



Parent/Student Handbook *Online*

Hilltop Christian School

Mission Statement

Hilltop Christian School exists as a ministry of Hilltop Free Will Baptist Church for the purpose of providing academic excellence through a Biblical worldview with a desire to develop students who become complete in Christ, build critical thinking skills, and grow in Christ-like character; while providing a loving, safe, and nurturing atmosphere in a structured and educational environment.

Statement of Faith

We believe the Bible to be the holy, inspired, infallible Word of God providing precise rules of faith and practice. We believe in one God, existing in three persons: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, His sinless life, vicarious death, glorious resurrection, and imminent return. We believe salvation comes by faith alone and exists in the repentant heart, engendering faith, and unreserved committal of one's self to Christ as Savior with purpose to love and obey His written Word and indwelling spirit upon regeneration.

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History

In October of 1981, Hilltop Free Will Baptist Church voted to begin a daycare ministry. Because of the success of the daycare ministry, the decision was made to start a Christian school. Hilltop Christian School opened in August of 1982 with an enrollment of seventy students. Due to the steady growth of the school, the church voted to add an educational building to its existing facility in 1985. The transition from the Accelerated Christian Education curriculum to a traditional classroom setting began in 2001 and concluded in 2004. With both the church and the school growing steadily, construction started on a new facility in the fall of 2005. In December of 2006, the church and school moved into the completed building with plans for the construction of a gymnasium with additional classroom space to follow. The construction on the gymnasium was completed in October 2008.

Objectives and Philosophy

Hilltop Free Will Baptist Church and Hilltop Christian School hold that Christian education is a directive from God for the Christian family (Prov. 19:27; 22:2; Deut. 6:6-9; Col. 2:8). We believe in the growth process of the total person. We strive to promote the student's spiritual, academic, social, and physical growth.

Students should be grounded in Biblical moral values, patriotism, citizenship, moral character, and superior academic knowledge. Hilltop Christian School adheres to these goals:

1. To lead children to a personal knowledge of Christ as Savior
2. To prepare children spiritually by instilling in them a love for the Lord Jesus Christ and a sense of responsibility to be all God wants them to be
3. To prepare children to serve God effectively
4. To encourage children to think clearly, logically, and independently
5. To offer instructional programs that meet children's academic needs
6. To achieve mastery in the tools of learning and communication

Admission Procedures and Policies

The church and school shall have a racially nondiscriminatory policy and, therefore, shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color or national or ethnic origin. HCS accepts students when parents share the school's objectives and philosophy. HCS does not enroll students who attend Jehovah Witness, Mormon, United Pentecostal, or Catholic services. Please be aware that HCS has limited facilities and resources to accommodate students with learning or handicapped disabilities; therefore, the administration may admit a handicapped or LD student upon specific stipulations accepted by the parents.

Observe the following procedures for admissions:

1. Obtain an information packet from the office,
2. Schedule an interview with the principal,
3. Give the pastor reference form to your pastor so it can be mailed or faxed to the office,
4. Complete the registration form and sign the appropriate agreements,
5. Pay the registration fee,
6. Schedule placement testing for your student

The interview with the principal begins the enrollment procedure. The appointment will include a tour of the facility, and an examination of the student's academic and behavioral record. Parents should bring with them a copy of the student's latest report card or standardized test results.

Upon acceptance:

1. The first month's tuition and all other necessary fees should be paid before the first day of school.
2. Immunization records and a copy of the child's birth certificate should be delivered to the office by the first day of school.
3. Parents will also be required to attend the opening PTF night before the first week of school.

Re-Enrollment: Students who are currently enrolled in HCS will have a seat reserved until the first Monday in March. A re-enrollment form must be turned in to the office, and the re-enrollment fee must be paid before this date. Beginning in March, enrollment is based on a first come basis.

Transfer Students

Students seeking to transfer to HCS must be in good standing with their previous school. They must fulfill all financial obligations with their previous school before transferring. The student's discipline record may also be requested. All new students entering 1st -11th grades (new seniors are not permitted) will be required to take a placement test upon acceptance. After testing, the principal will determine the student's academic status and grade. High school students' course credits will be transferred to HCS if the courses comply with the UNC Board of Governors requirements for college entrance.

