must agree to unlock the phone. Any inappropriate material found on the phone as a result of this search may result in disciplinary action.
- When particularly inappropriate materials are found (e.g cyberbullying, highly suggestive, etc) the principal may hand the phone over to an officer of the law.
- During tests, quizzes, and for other purposes, teachers may ask students to turn in their phones.
- Smartwatches are not permitted at school.

Classroom Volunteers

We welcome volunteers in the classroom as long as it is an asset to student learning rather than a distraction. This decision will be made at the teacher's discretion on a case by case basis. Anyone interested in volunteering in the classroom must contact the classroom teacher and schedule an appropriate time for such visit.

Communication

Renweb is our online system used to communicate academic, demographic, and financial information with DCS families. All school correspondence is done via email as well as Parent Alert messages via RenWeb. We encourage families to use this system on a regular basis to stay informed of school events

and student progress. The RenWeb district code for DCS is DC-MS. Please visit renweb.com for more information. DCS also communicates with families via Facebook and our web page.

Curriculum

Textbooks are the property of Discovery Christian School and are rented by the student for the year. Books are returned at the end of the course, and book fines will be assessed for damage due to abuse. Textbooks will not be sent home at the end of the school year.

Curriculum	
K4	ABeka
K5	BJU and Guided Reading
Grades 1 & 2	Abeka Phonics, Spelling and Language Bob Jones University Press Math BJU Language Guided Reading
Grade 3	Bob Jones University Press English and Math Developmental Studies Guided Spelling ABeka History and Science
Grades 4 & 5	Bob Jones University Press English and Math ABeka History BJU Science
Grades 6 -12	Bob Jones University Press

Devotion

We will have a daily devotion lesson. This time is crucial to the spiritual growth of our students. Students should bring their Bible to devotion each day.

Disciplinary Model

Discovery Christian School's disciplinary model is designed to help students understand their behavior, how it affects the DCS environment, repair any damage done to relationships and/or property, and to develop habits that lead to different outcomes in the future.

Discipline will be done in partnership with parents. The emphasis is on helping students navigate social responsibility in a respectful way. Bullying, taunting, degrading and/or intimidating will not be tolerated. The behaviors will be dealt with by working with students to recognize, repair, and re-orient to make better decisions.

The DCS staff values honesty from students in dealing with disciplinary situations. As part of our partnership, parents will be notified if patterns of behavior are identified by the DCS staff or if a student becomes physically violent with the staff or other students.

Consequences may include dismissal from the class (separation of student), a meeting with the directors, parental notification, in school suspension, after school detention, and any other consequences deemed appropriate by the school administrators.

Students may be placed in After-School Detention (3:15-4:15) under the supervision of the administration or staff. Students will be required to study or complete work detail during this time. Students may be placed in In-School Detention (school hours). Students will be required to complete class assignments while isolated from other students. The parents of the student will pay the cost of supervision (\$50 per day). Any student who is a repeat violator of the rules and regulations of Discovery Christian School, or whose presence at the school is considered by the administration as not being conducive to the goals of the school, will face suspension or permanent expulsion. Violations of a serious nature can be placed on probation. This status means that while the student is on probation, if he/she continues to be a disciplinary problem, he/she can face suspension or even expulsion from DCS. The probationary status is recorded as a part of the student's discipline record. Students may be suspended from any extracurricular activities during this time. If a student is suspended, he/she is required to complete assignments missed during suspension. Although required to do the work, the student may receive no credit for grading purposes. The parent, not the teacher, is responsible for the remediation of any skills that the student misses during the time of suspension.

Field Trips

DCS students will take field trips throughout the school year to enhance the education of the students. Parents will be notified well in advance as to the date and cost of the field trip. Students who choose not to attend a designated field trip and are absent from school that day must still adhere to the absence policy listed under the attendance section of this document.

Grade Promotion/Retention

Kindergarten students may be promoted to the first grade upon satisfactory completion of the requirements of kindergarten and the recommendation of the appropriate school official considering the chronological age and mental, social, and physical development of the student. Students who exceed 20 absences during the school year may not be promoted.

