

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND
NORTHERN DIVISION**

BETHEL MINISTRIES, INC.,)
9001 Vollmerhausen Road)
Savage, MD 20763)
Howard County)

Plaintiff,)

DR. KAREN B. SALMON, in her)
official capacity as State Superintendent;)
MATTHEW GALLAGHER, in his)
official capacity as Chair of the BOOST)
Advisory Board; MARVA JO CAMP,)
LINDA EBERHART, DR. NANCY S.)
GRASMICK, ELIZABETH GREEN,)
BETH SANDBOWER HARBINSON,)
and DR. A. SKIPP SANDERS, all in)
their official capacities as members of)
the BOOST Advisory Board,)
200 West Baltimore Street)
Baltimore, MD 21201)
City of Baltimore)

Defendants.)

Case No. _____

VERIFIED COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

COMES NOW the Plaintiff, BETHEL MINISTRIES, INC., by counsel and for its causes of action against Defendant DR. KAREN B. SALMON, in her official capacity as State Superintendent of the Maryland State Department of Education, Defendant MATTHEW GALLAGHER, in his official capacity as Chair of the BOOST Advisory Board, and Defendants MARVA JO CAMP, LINDA EBERHART, DR. NANCY S. GRASMICK, ELIZABETH A. GREEN, BETH SANDBOWER HARBINSON, and DR. A. SKIPP SANDERS, in their official capacities as members of the BOOST Advisory Board, alleges and states the following:

INTRODUCTION

1. Bethel Ministries, Inc. (Bethel) is a Christian ministry with a desire to love and serve the Savage, Maryland community.

2. As part of its outreach, Bethel runs a private Christian school, Bethel Christian Academy, devoted to the core values of authentic Christianity, academic excellence, and advancing community.

3. Approximately 20% of Bethel's students qualify to receive free or reduced-price lunches.

4. Bethel Christian Academy applied for—and received—scholarship funding for some of its students from low-income families through the Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) Program.

5. For the two years Bethel participated in BOOST, the Program required that participating schools not discriminate in student admissions based on sexual orientation.

6. Bethel also participated in the Nonpublic Textbook and Technology Program, and the Nonpublic Aging Schools Program, which have the same admissions nondiscrimination requirements as BOOST does.

7. Bethel has not, and will not, discriminate against a student in admissions based on an applicant's sexual orientation.

8. But because of Bethel Christian Academy's religious belief that marriage is the union of one man and one woman, and its belief that biological sex is an immutable gift from God, Maryland officials excluded Bethel from participating in BOOST, putting at risk the students who attend the school based on this scholarship funding.

9. Worse, State officials demanded that Bethel pay back the over \$100,000 in

scholarship funding that Bethel had received through the BOOST Program during the two years it participated in the Program.

10. State officials revoked Bethel's eligibility for BOOST, despite Bethel's compliance with the nondiscrimination requirement.

11. State officials revoked Bethel's eligibility for BOOST, despite clear Program language stating that nothing shall require any school to adopt a rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious teachings.

12. State officials revoked Bethel's eligibility for BOOST, despite clear Supreme Court precedent that government hostility towards the religious belief that marriage is the union of a man and a woman has no place in our society.

13. The State's BOOST decision also rendered Bethel ineligible for the Textbook and Technology and Aging Schools grant programs.

14. Bethel Ministries, Inc., therefore brings this action pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 for violation of its civil rights.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

15. This action arises under the United States Constitution, particularly the First and Fourteenth Amendments, and 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983 and 1988.

16. This Court is vested with original jurisdiction over these claims under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1343.

17. This Court is vested with authority to grant the requested declaratory judgment under 28 U.S.C. § 2201, *et seq.*

18. This Court has jurisdiction to award the requested injunctive relief under 28 U.S.C. § 1343.

19. This Court has jurisdiction to award reasonable costs and attorneys' fees under 42 U.S.C. § 1988.

20. Venue is proper in United States District Court for the District of Maryland under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b), because Defendants reside in the District of Maryland, and the events giving rise to the claim occurred within the District of Maryland.

PARTIES

21. Plaintiff Bethel Ministries, Inc., is a Christian ministry and part of The General Council of the Assemblies of God and the Potomac District Council of The Assemblies of God, established and existing as a non-profit religious corporation under the laws of the State of Maryland. As part of its religious mission, and under the same legal entity, Bethel Ministries, Inc., operates Bethel Christian Academy.

22. Bethel's principal place of business is located at 9001 Vollmerhausen Road, Savage, MD 20794.

23. Defendant Dr. Karen B. Salmon is the State Superintendent of Schools for the Maryland State Department of Education, which administers the BOOST Scholarship Program. She is sued in her official capacity only.

24. Defendant Matthew Gallagher is the Chair of the BOOST Advisory Board, which oversees the BOOST Program. He is sued in his official capacity only.

25. Defendants Marva Jo Camp, Linda Eberhart, Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, Elizabeth A. Green, Beth Sandbower Harbinson, and Dr. A. Skipp Sanders are members of the BOOST Advisory Board, which oversees the BOOST Program. They are sued in their official capacities only.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

Bethel Ministries, Inc. and Its Religious Mission

26. Bethel Ministries, Inc., is a Pentecostal Christian church in Savage, Maryland, with a desire to love and serve its community.

27. Bethel's religious beliefs and related practices are based on Holy Scripture and the teachings of the Assemblies of God.

28. As part of its religious mission, Bethel operates Bethel Christian Academy, a private school for students in preschool through eighth grade.

29. Founded in 1984, Bethel's mission is to create an authentic Christian learning community to train students to know, love, and serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and to equip students spiritually and academically to be lights to the world.

30. Bethel desires to produce academically equipped youth who demonstrate their commitment to Christ by exhibiting love toward others, strong biblical convictions, and a desire to impact the world for Christ.

31. Once a week, students participate in a chapel service where they have the opportunity to worship and hear Bible teaching.

32. The Bible is core to Bethel's curriculum; it is thoroughly integrated throughout all subjects.

33. Bethel teaches its students the basic tenets of the Christian faith using the Bible and published curriculum materials.

34. The school's goal-oriented curriculum is designed to result in not only high academic achievement, but also to establish a foundation firmly anchored in biblical truth.

35. Bethel is committed to interactive, hands-on learning and the growing use of educational technology in the classroom.

Bethel's Admissions Standards

36. For the 2018-2019 school year, Bethel has 281 enrolled students in preschool through 8th grade.

37. Bethel serves an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse student population.

38. Over 85% of Bethel's current student population is nonwhite.

39. Bethel's student population represents approximately 40 different nations.

40. Approximately 20% of Bethel's students qualify to receive free or reduced-price lunches.

41. Admission to Bethel is competitive, and based on a student's skills assessment or formal entrance exam, evaluation of previous grades and behavior, and a pre-enrollment interview.