Church and School Relationship

Hilltop Christian School exists as a ministry of Hilltop FWB Church. The Board of Deacons for Hilltop FWB Church performs the duties of the school board, and the pastor serves as the chief executive of the school.

As an educational outreach, HCS has opened its doors to the community; however, the same philosophy adopted by the church is adapted to the Christian school. Therefore, parents who become uncooperative and volubly disgruntled with the church or who become openly critical and unruly in their disagreement will lose the privilege of their children attending HCS.

Parental Agreement and Communication

Because the Bible has given parents the mandate to rear their children (Duet 11:9), the Christian school should assist the parents, not replace the parents. Students will not excel academically or develop spiritually without parental involvement. Therefore, parents should actively supervise their students in the areas of homework completion and test preparation. With parental reinforcement, discipline problems may be kept to a minimum. Parents may receive occasional phone calls from teachers or the principal; this insures adequate communication between the school and the parents in order to quickly alleviate problems that would otherwise persist. Teachers will make efforts to keep parents informed of their child's disciplinary and academic performance; however, parents should also assume responsibility to initiate communication. Throughout the year, students will bring home tests, forms, and notes to be signed; all papers should be signed and returned within two days.

Parent/teacher conferences may be requested by either the parents or the teacher. Parents and teachers should work together to resolve problems. Parents who have a problem with their child's teacher should contact the administration. All matters should be handled in a Christian manner, void of slander and gossip.

Parents may also be asked to help with school functions (field trips, fund raisers, ect.), and their help will be appreciated on a volunteer basis. Whenever parents assist with school activities, they are asked to abide by school dress policies. Contact your child's teacher to be placed on the list of parent volunteers.

Standard of Conduct

In order to develop the spiritual character of each student, Standards of Conduct have been adopted that will benefit each student's spiritual growth. Every student must adhere to these standards, whether they are on school property or away from the campus, during the school year or summer break. Maintaining a Christian environment can only be accomplished when students who would manifest poor testimonies or contribute negative peer pressure are disallowed the privilege of attending HCS. Therefore, any student who breaches the Standards of Conduct will be disciplined through detention, suspension, or expulsion. Students are expected to live according to the school's standards of conduct when school is in and out of session. HCS students must consistently observe the following standards:

- Faithful church attendance to a Bible-believing church
- Refrain from all illegal activity
- Refrain from all forms of alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse
- Refrain from attending dances and listening to music with violent and vulgar lyrics
- Refrain from fornication, homosexuality, and immoral practices

Discipline

Discipline and order is vitally necessary to achieve the goals of Christian education. Students cannot effectively learn academic, subject matter or spiritual values when discipline is disregarded. The principal and teachers administer discipline with love and instruction.

We believe that teachers should be respected by the students, and they have the authority to maintain classroom discipline and enforce school policy. Teachers also have the authority to determine specific classroom rules that fashion a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. When a student has a complaint or disagreement with the teacher, he should speak with the teacher privately after class, and in a respectful manner to avoid making a scene before his peers. When the principal deems corporal punishment to be necessary, a parent must come to school and administer corporal punishment within twenty-four hours of the student's offense. The following violations will warrant corporal punishment:

- Fighting
- Willful disrespect or defiance to authority
- Willful destruction of property
- Using inappropriate language
- Cheating or stealing

When Junior High and High School students become disruptive in class or breach the handbook and classroom policies, they may be given extra work or demerits. Students will be given detentions when they accumulate 4 demerits. These detentions must be served on the day assigned. Students will be charged \$3.00 for each hour of detention served.

The following offenses may warrant detentions, suspensions, or expulsion:

- Fighting or harming students
- Willful disobedience, defiance, or disrespect to authority
- Willful destruction of another's property
- Indecent, inappropriate, or racist language
- Cheating, stealing, or dishonesty
- Blatant disregard for the standards of conduct
- Provoking other students
- Bringing a weapon to school
- Skipping school
- Persistently disregarding school rules and policy

Parents will be notified when a detention must be served, and all detention forms must be returned with a parent's signature within 2 days after they have been issued. Students will only be allowed to reschedule a detention in the case of a family emergency, sickness, or long term plans. Work, extra-curricular activities, or athletics will not be accepted as viable reasons. Non-viable absences from detention will result in demerits.