Elementary and middle school students may be promoted to a given grade level upon evidence of satisfactory completion of the requirements of the previous grade level and the recommendation of the appropriate school official considering the chronological age and mental, social, and physical development of the student. Students who exceed 20 absences during the school year may not be promoted.

High School students are promoted to the next level in a subject area in which they have successfully completed the requirements of the previous level as per the scope and sequence of the high school curriculum. The maximum number of absences allowed for students may not exceed 20 days during the school year, or 10 days from single semester, half-credit courses. Students will be promoted to the next grade when an average in all subjects for the year is 60 or higher. In all possible retention cases, several factors are taken into account; past performance, individual needs, maturity, homework completion, and parental input. The final decision lies with the faculty team including, but not limited to, the current teachers and school administrators.

Graduation Requirements

Graduates must complete at least four classes in English, History, Math, and Science. Also, they must complete four electives which must include one in the fine arts, one-half unit in computer and two advanced electives. One must be a foreign language and second a foreign language, or Advance Geography, 5th math, or 5th science. Graduates must also earn one complete Bible credit. Any college courses taken through a dual enrollment program must be approved by the administration. Graduates must earn a minimum of 21 credits.

Requirements for Granting a Diploma

- (a) A student shall earn at least two (2) of his last (4) credits in residence at the high school before the school may grant him a diploma. Successful completion of four (4) half (0.5) credit courses in one semester is equivalent to two (2) credits.
- (b) Discovery Christian will not grant a diploma, signed or unsigned, or any substitute for a diploma, to a student who fails to meet the requirements for graduation.
- (c) Dual Credit courses taken through an institution of higher learning prior to high school graduation may not be used for high school credit.
 - A “dual enrolled” student is a student who is enrolled in a community or junior college or state institution of higher learning while enrolled in high school.
 - A “dual credit” student is a student who is enrolled in a community or junior college or state institution of higher learning while enrolled in high school and who is receiving high school and college credit for postsecondary coursework.
 - One (1) three-hour university or community or junior college course equals one (1) high school credit (i.e., 1 Carnegie Unit).
- (d) DCS may issue a half (0.5) credit for any course successfully completed at the end of one semester (or the equivalent classroom hours). The course may be a one semester course or a full-year course.
- (e) DCS may issue credits to eighth grader provided the courses (e.g., Algebra I, Pre-Algebra, Entry Level Computer, and Foreign Language) are successfully completed, carry the same rigor and content as the high school course, and meet state requirements.
- (f) The total number of required credits earned by correspondence, summer school, or approved online courses for repeat or new coursework, shall not exceed two (2) credits earned during one summer.
- (g) Coursework taken on-line or by correspondence may be credited toward graduation provided that permission is granted by DCS and the course provider is regionally or state accredited.
- (h) The Head of School may grant a half (0.5) credit to a student for participating in a foreign study tour program after establishing that the time and content of the program meet the requirements for awarding such credit.

Requirements for Awarding Credit in Summer School

- (a) Credit may be given for coursework done in summer school that is equal in quality and quantity to the course requirement of the regular school year.
- (b) An “extended term” is summer school enrollment for remediation or completion of course objectives not met by participating students at the same school during the regular school year.
- (c) A student may earn a maximum of two (2) credits during a summer.

College Days

Students in grades 11 and 12 are encouraged to visit college campuses for a first hand experience of the school they are considering. Students must complete the College Day Request Form and return to the school office prior to a college visit. Parents are asked to request in writing one week in advance of the missed school day. College days are granted at the discretion of the school administration. Students will be responsible for any class work missed. Juniors will be allowed one day and seniors will be allowed two days per year.

Senior Exam Exemption

Seniors are eligible to be exempt during final exams of the spring semester. In order to be exempt the following standards must be met:

- Four or fewer excused absences in the class with an A average, plus
- No unexcused absences for the year resulting for any reason
- or
- Two or fewer excused absences in the class with a B or better average, plus
- No unexcused absences for the year resulting for any reason.