42. Bethel's religious beliefs and related practices are summarized in its 2017-2018 Parent/Student Handbook (attached as Exhibit 1).

43. Bethel does not require students or their parents to be professing Christians, or agree with Bethel's statement of faith.

44. But students are required to comply with the school's faith-based conduct policies, including its codes of conduct.

45. Parents must agree to support Bethel's core values, school policies, and codes of conduct.

46. Bethel's nondiscrimination statement, which is reflected in its 2017-2018 Parent/Student Handbook, states that Bethel does not discriminate based on race, color, or national or ethnic origin, in its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs,

and athletic and other school-administered programs. *See* Ex. 1.

47. Bethel has not, and will not, deny an applicant admission to Bethel based on the sexual orientation of the applicant.

Bethel's Conduct Standards

48. As a distinctly Christian school, Bethel believes that marriage is exclusively the covenantal union of one man and one woman.

49. As a distinctly Christian school, Bethel believes that God immutably created each person in His image as either male or female.

50. Faculty, staff, and students are expected to align their conduct with Bethel's belief that marriage is the union of one man and one woman.

51. Faculty, staff, and students are expected to align their conduct with Bethel's belief that biological sex as either male or female is an immutable gift from God, and therefore identify with, dress in accordance with, conduct themselves in keeping with, use the pronouns associated with, and use the facilities provided for, their biological sex.

52. Bethel's conduct policy prohibits harassment and inappropriate relationships (including physical contact or public displays of affection).

53. Bethel's conduct policy prohibits any communication of a sexual nature, such as identifying as the opposite sex, or expressing romantic attraction towards another student.

54. Additionally, any illegal or immoral behavior that is in violation of the school's statement of faith will be considered grounds for disciplinary action.

55. Violations of Bethel's conduct policy will be addressed with disciplinary action. Bethel's administration reserves the right to use its discretion in determining whether behavior is serious enough to warrant detention, suspension, or expulsion.

56. If a student persists in violation of Bethel's conduct policy, and is unrepentant and unresponsive to correction, the student may be required to leave the school community.

57. Bethel requires its students to adhere to the dress code requirements for their biological sex and grade level.

58. Bethel refers to students by the pronouns consistent with their biological sex.

59. Bethel will not permit its sex-specific facilities to be accessed by members of the opposite biological sex.

The BOOST Program and Bethel's Participation

60. In 2016, the Maryland legislature passed a Fiscal Year 2017 budget bill establishing the Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) Program.

61. The Maryland legislature has reauthorized funding for the BOOST Program in each subsequent fiscal year.

62. BOOST provides scholarships for students who are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program to attend eligible nonpublic schools.

63. The BOOST Program is administered by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

64. MSDE is authorized to establish procedures for the scholarship application and award process, compile and certify a list of eligible applicants that ranks students by family income, and make scholarship awards.

65. The BOOST Advisory Board is comprised of seven appointed members.

66. The BOOST Advisory Board is authorized to review and certify the ranked list of student applicants and determine scholarship award amounts.

67. Schools participating in the BOOST Program must agree to not discriminate in student admissions based on sexual orientation, among other categories. *See* FY 2018 Budget Language, *attached as* Exhibit 2.

68. However, the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement does not “require any school or institution to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings.”

69. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirement does not define sexual orientation or discrimination.

70. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirement does not require schools to adopt particular policies or policy language.

71. During the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years, the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement did not include gender identity or gender expression.

72. Bethel participated in the BOOST Program in academic years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018.

73. Bethel signed the MSDE assurance that it does not discriminate in admissions based on sexual orientation.

74. Bethel met and complied with all of MSDE’s eligibility requirements to participate in the BOOST scholarship program during the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years.

75. During the 2016-2017 academic year, 17 Bethel students received BOOST scholarships.

76. During the 2017-2018 academic year, 18 Bethel students received BOOST scholarships.

Bethel’s Participation in Other MSDE Programs

77. MSDE operates two additional programs for nonpublic schools: the Textbook and Technology and the Aging Schools Programs.

78. The Nonpublic Schools Textbook and Technology Program purchases textbooks and computer hardware and software to loan to students at eligible nonpublic schools.

79. The Nonpublic Aging Schools Program provides funds to nonpublic schools for capital improvement projects for aging buildings.

80. Nonpublic schools must be eligible for the Textbook and Technology Program to apply for the Aging Schools Program.

81. Nonpublic schools must be eligible for the Textbook and Technology Program to apply for the BOOST Program.

82. Like BOOST, schools participating in the Textbook and Technology and Aging Schools Programs for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years had to agree not discriminate in student admissions based on sexual orientation, among other categories.

83. Like BOOST, the Textbook and Technology and Aging Schools' nondiscrimination requirements do not "require any school or institution to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings."

84. The Textbook and Technology and Aging Schools' nondiscrimination requirements do not define sexual orientation or discrimination.

85. The Textbook and Technology and Aging Schools' nondiscrimination requirements do not require schools to adopt particular policies or policy language.

86. In the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years, the Textbook and Technology and Aging Schools' nondiscrimination requirements did not include gender identity or gender expression.

87. Bethel signed the MSDE assurances that it does not discriminate in admissions based on sexual orientation.

88. Bethel met and complied with all of MSDE's eligibility requirements to participate in the Textbook and Technology Program.

89. Bethel met and complied with all of MSDE's eligibility requirements to participate in the Aging Schools Program.

90. Bethel participated in the Textbook and Technology Program in academic years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, among others.

91. Bethel participated in the Aging Schools Program in academic years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, among others.

Bethel's Denial of BOOST Funding

92. Upon information and belief, MSDE began investigating the policy language of BOOST schools in the fall of 2017.

93. Upon information and belief, this action was not prompted by any allegation of discrimination in student admissions that would violate the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement.

94. In December 2017, MSDE requested handbooks from schools participating in BOOST for review.

95. In December 2017, MSDE requested Bethel's parent-student handbook.

96. Bethel provided MSDE its 2017-2018 Parent/Student handbook.

97. On January 9, 2018, Maryland's Office of the Attorney General issued a memo to Defendant Gallagher and Monica Kearns on enforcing BOOST nondiscrimination requirements.

98. The January 9 memo indicated that MSDE could consider schools noncompliant with BOOST nondiscrimination requirements without allegations of sexual orientation discrimination in student admissions.