When a student accumulates several detentions in a quarter, the following standard will be applied: 3rd Detention – letter from principal, 4th Detention – eligible for suspension from extracurricular activities, 5th Detention – meeting between the parents and the principal, 6th Detention – eligible for removal from extracurricular activities, 8th Detention – probation, suspension or Saturday work detention; two probations in a year may result in expulsion or refused reenrollment for the next year, 9th Detention – possible expulsion, 10th Detention – expulsion.

Some suspensions may be “in school” and others may be “out of school.” Suspended students will receive a zero in all daily grades for each day of suspension; however, exams and tests may be made up at the teacher's convenience. A \$35.00 fee will be charged for each day of suspension. The principal and administrator will determine when suspensions and expulsions are necessary. The principal will also determine the type and length of suspensions.

When cooperation from a student or parent seems insufficient or a behavioral problem persists, the student may be requested to transfer out. The administrator, principal, and school board will determine if a student may return after being expelled for one year.

Payment Plan

Tuition is divided into eleven equal payments, and is due on the first of each month. The pay period is August through June. Payment is to be received within ten days of the due date. Delinquent fees will be added after the 10th and another after the 25th. If an account becomes past due for over thirty days, the student may be suspended until the payment is made. If a student is withdrawn or expelled from HCS, the full tuition payment for the calendar month of withdrawal or expulsion must still be paid, regardless of the day of the month. Tuition payments must be current before a student will be allowed to participate in K-5 or high school graduation ceremonies. The school may withhold report cards and records until tuition is paid in full.

Before and After School

Parents may begin bringing their students to school at 7:15am; children should never be left on campus before the doors are opened. There is no charge for "before school" care. All students who are not picked up by 3:15pm must go directly to "after care." Parents will be billed for "after school" care, and parents must pick up their children by 6:00pm. Athletes must also go to "after care" or an appointed study hall until it is time for them to arrive at practice, and they must return after practice is over. They will not be charged for the time before practice (siblings of athletes will be charged), but they will be charged for the time they spend in aftercare after practice. Students who are sixteen years old or older will not be charged for aftercare, but they must stay in the place designated for them if they do not leave campus.

Absences, Tardiness, and Late Dismissals

Absenteeism and tardiness will impair a student's academic progress. It can also be an inconvenience to the teacher while causing class disruptions. Students who arrive at 8:00am or later will be considered late for school. If they are late, they should not enter the classroom until they have first checked in at the office and received a tardy form. When a student has been tardy three times or has left early three times for unexcused reasons in a grading period, he will be disqualified for perfect attendance. When parents need to pick up their

child early, they must sign out in the office. Early dismissals will be counted in the same manner as tardiness. Excused reasons for arriving late or leaving early must include sickness, uncommon traffic, medical appointments, unforeseeable emergencies, or family bereavement.

Students will be considered absent if they arrive after 10:00am or leave before 12:00pm. Students will only be excused for absences due to sickness, bereavement, and unforeseeable emergencies; and students must return to school with a note written by the parents, explaining the sickness or reason for absence. When school is missed, students may not participate in extracurricular activities on that day of absence. Any student who misses 25 days in the year or 15 days in one semester (excused or unexcused) may not be promoted or may be required to attend summer school. The only exception will be a long-term illness that can be verified by a doctor.

High School and Junior High School students should have their book bags unpacked and be in their homerooms by 8:00. They will be dismissed from the lunchroom early enough to go to their lockers before school begins.

Make-Up Work for Absences

Parents or students should contact the teacher when they know they will be absent. When students are absent, they are not excused from their schoolwork. When an absence is excused (unforeseeable emergencies, bereavement, or sickness), a student may have the same number of days missed to make up the work and tests missed, not counting the day of return; however, long term assignments are still due on the day of return.