ACT Testing

Students are required by DCS to take the ACT in the fall and spring of their junior year and in the fall of the senior year. Students should use the DCS ACT code (250-001) when taking the test.

Grandparents Club

DCS welcomes the grandparents or the “like grandparents” of DCS students to join the DCS VIG Club. The VIG (Very Important Grandparent) member benefits will include opportunities to volunteer in classrooms, become a GG (Grandparent Greeter), be honorees at various monthly events throughout the school year and more. All members will receive a club t-shirt as well. A yearly membership is \$25/person or \$40/couple.

Inclement Weather Days

School cancellations due to inclement weather will be announced via RenWeb School Parent Alert, email, and the school Facebook page.

Lockers

Students in grades 9-12 will be assigned a locker for his/her personal use. Students are to keep their lockers orderly and clean and must use the locker assigned to them for the entirety of the school year. Students may decorate the inside of the lockers providing that nothing displayed is inconsistent with policies and values of the school. DCS reserves the right to inspect lockers to ensure compliance with school policy. DCS is not responsible for the damage or loss of items in lockers. Students assigned a keyed lock are responsible for keeping up with their key. A lost key will result in a replacement fee which will be determined at the time of reordering. Students assigned lockers without built in locks may use a combination lock (purchased by student) and are required to give the combination to the homeroom teacher.

Lunch/Snack

Students will have the option to purchase a school lunch or to bring their lunch to school daily. Lunch menus will be available on RenWeb for your convenience. Student meals brought from home will not be heated. Students who bring a lunch from home have the option to purchase a drink or other side items from the cafeteria. Only bottled water is permitted in the classrooms. Other drinks are permitted

in the cafeteria during lunch only. Parents are welcome to enjoy lunch with their child/children. Elementary students are encouraged to bring a snack daily that will be stored in the classroom. Middle/high school students may bring money to purchase snack items from the concession stand or bring a snack from home.

Meal prices: K4-3rd \$3.00 4th-12th & visitors-\$3.50

Medical

If an incident should arise where a student requires medical attention, the school administrators will first attempt to call the parent. If the parent cannot be reached, the school administrators will contact a person listed on the emergency card. In the event that an emergency contact cannot be reached, or if the medical emergency does not permit time to contact parents, an appropriate DCS staff person will seek emergency medical care for the student. Students are NOT allowed to carry over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription medications at DCS. Should the need for OTC medication arise, a parent or guardian must have written consent on file with the office specifying the dosage and times to be administered by a DCS staff member. All medication must be in the original container. Prescription medication will not be administered by DCS staff.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held throughout the school year as needed. Should a question or concern about your child's education arise, contact the teacher in an attitude of partnership to find solutions. Teachers will respond in a timely manner to discuss options with you. DCS assistant teachers are supportive staff for the classroom teachers. All correspondence regarding your child's academic needs should be conducted with the classroom teacher and not the assistant teacher. Assistant teachers have been informed of this policy.

Placement and Transfer Student Guidelines

1. Kindergarten - DCS requires, in accordance with MS state laws, in order to be eligible for admission to Kindergarten a child must have reached the age of 5 on or before September 1 of the school year for which application is being made.
2. Elementary - DCS requires, in accordance with MS state laws, in order to be eligible for admission into first grade a child must have reached the age of 6 on or before September 1 of the school year for which application is being made.
3. DCS will accept previously earned credits of transfer students who demonstrate competence in the subject area of the credit that is being transferred through proper documentation or placement testing.
4. DCS may refuse admission of a transfer student or acceptance of a transfer credit if there is not a match between the instructional/educational needs of a student applying for transfer and DCS's mission and/or admission policy.