99. The January 9 memo indicated that MSDE could consider schools noncompliant with BOOST nondiscrimination requirements solely on the basis of school policy language that addressed same-sex sexual conduct by admitted students, rather than the sexual orientation of applicants for admission.

100. On February 13, 2018, MSDE informed Bethel that Bethel's policies rendered it ineligible for the Textbook and Technology Program.

101. MSDE referenced the handbook review that was taking place for the BOOST program, and said that Bethel's policy did not comply with the Textbook and Technology Program nondiscrimination requirement.

102. On March 5, 2018, MSDE asked Bethel how its statement on marriage and biological sex was consistent with Bethel's assurance that Bethel does not discriminate in student admissions based on sexual orientation.

103. On March 13, 2018, Bethel sent a letter to MSDE explaining that Bethel does not consider sexual orientation in student admissions, that Bethel forbids all admitted students from engaging in any sexual conduct, and that Bethel's statement on marriage and biological sex is consistent with the BOOST Program's nondiscrimination requirements. *See* Ex. 3.

104. On May 2, 2018, Bethel sent a written statement to the BOOST Advisory Board, explaining that Bethel does not discriminate in student admissions based on sexual orientation. *See* Ex. 4.

105. On May 3, 2018, the BOOST Advisory Board met and discussed Bethel's eligibility for BOOST.

106. At the May 3 meeting, Defendant Gallagher did not display appropriate neutrality as a decision-maker.

107. At the May 3 meeting, Defendant Gallagher responded to a board member's statement that the BOOST schools "already had a substantial impact by it being in year two that we sort of realized the issue," by sneering: "You mean caught up with the fact that they signed an assurance illegally?"

108. At the May 3 meeting, in response to a discussion on how to interpret BOOST schools' policy language, Defendant Gallagher laughed as he stated that he did not "think the burden should be on the Board. I mean, I think, you know, you're either not discriminating or you're leaving the door open to discriminating."

109. At the May 3 meeting, when a Board member mentioned that the BOOST language states that BOOST schools cannot be required to change their religiously-motivated policies, Defendant Gallagher refused to address that aspect of the law and said he "really tried to limit, you know, my perspective to the actual handbook language[.]"

110. At the May 3 meeting, Defendant Gallagher stated, in reference to Bethel:

And in the in the Bethel example, you know, Bethel Christian Academy supports the biblical view of marriage defined as a covenant between one man and one woman and that God immutably bestows gender upon each person at birth as male or female to reflect his image. And then here's where it becomes problematic: Therefore, faculty, staff, and students conduct is expected to align with this view. Faculty, staff, and students are required to identify with, dress in accordance with, and use the facilities associated with their biological gender. And, you know, without going too far in terms of scenarios, you know, a person who identifies as a different orientation from their birth, that language affords them the opportunity to discriminate.

111. At the May 3 meeting, Defendant Gallagher suggested that Bethel's policy on biological sex violated the sexual orientation nondiscrimination-in-admissions requirement.

112. At the May 3 meeting, Defendant Gallagher thus treated the sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement as encompassing gender identity.

113. At the May 3 meeting, the BOOST Advisory Board decided to ask Bethel for more information.

114. On May 3, 2018, Monica Kearns, an MSDE representative, emailed Bethel to indicate that the Board would be requesting more information from Bethel.

115. On May 4, 2018, Monica Kearns informed Bethel that the BOOST Advisory Board probably would not determine Bethel's eligibility for BOOST before the May 21, 2018, BOOST application deadline.

116. On May 4, 2018, MSDE informed Bethel that MSDE had should not have sent the February Textbook and Technology Program letter, because MSDE was still considering whether Bethel's handbook language was acceptable for the BOOST requirements, and that the pending BOOST decision would determine whether Bethel was eligible for the Textbook and Technology Program.

117. On May 25, 2018, MSDE sent Bethel a letter asking the following questions: "1) Does your school discriminate in student admissions on the basis of sexual orientation? 2) If your school was to discover that one of its students was in violation of the school's religious or moral teachings concerning sexual orientation, what would the school do to address it?"

118. On May 29, 2018, Bethel sent MSDE a letter responding to MSDE's questions, and attaching previous statements to MSDE which also explained that Bethel does not discriminate in student admissions based on sexual orientation. *See Ex. 5.*

119. Bethel's May 29 letter provided in part: "Any student who can meet our academic standards and is likely to thrive in our structured environment is welcome to join our school community regardless of religious beliefs, experience of same-sex attraction, sexual self-identification, past participation in same-sex behavior, beliefs about marriage, or beliefs about sexual morality." *See* Ex. 5.

120. On June 4, 2018, the BOOST Advisory Board met and decided to address Bethel's eligibility at its next meeting.

121. On June 21, 2018, the BOOST Advisory Board met and decided that Bethel was not eligible for BOOST.

122. The BOOST Advisory Board went into closed session to discuss Bethel's eligibility for BOOST.

123. The BOOST Advisory Board did not give a reason for going into closed session as required by the Maryland Open Meetings Act for closing the meeting.

124. The Open Meetings Act, according to state guidance (FAQ), requires:

The presiding officer must also prepare a written statement, or "closing statement," that cites the part of the Act that contains the applicable exception, lists the topics to be discussed in the closed session, and gives the public body's reason for excluding the public. A member of the public in attendance may object to the decision and inspect the closing statement.

125. Defendant Gallagher suggested that the Board was going into the closed session to receive legal advice, but did not identify the relevant section of the Open Meetings Act.

126. On information and belief, Defendant Gallagher did not prepare a written closing statement as required by the Open Meetings Act and described above.

127. Before the Board went into closed session, Defendant Gallagher noted that the Board had not gone into closed session for three years.

128. The BOOST Advisory Board did not do any deliberating about Bethel's eligibility for BOOST in any open session.

129. The BOOST Advisory Board returned from closed session and promptly voted to exclude Bethel from the BOOST Program.

130. The BOOST Advisory Board did not explain why it was voting to exclude Bethel from the BOOST Program at its June 21 meeting.

131. The BOOST Advisory Board also voted to deem Broadfording Christian Academy and Grace Academy eligible for BOOST at its June 21 meeting.

132. The BOOST Advisory Board voted to deem Woodstream Christian Academy ineligible for BOOST at its June 21 meeting.

133. Upon information and belief, Bethel, Broadfording Christian Academy, Grace Academy, and Woodstream Christian Academy have similar beliefs and policies on marriage and sexual conduct.

134. On August 8, 2018, Defendant Gallagher sent Bethel a letter informing the school that at its June 21, 2018 meeting, the Board found that Bethel's statement on marriage and biological sex violated the BOOST nondiscrimination requirements. *See* Ex. 6.