When parents and students know an unexcused absence will take place, the parents or students should contact the teacher before the absence takes place. Arrangements for making up schoolwork and tests must be made before the absence takes place. If a student fails to make arrangements with a teacher before an unexcused absence, a letter grade will be deducted for each test and quiz missed. On the day of return, students may make up the tests and quizzes missed with a letter grade deduction. Each additional day taken to make up work will result in additional letter grade deductions.

Curriculum

Believing that any contrary purpose would not be Christian, Hilltop Christian School has purposed to excel in academics. While the teachers have been delegated the responsibility to teach the students, we believe that parents are ultimately responsible for their child's education. Educating children will require teamwork between the parents and teachers. Our students perform above the national average, and we wish to continue high standards of academics. We believe that both the educator and the curriculum should be Bible-based and Christ-centered, and we hold to the belief that the Bible is truth and any curriculum that opposes Scriptural principles must be omitted.

- Principal's List: Students who have earned all "A's."
- A Honor Roll: Students who have earned an "A" average, having no grades below a "B."
- Honor Roll: Students who have earned a "B" average, having no grades below a "C."

GRADING SCALE:

| | |
|----|--------|
| A+ | 99-100 |
| A | 95-98 |
| A- | 93-94 |
| B+ | 91-92 |
| B | 88-90 |
| B- | 85-87 |
| C+ | 83-84 |
| C | 78-82 |
| C- | 75-77 |
| D+ | 74 |
| D | 72-73 |
| D- | 70-71 |
| F | 0-69 |

HIGH SCHOOL

GPA *SCALE:

| | |
|---|---|
| A | 4 |
| B | 3 |
| C | 2 |
| D | 1 |
| F | 0 |

*Add 1 point for honors courses.

Homework

Students are expected to finish their homework assignments on time, as well as other projects and research papers. Homework is given for reasons of practice, reinforcement, strengthening remedial skills, and special projects. We request full cooperation with the parents in seeing that homework is completed. Repeated homework failures could result in expulsion.

When a student is absent, he should try to complete the assignments on time. Using the extra days allowed for "make-up" work should be a last resort. Whenever possible, an absent student should call a friend and get the daily assignments. Obtaining the assignments and completing the work is always the students' responsibility.

Afterschool Study Hall

Junior High and High School Students: When a junior high or high school student receives his 5th offense in a quarter, he will be required to attend after-school study-hall for the remaining weeks of the quarter. This study hall will be held on the same days of detention.

Graduation Requirements

| | COLLEGE PREP DIPLOMA | GENERAL DIPLOMA |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| ENGLISH | 4 credits | 4 credits |
| MATH | 4 credits: 1 higher than Algebra I | 3 credits: Algebra I required |
| SOCIAL STUDIES | 3 credits: US History, World History, Government, Economics | 3 credits |
| SCIENCE | 3 credits: Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry | 3 credits |
| HEALTH/PE | 1 credit | 1 credit |
| BIBLE | 1 credit each year at HCS | 1 credit each year at HCS |
| FOREIGN LANGUAGE | 2 credits | |
| TOTAL CREDITS Electives offered will vary each year. | 21 credits | 20 credits |

Athletic Eligibility Requirements

Physical education and athletic will not be prioritized above spiritual and academic education; but physical education is necessary (I Cor. 6: 19-20). Students should consider participation in athletics a privilege not a right. All participants must maintain an attitude and reputation of character and godly conduct during participation. The administration, along with the athletic coaches, will discipline unsportsmanlike conduct. Students may be disallowed the privilege of participating if disciplinary infractions occur, whether they are related or non-related to sports.

1. Athletes must maintain a “C” average, having no grades below a “D.” Students who do not meet the criteria when report cards come out will be placed on probation. An athlete will then have a maximum of three weeks to bring his grade up to regulation status, and the principal will remove the athlete from probation. During probation, athletes may practice with the team or squad, but they may not participate in a game until probation has been lifted.
2. Once a sports season begins, students must fulfill their commitments by completing the entire season with the team. When students withdraw from a team before the season ends, he may be disallowed participation by the coach the following season.
3. Athletes are expected to attend all practices and games for their team. Only illness and family bereavement will be accepted as excused absences. When an athlete misses a practice or game for an unexcused reason, he will be benched for one game. Players who will miss a practice or game for an excused reason should call or send a message to the coach before the game or practice.