Report Cards

Teachers will report academic progress through the RenWeb system and send a printed copy home with the student each quarter. Report cards will also be emailed to parents each quarter. Pre-K4, K5, 1st, and 2nd grades grading scale performance evaluations are at the discretion of the teacher. The following is the DCS grading scale used to report student progress:

- Pre-K4, Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades:
S-Satisfactory, N-Needs Improvement, U-Unsatisfactory.
- 3rd-12th grades:
A 90-100
B 80-89
C 70-79
D 60-69
F below 60

Safety

Safety of DCS students and staff will be first considered in all circumstances. All exit doors will remain locked during school hours. School property will be respected at all times.

No visitors, including parents, are to come in any of the school buildings during school hours for any reason without checking in through the school office in the administration building. The only exception is if the visitor has been invited to a program or event. Student visitation will be allowed only in emergency situations as determined by the administration. This includes lunch, break, and after dismissal.

The following are not allowed on school property at any time:

- Weapons of any kind (toy or real)
- Alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs
- Toys and sports equipment (unless pre-approved by DCS administrators)
- Any other items deemed inappropriate or distracting by DCS administrators

Banning Individuals from School Campus

While DCS makes every reasonable effort to welcome parents and other community members to participate in school activities, an individual may be banned from school campus if:

- He/she presents a threat to the safety of students and/or employees of the school, or other individuals appropriately participating in a school activity, or
- He/she creates a disruption to the educational process

Banning an individual from campus is serious action that the school wishes to avoid if at all possible. However, safety concerns for the school community must take priority.

School Day

Daily Schedule

Buildings open at 7:30 AM
School day begins at 7:55 AM
Devotion begins at 8:00 AM
K4-5th grades are dismissed at 2:30 PM
6th-12th grades are dismissed at 3:10 PM

Student Drivers

Students driving to school must hold a valid driver's license and are expected to park in designated areas as specified by DCS administrators. Student drivers are expected to be in school on time and not leave before dismissal. Unauthorized vehicles are not allowed on school property during school hours. A student driver must promptly notify the school office if he or she is no longer using the vehicle

authorized by administration. Student drivers must abide by state and local traffic laws at all times on school property. Drivers should drive slowly and use caution when exiting the campus. All student cars will remain parked during school hours. All motor vehicles are off limits during school hours. Student drivers are not to return to their vehicles or move them during the school day without administrative permission. Student drivers can face disciplinary consequences for allowing fellow students to be unauthorized passengers in their vehicles.

Student Uniform Policy

Our dress code is based on the Biblical principles of modesty, neatness, and appropriateness. Modesty is mentioned often as an important character quality (1 Timothy 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:5-6). Modest people don't go out of their way to bring undue attention to themselves. Likewise, neatness and appropriateness are important as we seek to be ambassadors for Jesus Christ. We need to be examples for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, in purity, (1 Timothy 4:2). We also desire to give a good report and to not be offensive in anything we do. This suggests living differently than the world (1 John 2:15). In addition, dress is to be distinctively masculine and feminine, reflecting a wholesome appreciation for God's creative plan (Deuteronomy 22:5). As we determine to glorify the Lord in all we do (1 Corinthians 10:31), these qualities help us to do that in the area of dress. It is our conviction that appropriate attire has a positive impact upon the attitude of the student and the atmosphere of the classroom. Students are expected to dress appropriately and modestly at all times at DCS. Dress should not be a distraction to other students. When student attire is questionable the DCS administrators will determine if it is appropriate or not.

Uniforms

The following mandatory uniform standards for student attire have been developed and are applicable to all elementary, middle, and high school students.

1. Tops

- Color/Style: Only tops purchased from DCS (The school store will sell shirts in the following colors: gray, white, royal blue, and orange. All students must purchase one royal blue shirt which will be worn on outings. Long and short sleeve shirts will be available to purchase.)
- Fit: must be buttoned properly (shirts must be tucked in on outings)
- Under the school uniform: solid color (gray, white, black) undershirt, camisole, or turtleneck
- In addition to the shirts described above, students may wear a school sponsored t-shirt on designated days.