135. Defendant Gallagher's August 8, 2018 letter did not discuss repayment of BOOST funds.

136. Four months later, on December 12, 2018, MSDE sent Bethel another letter, demanding repayment of \$102,600 in past BOOST funds for the years Bethel participated in the BOOST Program. *See* Ex. 7.

137. In the December 12 letter, MSDE notified Bethel that it was disqualified from BOOST for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 academic years.

138. Upon information and belief, the sole reason MSDE and the BOOST Advisory Board disqualified Bethel was the school's statement on marriage and biological sex, neither of which constitute discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in admissions.

139. Bethel has not, and will not, deny an applicant school admission based on the sexual orientation of the applicant.

140. On February 28, 2019, MSDE sent Bethel a letter notifying it, among other things, that Bethel could regain its eligibility for the BOOST Program by revising the language in its student handbook.

141. On May 24, 2019, MSDE sent Bethel a document containing examples of how various religious schools revised their handbook language to retain BOOST eligibility. *See Ex 8.*

142. Bethel would be in serious financial constraints if forced to pay \$102,600 to MSDE.

143. Many parents of students who benefit from BOOST scholarships, and who learned in August 2018 that Bethel was disqualified from the BOOST Program, were left scrambling to find alternate financial aid to keep their children at Bethel, or an alternate school choice.

144. Bethel attempted to provide additional scholarship funding to students who were detrimentally impacted by the State withdrawing BOOST funding from Bethel, but even that additional funding was insufficient to fully cover the gap left by the loss of BOOST scholarships.

145. Upon information and belief, at least six Bethel students were forced to leave Bethel due to lack of BOOST funding.

146. Upon information and belief, at least two prospective students desired to attend Bethel, but could not do so because the State declared Bethel ineligible to receive BOOST funding.

Bethel Desires to Participate in MSDE's Programs for Nonpublic Schools

147. Because MSDE disqualified Bethel from participating in BOOST, MSDE also disqualified Bethel from the Textbooks and Technology and Aging Schools Programs for the 2018-2019 academic year.

148. But for MSDE interpreting Bethel's statement on marriage and biological sex to constitute sexual orientation discrimination in admissions, Bethel would have been eligible to participate in BOOST, the Textbooks and Technology, and Aging Schools Programs during the 2018-2019 academic year.

149. Bethel desires to participate in all three nonpublic school programs in the future, including the 2019-2020 academic year.

150. On March 26, 2019, the Maryland legislature passed House Bill 100, and it was enacted into law on May 13, 2019.

151. House Bill 100 establishes new, expanded nondiscrimination requirements for the BOOST Program and Textbooks and Technology Program for the 2019-2020 academic year:

[A]ll participating schools must agree that they will not discriminate in student admissions, retention, or expulsion or otherwise discriminate against any student on the basis of...sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.

152. However, the Program requirements go on to say: "Nothing herein shall require any school or institution to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings."

153. The new gender identity nondiscrimination provision affects not only school admissions, but also student retention, expulsion, or anything else the State deems "otherwise discriminat[ing]."

154. The new gender identity nondiscrimination provision expands the categories that BOOST schools may not consider to include “gender identity or expression,” though it does not define these terms.

155. Bethel expects students to align their conduct with Bethel’s belief that biological sex as either male or female is an immutable gift from God, and therefore identify with, dress in accordance with, conduct themselves consistently with, and use the facilities provided for their biological sex.

156. The State has not currently defined the gender identity nondiscrimination provision nor what is required for it to be satisfied.

157. Aside from the gender identity nondiscrimination provision, Bethel meets all other eligibility requirements for reinstatement in the Textbook and Technology Program, as it:

- a. Is registered with the State Board of Education,
- b. Does not charge more tuition to a participating student than the statewide average,
- c. Complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended,
- d. Has submitted its student handbook to MSDE for review, and
- e. Certifies compliance with Title 20 Subtitle 6 of the State Government Article.

158. Aside from the gender identity nondiscrimination provision, Bethel meets the eligibility requirements for reinstatement in BOOST, as Bethel:

- a. Complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended,
- b. Certifies compliance with Title 20 Subtitle 6 of the State Government Article
- c. Administers national standardized assessments, and
- d. Provides more than only pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs.

159. Because Bethel was wrongfully excluded from the Textbooks and Technology Program for the 2018-2019 school year, that BOOST requirement should be waived.

160. Finally, eligibility to participate in Aging Schools is dependent upon the school participating in the Textbook and Technology Program during the 2018-2019 academic year.

161. Because Bethel was wrongfully excluded from the Textbooks and Technology Program for the 2018-2019 school year, that requirement for participation in the Aging Schools Program should be waived.

ALLEGATIONS OF LAW

162. All acts of the Defendants, their officers, agents, servants, employees, or persons acting at their behest or direction, were done and are continuing to be done under the color and pretense of state law.

First Cause of Action: Violation of the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

163. Bethel realleges each allegation in ¶¶ 1-162 of this Complaint and incorporates them herein.

164. The BOOST sexual orientation and gender identity nondiscrimination requirements, as applied, violate Bethel's right to free exercise of religion, under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

165. Bethel's sincerely held religious beliefs include beliefs that there are two immutable and complementary sexes; that marriage is the consensual, lifelong, exclusive union of one man and one woman; and that sexual relations must be reserved for marriage.

166. Bethel's religious beliefs and related practices are based on Holy Scripture and the teachings of the Assemblies of God.

167. Bethel's religious beliefs and related practices are summarized in its 2017-2018 Parent/Student Handbook.

168. Bethel expects its students to align their conduct with Bethel's belief that biological sex as either male or female is an immutable gift from God, and therefore identify with, dress and conduct themselves in accordance with, and use the facilities provided for, their biological sex.

169. Any communication of a sexual nature, or any behavior that is in violation of the school's statement of faith, will be considered grounds for disciplinary action.

170. Bethel's continued compliance with its religious beliefs in its admissions and student conduct policies is religious exercise under the First Amendment.

171. The First Amendment protects Bethel's right to freely exercise its religion.

172. The First Amendment protects Bethel from government hostility, targeting, and discrimination because of its religious beliefs and practices.

173. At all times relevant to this Complaint, Bethel met and fully complied with all of the State's eligibility requirements to participate in the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 BOOST scholarship program.

174. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements—at all times relevant to this Complaint—did not and does not include a requirement that participating schools adopt certain written policies.

175. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements do include a requirement that participating schools cannot be forced to adopt policies in violation of their religious or moral convictions.

176. Defendants, in the course of their enforcement activities, treated the BOOST sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement as requiring certain written policies from participating schools.