Dress Code and Appearance

The administration of HCS maintains the conviction that genders should remain distinct and separate in appearance; and one's appearance should not conform to worldly styles that would compromise ones Christian reputation. Women should do nothing that would reduce their femininity, while men should never carry themselves in a way that would detract from their masculinity. We endeavor to create, not only a spiritual atmosphere, but one that is conducive to learning and encourages students to focus on their studies.

1. Clothing, jewelry, makeup, or nail polishes should never be worn in a gaudy or worldly manner.
2. "Rock music" styles should never be imitated.
3. Torn, shredded, sloppy, or faded clothing is not permissible. Do-rags are not permitted.
4. Tattoos and body piercing are prohibited.
5. Clothing should never be worn excessively tight or form fitting.
6. Clothing should never display writing other than a small logos.

GIRLS

1. Dresses or skirts with blouses or sweaters must be worn during school hours. Casual T-shirts and sweatshirts are not permitted. Only elementary girls may wear denim (be careful to avoid sloppy styles). Junior High and High School students may wear denim skirts on Fridays, and all students may wear HCS T-shirts and sweatshirts on Fridays.
2. Hemlines and slits must be no shorter than the middle of the knee and must touch the floor when kneeling.
3. Necklines must be modest and no lower than three finger widths below the collarbone.
4. Blouses must be lengthy enough to touch the hipbone.
5. Sleeveless dresses are allowed, but they must come to the edge of the shoulder and should not be low cut in the arms or neckline. Sun dresses are only permissible when worn with a sweater, top, shell, T-shirt, etc. Tank tops are never allowed.
6. Loosely woven sweaters and blouses, as well as lightweight, lightly colored, and thin apparel should be worn with slippers.

7. When culottes (or athletic shorts) are deemed appropriate, they must be modest and in agreement with the hemline codes for skirts and dresses.
8. Flip-flops and beach shoes are not allowed.
9. Two earrings in each ear are permissible.
10. Hair coloring and highlights must be a natural color. Hats should not be worn except on field trips or outdoor activities.

BOYS

1. Collared shirts must be worn during school hours, and the shirts must have sleeves. Sweaters must be worn with a collared shirt or turtleneck beneath them. Shirt tails must be tucked in at all times. T-shirts and sweatshirts are not permitted; however, all students may wear HCS T-shirts and sweatshirts on Fridays.
2. Dress or casual pants must be worn to classes; no denim is permitted. Athletic and parachute style pants and camouflage pants cannot be worn during class times. Blue jeans are only permitted on Fridays.
3. Belts should be worn and buckled, and pants are not to sag.
4. Sandals and flip-flop style shoes are not permitted.
5. Chains, bracelets, and earrings are not permitted.
6. Boys may not have beards or mustaches and must be cleanly shaven; hair should be neatly trimmed at the neck and above the ears. Hair should not be excessively bushy, a bowl cut, or shaven above the natural hairline. Short haircuts are permissible, but "skinheads" are not. Sideburns should not be lower than the bottom of the ear.
7. Hats should not be worn in the building.

FORMAL DRESSES

When it is appropriate to wear a formal dress at a school activity, the dresses must be approved. Guidelines for formal dresses may be obtained in the school office.

School Closings and Delays

When school must be closed or delayed due to inclement weather or other disasters, parents will be notified through the SchoolCast alert system. The closing and delay status will also be submitted to WRAL (television) and 680-WPTF (radio) stations and websites. Closings and delays will also be posted on the church/school web site: www.hilltopchurch.com. It should not be assumed that HCS will always follow the decisions of the county schools.

Breaks, Lunches, and Charge Policies

Students may bring a lunch to school or buy their lunch. If a student forgets his lunch, he will be allowed to charge lunch from the school, and the parents will be contacted about the charged amount. If charges have not been paid by the end of the nine-week period, it may be added to the tuition bill. Elementary students should not have candy or soft drinks for morning break. It is important that their morning food and drink complement their learning duties, not hinder their alertness and performance. Elementary students should not bring glass-bottled drinks; only drinks in plastic bottles or boxes should be brought for lunch.