2. Bottom

- Colors: khaki, black, denim, or white (solid colors only)
- Styles: skirt, shorts, slacks, capri pants, skorts; ***no form fitting fabric or styles***; no ornamentation or insignia; no rips, tears, holes allowed
- Fit: skirts, shorts, and skorts may be no more than three inches above the bend of the back of the knee (garments with slits will be measured from the top of the slit); pants and shorts must be worn at the natural waist; pants legs must not drag the floor; correct size to avoid sagging or overly snug fit

3. Jumpers/Dresses

- Colors: khaki, royal blue, black, denim, or white (solid colors only)
- Styles: no ornamentation and no insignia
- Fit: no more than three inches above the bend of the back of the knee (garments with slits will be measured from the top of the slit)

- Tights/leggings may be worn under skirts or dresses in neutral or black (solid colors only). Leggings are to only be worn as an undergarment with dresses or skirts that are an appropriate length.

4. Uniform Accessories

Shoes

- Matched pair
- Properly fastened
- Socks—matched set; must coordinate with the uniform and not be a distraction

Belts—Belts should be worn when the shirt is tucked in. All shirts are to be tucked in and belts worn when on school outings.

- Colors—solid color
- Fit—worn inside the belt loops

Supplemental Wear

Indoor Layering Garments—If while in the building a student needs to wear a wrap for warmth, it must be worn over an approved uniform top. If the extra garment has a hood, the hood cannot be worn in the building.

- Colors—royal blue, orange, gray, khaki, black, or white (solid colors only); prints, plaids, camouflage and other patterns or designs are not acceptable
- Styles—cannot bear a logo or name brand symbol or other insignia or message larger than the size of a standard credit card; no more than one insignia

Outdoor Coats

- For extreme cold weather days, heavy coats that are not school-approved colors are permitted. These are to be worn outside only.

Dress Down Days

Designated dress down days are to be determined by the administrators. On dress down days, students may wear jeans that follow the uniform policy with a school sponsored t-shirt.

General Standards Summarized

- Students are expected to wear clothing in a normal fashion. For example, shorts/pants must be worn with the waistband around the waist. Pants legs must not drag the floor. Clothing such as belts, flaps, shoes, etc. must be fastened.
- Tops should provide adequate coverage. No skin may show above the belt line.
- Bottoms should fit appropriately. No skin may show above the belt line.
- Clinging, revealing, immodest or overly form-fitting garments are not allowed. Cleavage must not show. Sundresses are not allowed.
- No clothing or accessories which through language or graphics display, exploit, sanction or promote drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gangs, sex, violence, discrimination, vulgarity, unlawful activity or behaviors in opposition to Christian principles are allowed.
- The wearing of leggings, tights or similar attire does not provide for an exception to the length requirement for dresses, skirts, or other similar garments.
- Proper and acceptable undergarments will be worn at all times. Undergarments should not be visible to others.
- While indoors, students may not wear the hood portion of a hooded jacket.

- Hair should be fixed in an appropriate and acceptable manner with no extreme styles such as mohawks or shaved portions of the head. Hair for all students should be within the normal range of human hair color. Male students are to be clean-shaven with sideburns no longer than the bottom of the ear; no facial hair is permitted. Male students should have hair that is trimmed and not touching the eyebrow or the collar. No male buns or ponytails allowed. Male students may not wear headbands during the academic day.
- Any clothing, jewelry, hair, make-up, fingernails, or any other item which causes a disruption of the school environment may be banned at the discretion of the administrators.

The following are prohibited:

- Visible tattoos
- Contact lenses that create an unnatural eye effect
- Visible body piercings (except ears and those are limited to one hole per ear for female students; male students are not allowed to have any piercings)
- Chained wallets or spiked jewelry
- See through garments
- Knit or spandex pants, jogging, exercise/yoga, cargo pants or shorts, skinny jeans, pajamas or loungewear
- Torn, ripped, frayed, or cut clothing (no rips or tears allowed in pants or tops)
- Bedroom shoes, hee-lies, shoes that light up, glitter/sequined shoes, flip flops

The administrators shall have the authority to interpret the dress code and make case by case determinations for the appropriateness of dress which is questionable or which is not covered in this policy.