177. Upon information and belief, Defendants, in the course of their enforcement activities, deemed it irrelevant whether participating schools had actually denied admission to an applicant because of his or her sexual orientation.

178. The Defendants excluded Bethel from the BOOST program despite Bethel's truthful assurance that it does not discriminate in admissions based on sexual orientation, and its numerous explanations of how its policies did not discriminate against applicants based on sexual orientation.

179. The Defendants excluded Bethel from the BOOST program without evidence or even allegations that Bethel engaged in sexual orientation discrimination in student admissions.

180. The Defendants excluded Bethel from the BOOST Program without giving Bethel access to the deliberations in the June 21, 2018, meeting that led to Defendants' determination.

181. The Defendants excluded Bethel from the BOOST Program without clarifying how they were interpreting the sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement and how that was balanced by the religious policy protection.

182. The Defendants excluded Bethel from the BOOST Program due to Bethel's statement on marriage, biological sex, and sexual conduct.

183. On information and belief, Defendants excluded Bethel from the BOOST Program due to Bethel's ban on sexual conduct for students, even though Bethel students cannot legally consent to sexual conduct.

184. Upon information and belief, Defendants excluded Bethel from the BOOST Program on the theory that Bethel's sexual conduct standards for admitted students discriminated *in admissions* based on sexual orientation, even though Bethel forbids all admitted students, regardless of sexual orientation, from engaging in sexual conduct.

185. On information and belief, Defendants excluded Bethel from the BOOST program due to Bethel's policies on biological basis of the distinction between the sexes, even though the 2017-2018 BOOST nondiscrimination requirement did not address sex or gender identity.

186. On information and belief, Defendants excluded Bethel from the BOOST Program without considering the BOOST budget language establishing that schools cannot be forced to adopt policies at odds with their religious or moral teachings.

187. The Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement targets, shows hostility toward, and discriminates against religious schools.

188. The Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement targets, shows hostility toward, and discriminates against Bethel because of its religious beliefs and practices.

189. The Defendants' statements disparaging Bethel's religious beliefs regarding marriage and biological sex show hostility toward, and discriminate against Bethel because of its religious beliefs and practices.

190. Government targeting of or hostility toward religious beliefs is subject to strict scrutiny.

191. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements are not a neutral or generally applicable law.

192. The BOOST sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement, as applied, substantially burdens Bethel's free exercise rights.

193. The BOOST gender identity nondiscrimination requirement, as applied, substantially burdens Bethel's free exercise rights.

194. Because the BOOST nondiscrimination requirements substantially burden Bethel's religious exercise, they must further a compelling government interest in a narrowly tailored way.

195. The Defendants have no compelling interest that is served by infringing Bethel's religious exercise rights, nor can any such interest be achieved by the least restrictive means available.

196. Thus, the BOOST nondiscrimination requirements, as applied, violate Bethel's right to free exercise of religion under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as incorporated and applied to the States through the Fourteenth Amendment.

WHEREFORE, Bethel respectfully requests that the Court grant the equitable and legal relief set forth in the prayer for relief.

**Second Cause of Action: Violation of the Free Speech Clause
of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution**

197. Bethel realleges each allegation in ¶¶ 1-196 of this Complaint and incorporates them herein.

198. Defendants' actions requiring Bethel to change its student handbook language in order to be eligible for BOOST funding violates the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

199. The BOOST sexual orientation and gender identity nondiscrimination requirements, as applied unconstitutionally abridge Bethel's free speech because they: 1) discriminate against Bethel's constitutionally-protected speech based on its viewpoint, and 2)

discriminate against Bethel's constitutionally-protected speech based on its content, and 3) condition receipt of funding on Bethel surrendering its freedom of speech.

200. Religious speech is fully protected by the First Amendment.

201. Bethel engages in religious speech as it carries out its faith-based educational mission.

202. Bethel's religious speech includes the publication of its 2017-2018 Parent/Student Handbook.

203. Bethel's 2017-2018 Parent/Student Handbook summarizes Bethel's religious beliefs and related practices, including its belief that marriage is the life-long covenant union of one man and one woman, and the belief that biological sex is an immutable gift from God.

The BOOST Nondiscrimination Requirements are Viewpoint-Based

204. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements target particular views taken by speakers on a subject.

205. The BOOST sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement targets the view that marriage is the union of a man and a woman.

206. The BOOST gender identity nondiscrimination requirement targets the view that there are two immutable and complementary sexes.

207. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements permit schools to have statements that promote or condone same-sex marriage or a gender identity at variance with one's biological sex.

208. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements permit schools to have statements that do not address same-sex marriage or gender identity.

209. But the BOOST nondiscrimination requirements punish Bethel for stating in its handbook its belief that marriage is the consensual, lifelong, exclusive union of one man and one woman and that biological sex is immutable.

210. Defendant's preference for certain statements that favor one viewpoint on marriage and gender identity, punishing other viewpoints about marriage and gender identity, discriminates against speech based on viewpoint.

211. Viewpoint-based speech restrictions are presumptively unconstitutional and subject to strict scrutiny.

The BOOST Nondiscrimination Requirements are Content-Based

212. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements, as applied, discriminate against Bethel's speech based on the idea or message expressed.

213. The BOOST sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement, as applied, discriminates against Bethel's message, as published in Bethel's 2017-2018 Parent/Student Handbook, that it believes marriage is the union of a man and a woman.

214. The BOOST gender identity nondiscrimination requirement, as applied, discriminates against Bethel's message, as published in Bethel's 2017-2018 Parent/Student Handbook, that it believes there are two immutable and complementary sexes

215. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements, as applied, cannot be justified without reference to the content of Bethel's speech.

216. Defendants disqualified Bethel from the BOOST program because the Defendants disagree with the message Bethel's speech conveys.

217. Defendants have stated that Bethel could regain BOOST eligibility by altering the content of Bethel's handbook.

218. As such, the BOOST nondiscrimination requirements, as applied, are subject to strict scrutiny.

The BOOST Nondiscrimination Requirements Impose an Unconstitutional Condition

219. The First Amendment's Free Speech Clause prohibits the government from conditioning a benefit on the relinquishment of the right to freedom of speech.

220. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements impose a viewpoint and content-based litmus test on the ability of schools to participate in the BOOST program.

221. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements condition Bethel's ability to participate in the BOOST Program and receive BOOST funding on Bethel changing the language in its handbook about its religious beliefs.

222. Bethel has the First Amendment right to choose the content of its expression, the messages it desires to promote, and the viewpoints it wants to express, and to exercise its religion by communicating messages consistent with its religious beliefs.