School and Classroom Policies

GENERAL POLICIES

1. Students should respect the school property and the property of others. Everyone should make an attempt to keep the facilities clean.

2. Radios, tape and CD players, tapes and CD's, pagers, games, laser light, toys, etc. should not be brought to school except when special permission has been given. Guns, knives, and other weapons should never be brought to school.
3. Lying, cheating, inappropriate and racist language, disobedience, harassment, fighting, disrespect to authority, destruction of property, complaining, leaving school without permission, and failure to complete responsibilities are forbidden traits and actions that will be dealt with seriously.
4. Gum and candy is forbidden before, during, and after school.
5. Animals should not be brought to school unless special permission is granted.
6. Cell phones should be turned off and left in the students' book bags. Students must obtain a teacher's permission to use their cell phones, and requests should be made sparingly. Junior High and High School students may request permission to use them at break, lunch, and after school. Students are not permitted to use the school phones except in rare cases.

AFTER SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Students may never ride home with anyone other than their parents unless a note has been sent to the teacher by the parent, explaining whom they have permission to ride with. One note will be sufficient for those who will "car-pool" for most of the school year.

VISITORS AT SCHOOL

1. Students should not have visitors come to see them during school hours or after school. Only immediate family members may visit a student for lunch. Any exception must be approved by the principal one day in advance.
2. Parents should not enter the classroom during school hours; they should ask an office secretary to remove their child from the classroom or give their child a message. This situation should only occur under extreme circumstances.
3. Students may not have friends meet them after school unless parents accompany them.

SICKNESS AND MEDICINE

1. The office will only keep a minimal supply of medicine. Parents will be contacted before a child is given medicine other than Tylenol or throat lozenges.
2. Medicine should never be sent to school with children without a note of explanation and instruction. Without a note of instruction, the child will not be permitted to take the medicine.
3. When a student's temperature rises to a fever, he is not permitted to come to school. Parents will be contacted immediately and will be asked to pick their child up from school if a child contracts a fever at school.
4. Medicine must be taken in the presence of a teacher.

MOVING IN THE HALLS

1. Elementary students should move in the hallways quietly and in straight lines.
2. Junior High and High School students should walk quietly in the hallways without distracting other classes.

LUNCHROOM BEHAVIOR

1. Students should not talk loudly.
2. Each student should observe proper manners and cleanliness in the lunchroom.
3. Appropriate trash should go in the trash cans, and aluminum cans should be recycled.
4. Students may not leave the lunchroom without permission.

BOY-GIRLS RELATIONSHIPS

1. Holding hands, tickling, hugging, embracing, kissing, or similar forms of physical contact are not in good taste and will not be permitted while at school or school-related activities.
2. Students should act discreetly and show good judgment.

3. Couples should never be in buildings, classrooms, or other secluded locations without an adult being present.
4. These rules apply when a HCS student is with a non-HCS student at school functions.
5. Couples who disregard these policies will be socially separated.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

1. Students of HCS are bound to the handbook rules and policies after school hours.
2. Girls should never wear slacks or shorts on campus, while dresses, skirts, culottes, and T-shirts should meet the standards established in “appearance and dress code” section of the handbook.
3. Boys may not wear shorts, while jeans and shirts must comply with the standards established in the “appearance and dress code” section of the handbook. Boys should not wear chains and jewelry that would not be approved during school hours.
4. Students are expected to act in a responsible and Christian manner at all events, including ball games.
5. When students fail to comply with the rules during an extracurricular function, they will be asked to leave and punished the next day at school.

DRIVING STUDENTS

1. Students should drive responsibly while on and off campus. The privilege of driving may be refused to students who act irresponsibly.
2. Students may not ride home together without written, parental consent.
3. Students may not have bumper stickers or decals that compromise HCS standards.

PCP WEBSITES

HCS students who have people-contacting-people websites (e.g. MySpace, Facebook) must keep their website material in a Christ-like manner. Students will be held responsible for offensive material on their website if it contradicts the Standards of Conduct. Students must provide the school with the necessary information and access to view their website.