Compliance

All uniform/dress code incidents require immediate and/or timely remedy.

Should any uniform remedy require the student sign out of school, the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

- Incident #1: Verbal warning to student and parental contact to remedy uniform.
- Incident #2: Parent will receive personal phone call from homeroom teacher to remedy uniform and review school uniform policy.
- Incident #3: Parent will be called to remedy uniform and meet with school administrators.
- Incident #4: Out-of-school Suspension

Technology

Students will adhere to the acceptable use of technology while attending DCS. The use of the network, devices and internet is a privilege. If the user does not comply with the rules and guidelines, he/she will lose technology use privileges. When using the DCS network and or its connection to the internet, the user must accept the responsibility to use it in a proper, ethical, and legal way. These guidelines apply to the use of the DCS network and/or internet, including both school-owned hardware/equipment/devices and items brought on sight by users. (See cell phone policies)

- Logging onto or using inappropriate websites is strictly prohibited. Devices shall not be used to view, download, upload, forward, print, copy or file any inappropriate content.

- Each user has the responsibility to report offensive material to his/her teacher. Attention should not be drawn to this offensive material, subjecting others to its influence.
- All rules and policies in place at DCS regarding honesty, courtesy, and integrity will apply.
- Students will not install any software or attempt to alter or modify software configuration of the school's computers. Downloading or installing games and music files is prohibited.
- Abusive, vulgar communication is not to be used.
- Technology is not to be used to steal, forge, lie, cheat, plagiarize, bully, or threaten.
- Students will not be allowed to use personal email, instant messaging, or social networking sites such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.

Users have no expectation of privacy with regard to their use of DCS technology. DCS may access, view, investigate, and delete any and all information stored on or created with DCS technology. DCS may do so without cause and without prior notice to the user.

Discipline actions for infractions and misuse of the DCS network, internet connection, software, and/or hardware will include one or more of the following:

- Temporary or permanent loss of privileges for use of these items
- In-school suspension (ISS)
- Out of school suspension (OSS)
- Legal action, if necessary

Social Media Policy for Students

Students will be reprimanded for any inappropriate behavior or action as defined by school guidelines. This applies to personal websites, blogs, or profile directories such as Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Users who engage in behavior unbecoming of a member of the DCS community through the use of a website will be subject to penalties which may include suspension or expulsion. Any communication to or about any other member of the school community will be considered to be subject to the school's regulations and code of conduct. In addition, if DCS, in its sole discretion, believes that information on a website, or in an email or text message, is obscene or constitutes a threat, defamation, copyright infringement, or other illegal activity, whether directed at DCS, faculty, staff, students, or other, DCS may be compelled to contact the appropriate authorities.

Social Media Policy for Parents

Inappropriate behavior or actions by parents or guardians posted on any social network site that portrays DCS, any student of DCS, or any staff member of DCS in a manner that may cause harm or distress, including bullying, threats, harassment, defamation, or similar actions is prohibited. Parents or guardians who commit any of these violations may be banned from DCS events and programs. A second violation may result in their child(ren) being suspended or expelled. The DCS name and/or logo are not permitted to be used for social media except by faculty members. No social media groups pertaining to DCS should be governed or set up by anyone other than a faculty member.

Testing

Select grade levels will participate in annual standardized assessments at the discretion of the administration. This allows for the school to track student progress from one school year to the next. A copy of individual results will be provided to parents in the fall of the following school year.

Textbook/Library Books

Textbooks and library books are the property of DCS. Students are expected to take care of all books. In the event that a DCS book is lost or damaged the student will be responsible for the cost of replacement.