The BOOST Nondiscrimination Requirements Fail Strict Scrutiny

223. Because the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement discriminates against Bethel's speech based on its viewpoint and content, and imposes an unconstitutional condition on the surrender of constitutional rights, the nondiscrimination provision must further a compelling interest in a narrowly tailored way.

224. The Defendants have no compelling interest that is served by infringing Bethel's free speech rights, nor can any such interest be achieved by the least restrictive means available.

225. Thus, the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement, as applied, violates Bethel's right to free speech under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as incorporated and applied to the States through the Fourteenth Amendment.

WHEREFORE, Bethel respectfully requests that the Court grant the equitable and legal relief set forth in the prayer for relief.

**Third Cause of Action: Violation of the Due Process Clause
of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
(Void for Vagueness)**

226. Bethel realleges each allegation in ¶¶ 1-225 of this Complaint and incorporates them herein.

227. The Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees Bethel the right to due process of law.

228. The Fourteenth Amendment prohibits Defendants from enforcing laws based on vague standards.

229. Laws that interfere with First Amendment freedoms require a high level of specificity.

230. Schools participating in the BOOST Program for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years were required to agree to not discriminate in student admissions based on sexual orientation, among other categories.

231. However, the BOOST sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement does not “require any school or institution to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings.”

232. The BOOST sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement does not define sexual orientation or discrimination.

233. Bethel has not, and will not, deny an applicant school admission based on the sexual orientation of the applicant.

234. Bethel repeatedly communicated to the BOOST Advisory Board and MSDE officials that it does not discriminate in student admissions based on sexual orientation.

235. For example, in its May 29, 2018, letter to MSDE, Bethel stated: “Any student who can meet our academic standards and is likely to thrive in our structured environment is welcome to join our school community regardless of religious beliefs, experience of same-sex attraction, sexual self-identification, past participation in same-sex behavior, beliefs about marriage, or beliefs about sexual morality.” *See* Ex. 5.

236. But despite Bethel’s truthful assurances, the BOOST Advisory Board determined that Bethel violated the sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement.

237. Upon information and belief, MSDE and the BOOST Advisory Board did not disqualify Bethel based on any allegation that Bethel had denied an applicant admission based on the sexual orientation of the applicant.

238. Upon information and belief, the sole reason MSDE and the BOOST Advisory Board disqualified Bethel from the BOOST program was the school’s statement of religious belief on marriage and biological sex.

239. Further, MSDE informed Bethel that it could regain its eligibility for the BOOST Program by revising the language in its student handbook.

240. MSDE subsequently sent Bethel two documents containing examples of how various religious schools revised their handbook language to retain BOOST eligibility. *See* Ex. 8.

241. The MSDE and BOOST Advisory Board disqualified Bethel based on vague, subjective, and malleable standards that differed from the program budget language.

242. The BOOST sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement, as applied, provided no warning or notice that something beyond sexual orientation discrimination in admissions was prohibited.

243. The BOOST gender identity nondiscrimination requirement is also vague.

244. The BOOST gender identity nondiscrimination requirement requires nonpublic schools to agree not to discriminate in student admissions, retention, or expulsion, “or otherwise discriminate against any student” based on “gender identity or expression,” among other categories.

245. The State has not defined the gender identity nondiscrimination provision nor what is required for it to be satisfied.

246. It is impossible to know what a person’s gender identity or expression may be, or how it applies.

247. It is unclear whether the State interprets the gender identity nondiscrimination provision to impose affirmative obligations on nonpublic schools.

248. Bethel does require all its students, faculty, and staff to conform their conduct to its belief that biological sex is an immutable gift from God.

249. Bethel does require students to use the facilities set aside for their biological sex.

250. Bethel does require students to adhere to the dress code for their grade and biological sex.

251. Bethel cannot know whether its faith-based policies violate the BOOST gender identity nondiscrimination requirement.

252. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements are thus vague as applied to Bethel and accordingly violate the Fourteenth Amendment’s Due Process Clause.

WHEREFORE, Bethel respectfully requests that the Court grant the equitable and legal relief set forth in the prayer for relief.

**Fourth Cause of Action: Violation of the Due Process Clause
of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
(Parental Rights)**

253. Bethel realleges each allegation in ¶¶ 1-252 of this Complaint and incorporates them herein.

254. Religious schools are protected by the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment from the government's unwarranted interference with the rights of parents, and the rights of the school selected by parents, to direct the upbringing and education of the parents' children.

255. The BOOST sexual orientation and gender identity nondiscrimination requirements as applied, deprive the students' parents of fair opportunity to procure for their children instruction consistent with their sincerely held religious beliefs concerning biological sex, marriage, and human sexuality and that they have selected, at least in part, for religious reasons.

256. The Fourteenth Amendment protects Bethel from deprivation of its property rights without due process of law.

257. The right to conduct schools and education in a certain manner is a due process right under *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, 268 U.S. 510 (1925).

258. Parents and guardians, as a part of their liberty, may direct the education of their children by selecting schools that are Christian and affirm religious teachings on biological sex, marriage, and human sexuality.

259. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirements, as applied, infringe on the rights of Bethel to conduct its school in a distinctly religious manner consistent with its Christian beliefs.

260. Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirements infringes on the rights of parents to choose religious schools where their children will receive a distinctly Christian education.

261. Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement results in parents being forced to choose between a government benefit, and choosing a religious school that upholds their beliefs regarding marriage and human sexuality.

262. The BOOST nondiscrimination requirement, as applied, therefore violates the Fourteenth Amendment.

WHEREFORE, Bethel respectfully requests that the Court grant the equitable and legal relief set forth in the prayer for relief.

**Fifth Cause of Action: Violation of the Equal Protection Clause
of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution**

263. Bethel realleges each allegation in ¶¶ 1-262 of this Complaint and incorporates them herein.

264. The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects the right of similarly-situated entities to be treated similarly under the law.

265. The BOOST sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement, as applied, unconstitutionally abridges Bethel's right to equal protection of the law.

266. The BOOST sexual orientation nondiscrimination requirement, as applied, treats Bethel differently from similarly-situated nonpublic religious schools on the basis of the religious content and expression in their student handbooks.

267. The BOOST Advisory Board voted to deem Bethel ineligible for BOOST at its June 21, 2018, meeting.

268. Upon information and belief, the sole reason MSDE and the BOOST Advisory Board disqualified Bethel from BOOST was the school's statement on marriage and biological sex, neither of which constitute discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in admissions.

269. Bethel believes that marriage is the union of one man and one woman, and that sexual conduct is to be reserved to such a union.