Transcripts

DCS will release student records by request to high school students. Each student will receive three official or unofficial transcripts at no cost. Each subsequent request will incur a \$5 fee payable at time of request to the school office. Please allow 7-10 business days for processing from the time the Transcript Request Form is received in the office.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition payments are due on the 1st day of the month and no later than the 5th day of each month. A representative of each family is required to sign the 2017-2018 Enrollment Contract. Any payment after the 5th day of the month will incur a \$30.00 late fee. Habitually late tuition payments may result in the expulsion of your child/children from DCS. The preferred method of tuition payment is bank draft. Any bank draft or check returned will incur a \$30.00 returned bank fee and require the payment be made in cash within 5 business days of notification from DCS. Other methods of payment accepted are personal check, money order, credit card and cash. Credit card payments will incur a 3% fee with each transaction. DCS will not accept post dated checks for any reason. (see inside front cover of this handbook for the tuition table)

Delinquent Accounts:

Tuition and fees provide revenue for the school's operating budget. It is always our hope that each family is able to faithfully honor all financial obligations to our school. In the event that does not happen, however, DCS has adopted policies to ensure that we continue to be good stewards of our financial resources and to make sure that DCs is able to meet its financial obligations to those that provide services to our school. Students whose accounts are past due 45 days may be restricted from attending classes, participating in extracurricular activities, taking exams, or receiving report cards until the account is current. The school reserves the right to refuse to extend further credit to any student whose account reflects a continuous/repeated financial risk. DCS also reserves the right to pursue other means to collect balances due to the school, as the situation may warrant. The Heads of School and/or DCS Board of Directors must approve any special arrangements for unusual circumstances. Please contact the school office if there is a problem with your account. We strongly encourage the Christian principle of open and honest communication when working to resolve issues. DCS will make every reasonable effort to provide solutions should a financial challenge arise, but without time, open, and regular communication, such solutions may not be available.

2017-2018 Tuition				
Grade	Annual	10 month plan	12 month plan	
K4	4,000.00	400.00 August 9, 2017-May 1, 2018	334.00 June 1, 2017- May 1, 2018	
RETURNING STUDENTS (Enrolled in the 16-17 school year)				
Grade	Annual	10 Month Plan	12 Month Plan	Sibling Discount
K5-7 th	4245.00	425.00 August 9, 2017-May1, 2018	354.00 August 9, 2017-July 1, 2018	4,120.00 Only for siblings in K5-7 th
8 th -12 th	4330.00	433.00 August 9, 2017-May1, 2018	361.00 August 9, 2017-July 1, 2018	
NEW STUDENTS (first time enrollment ~ 2017-2018 school year)				
Grade	Annual	10 Month Plan	12 Month Plan	Sibling Discount
K5-7 th	4245.00	425.00 August 9, 2017-May 1, 2018	354.00 June 1, 2017-May 1, 2018	4,120.00 Only for siblings in K5-7 th
8 th -12 th	4330.00	433.00 August 9, 2017-May 1, 2018	361.00 June 1, 2017-May 1, 2018	
Only students enrolled in K5-7th grade are eligible for a sibling discounts.				
Fee & Due Dates				
Returning Student Registration	\$50.00 -On or before February 28, 2017		\$100.00- After February 28, 2017	
Returning Student Curriculum Fee	\$350.00-On or before May 1, 2017		\$450.00-After May 1, 2017	
New Student Application Fee	\$25.00 Due with completed application			
New Student Registration	\$100.00 Due upon notification of acceptance			
New Student Curriculum	\$350.00 Due two weeks after date of acceptance		\$450.00 if not paid within two weeks of acceptance	
Technology Fee	\$15.00 (All students)		Due by August 9, 2017	
Art Fee	\$25.00 6 th -8 th grade students and high school students enrolled in Art I or Art II		Due by August 9, 2017	
Science Fee	\$50.00 6 th -12 th grade students		Due by August 9, 2017	
See Parent/Student Handbook and the Enrollment Contract for more information. Incomplete registration will result in student/s not being able to attend class.				