270. Bethel prohibits all students from engaging in any sexual conduct or communication.

271. Bethel has not, and will not, deny an applicant school admission based on the sexual orientation of the applicant.

272. MSDE allowed other religious schools with religious beliefs and conduct policies similar to Bethel's to remain eligible for BOOST.

273. For example, at the same June 21, 2018 meeting, the BOOST Advisory Board also voted to deem Broadfording Christian Academy and Grace Academy eligible for BOOST.

274. Upon information and belief, Broadfording Christian Academy and Grace Academy have similar beliefs and policies on marriage and sexual conduct to Bethel.

275. Upon information and belief, Broadfording Christian Academy and Grace Academy both affirm the belief that marriage is the union of one man and one woman.

276. Upon information and belief, Broadfording Christian Academy and Grace Academy both affirm that sexual conduct is to be reserved to such a union.

277. Upon information and belief, both Broadfording Christian Academy and Grace Academy have policies which state that they reserve the right to deny admission to an applicant engaged in sexual immorality.

278. Upon information and belief, the BOOST advisory board treated Bethel less favorably than other religious schools that have similar beliefs and policies, such as Broadfording Christian Academy and Grace Academy, based solely on the statement of Bethel's religious beliefs in its student handbook.

279. Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement treats Bethel less favorably than other religious schools that have similar beliefs and policies on marriage and sexual conduct.

280. Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement amounts to unbridled discretion.

281. Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement is ad hoc and lacks objective standards.

282. Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement is irrational and unreasonable, and imposes irrational and unjustifiable restrictions on First Amendment rights.

283. Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement does not serve a significant government interest.

284. Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement is not supported by a compelling governmental interest.

285. Defendants' enforcement of the BOOST nondiscrimination requirement is not the least restrictive means to accomplish any permissible government interest sought to be served by the requirement.

WHEREFORE, Bethel respectfully requests that the Court grant the equitable and legal relief set forth in the prayer for relief.

**Sixth Cause of Action: Violation of the Establishment Clause
of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution**

286. Bethel realleges each allegation in ¶¶ 1-285 of this Complaint and incorporates them herein.

287. The First Amendment to the United States Constitution, as applied to the States via the Fourteenth Amendment, prohibits States from excessively entangling themselves with religion.

288. On information and beliefs, Defendants, in the course of their enforcement activities, demanded that numerous religious schools submit their handbooks for Defendants' review.

289. On information and belief, Defendants, in the course of their enforcement activities, conducted an extensive review of numerous religious schools' religious beliefs and related policies.

290. Defendants, in the course of their enforcement activities, demanded that Bethel submit its handbook for Defendants' review of Bethel's religious beliefs and related policies.

291. Defendants, in the course of their enforcement activities, refused to accept Bethel's assurance that it did not discriminate in student admissions based on sexual orientation, and its numerous explanations of how its policies did not discriminate against students based on sexual orientation.

292. Upon information and belief, Defendants received no complaints about Bethel violating the nondiscrimination in admissions requirement.

293. Upon information and belief, Defendants' sole basis for finding Bethel noncompliant was the school's statement in its 2017-2018 Parent/Student handbook regarding Bethel's beliefs about marriage and biological sex.

294. Upon information and belief, Defendants took it upon themselves to interpret Bethel's religious beliefs about marriage and biological sex.

295. Upon information and belief, Defendants determined that Bethel's religious beliefs about marriage and biological sex constituted discrimination based on sexual orientation in student admissions.

296. Upon information and belief, Defendants substituted their own interpretation of Bethel's religious beliefs and ignored Bethel's repeated assurance that it did not discriminate against students in admissions based on sexual orientation.

297. Defendants excessively entangled themselves with religion in violation of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause.

WHEREFORE, Bethel respectfully requests that the Court grant the equitable and legal relief set forth in the prayer for relief.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Bethel Ministries, Inc. prays for judgment as follows:

A. That this Court issue a Preliminary and Permanent Injunction to enjoin the Defendants, Defendants' officers, agents, and employees, and all other persons acting in active concert with them, from enforcing the BOOST, Textbook and Technology, and Aging Schools nondiscrimination requirements to:

- (1) Prohibit Bethel from being eligible for funding from the BOOST, Textbook and Technology, and Aging Schools Programs due to its religious beliefs;
- (2) Force Bethel to pay back the previous funding it received from the BOOST Program;
- (3) Discriminatorily target Bethel in enforcing the BOOST, Textbook and Technology, and Aging Schools Program nondiscrimination requirements;

B. That this Court render a Declaratory Judgment declaring that Defendants' sexual orientation and gender identity nondiscrimination requirements are unconstitutional as applied to Bethel, and that Defendants' eligibility determination and repayment demand violate the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution;

C. That this Court issue the requested injunctive relief without a condition of bond or other security being required of Bethel;

D. That this Court award Bethel's costs and expenses, including its attorneys' fees, pursuant to 42. U.S.C. § 1988; and

E. For such other relief as the Court deems just and equitable.

Dated this 24th day of June, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ John R. Garza

John R. Garza
GARZA LAW FIRM, P.A.
17 W. Jefferson Street
Rockville, MD 20850
Telephone: (301) 340-8200
Fax: (301) 761-4309
Email: jgarza@garzanet.com

David C. Cortman*
ALLIANCE DEFENDING FREEDOM
1000 Hurricane Shoals Road, Suite D-1100
Lawrenceville, GA 30043
Telephone: (770) 339-0774
Fax: (770) 339-6744
Email: DCortman@ADFlegal.org

Christiana M. Holcomb*
Christen M. Price*
Gregory S. Baylor**
ALLIANCE DEFENDING FREEDOM
440 First Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20001
Telephone: (202) 393-8690
Fax: (202) 347-3622
Email: CHolcomb@ADFlegal.org
Email: CPrice@ADFlegal.org
Email: GBaylor@ADFlegal.org

Counsel for Plaintiffs

**Pro Hac Vice Motions filed
contemporaneously herewith*

***Pro Hac Vice Motion to be filed
subsequently*

VERIFICATION OF COMPLAINT

I declare under penalty of perjury, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, that I have read the foregoing Verified Complaint and the factual allegations thereof and that to the best of my knowledge the facts alleged therein are true and correct.

Executed this 23rd day of June, 2019.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Johnny Green', written over a horizontal line.

Johnny Green, D.B.S.
Senior Pastor,
Bethel Ministries, Inc.

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS

Bethel Ministries, Inc.

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Howard County (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number) John R. Garza, Garza Law Firm, P.A., 17 W. Jefferson Street, Rockville, MD, 20850 (301) 340-8200

DEFENDANTS

See attached list.

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED

Attorneys (If Known)

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff, 2 U.S. Government Defendant, 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party), 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

- Citizen of This State, Citizen of Another State, Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country, PTF DEF, Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State, Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State, Foreign Nation

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

Click here for: Nature of Suit Code Descriptions.

Table with 5 columns: CONTRACT, REAL PROPERTY, TORTS, CIVIL RIGHTS, PRISONER PETITIONS, FORFEITURE/PENALTY, LABOR, IMMIGRATION, BANKRUPTCY, SOCIAL SECURITY, FEDERAL TAX SUITS, OTHER STATUTES. Includes various legal categories like Insurance, Motor Vehicle, Personal Injury, etc.

V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- 1 Original Proceeding, 2 Removed from State Court, 3 Remanded from Appellate Court, 4 Reinstated or Reopened, 5 Transferred from Another District, 6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer, 8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity): 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983 and 1988

Brief description of cause: Violation of Plaintiff's First and Fourteenth Amendment rights based on Plaintiff's religious beliefs.

VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:

CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P. DEMAND \$ CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint: JURY DEMAND: Yes No

VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY

(See instructions): JUDGE DOCKET NUMBER

DATE 06/24/2019 SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD /s/ John R. Garza

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT # AMOUNT APPLYING IFP JUDGE MAG JUDGE

Case 1:19-cv-01853-ELH Document 1-1 Filed 06/24/19 Page 2 of 3
INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET FORM JS 44

Authority For Civil Cover Sheet

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and service of pleading or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. The attorney filing a case should complete the form as follows:

- I.(a) Plaintiffs-Defendants.** Enter names (last, first, middle initial) of plaintiff and defendant. If the plaintiff or defendant is a government agency, use only the full name or standard abbreviations. If the plaintiff or defendant is an official within a government agency, identify first the agency and then the official, giving both name and title.
- (b) County of Residence.** For each civil case filed, except U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county where the first listed plaintiff resides at the time of filing. In U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county in which the first listed defendant resides at the time of filing. (NOTE: In land condemnation cases, the county of residence of the "defendant" is the location of the tract of land involved.)
- (c) Attorneys.** Enter the firm name, address, telephone number, and attorney of record. If there are several attorneys, list them on an attachment, noting in this section "(see attachment)".
- II. Jurisdiction.** The basis of jurisdiction is set forth under Rule 8(a), F.R.Cv.P., which requires that jurisdictions be shown in pleadings. Place an "X" in one of the boxes. If there is more than one basis of jurisdiction, precedence is given in the order shown below.
 United States plaintiff. (1) Jurisdiction based on 28 U.S.C. 1345 and 1348. Suits by agencies and officers of the United States are included here.
 United States defendant. (2) When the plaintiff is suing the United States, its officers or agencies, place an "X" in this box.
 Federal question. (3) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1331, where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution of the United States, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States. In cases where the U.S. is a party, the U.S. plaintiff or defendant code takes precedence, and box 1 or 2 should be marked.
 Diversity of citizenship. (4) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1332, where parties are citizens of different states. When Box 4 is checked, the citizenship of the different parties must be checked. (See Section III below; **NOTE: federal question actions take precedence over diversity cases.**)
- III. Residence (citizenship) of Principal Parties.** This section of the JS 44 is to be completed if diversity of citizenship was indicated above. Mark this section for each principal party.
- IV. Nature of Suit.** Place an "X" in the appropriate box. If there are multiple nature of suit codes associated with the case, pick the nature of suit code that is most applicable. Click here for: [Nature of Suit Code Descriptions](#).
- V. Origin.** Place an "X" in one of the seven boxes.
 Original Proceedings. (1) Cases which originate in the United States district courts.
 Removed from State Court. (2) Proceedings initiated in state courts may be removed to the district courts under Title 28 U.S.C., Section 1441. When the petition for removal is granted, check this box.
 Remanded from Appellate Court. (3) Check this box for cases remanded to the district court for further action. Use the date of remand as the filing date.
 Reinstated or Reopened. (4) Check this box for cases reinstated or reopened in the district court. Use the reopening date as the filing date.
 Transferred from Another District. (5) For cases transferred under Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1404(a). Do not use this for within district transfers or multidistrict litigation transfers.
 Multidistrict Litigation – Transfer. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1407.
 Multidistrict Litigation – Direct File. (8) Check this box when a multidistrict case is filed in the same district as the Master MDL docket.
PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NOT AN ORIGIN CODE 7. Origin Code 7 was used for historical records and is no longer relevant due to changes in statute.
- VI. Cause of Action.** Report the civil statute directly related to the cause of action and give a brief description of the cause. **Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity.** Example: U.S. Civil Statute: 47 USC 553 Brief Description: Unauthorized reception of cable service
- VII. Requested in Complaint.** Class Action. Place an "X" in this box if you are filing a class action under Rule 23, F.R.Cv.P.
 Demand. In this space enter the actual dollar amount being demanded or indicate other demand, such as a preliminary injunction.
 Jury Demand. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not a jury is being demanded.
- VIII. Related Cases.** This section of the JS 44 is used to reference related pending cases, if any. If there are related pending cases, insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judge names for such cases.

Date and Attorney Signature. Date and sign the civil cover sheet.

DEFENDANTS

Maryland Department of Education, State Superintendent, Salmon, Karen B.

BOOST Advisory Board, Chairman, Gallagher, Matthew

BOOST Advisory Board, Member, Camp, Marva Jo

BOOST Advisory Board, Member, Ebergart, Linda

BOOST Advisory Board, Member, Sanders, A. Skipp

BOOST Advisory Board, Member, Grasmick, Nancy S.

BOOST Advisory Board, Member, Green, Elizabeth

BOOST Advisory Board, Member, Harbinson, Beth Sandbower

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Maryland

Bethel Ministries, Inc.

Plaintiff(s)

v.

Dr. Karen B. Salmon, et. al.

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-01853

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: (Defendant's name and address) Dr. Karen B. Salmon
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: John R. Garza
17 W. Jefferson Street
Rockville, MD 20850

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date:

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Maryland

Bethel Ministries, Inc.

Plaintiff(s)

v.

Dr. Karen B. Salmon, et al.

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-01853

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: (Defendant's name and address) Matthew Gallagher
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: John R. Garza
17 W. Jefferson Street
Rockville, MD 20850

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date:

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Maryland

Bethel Ministries, Inc.

Plaintiff(s)

v.

Dr. Karen B. Salmon, et. al.

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-01853

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: (Defendant's name and address) Marva Jo Camp
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: John R. Garza
17 W. Jefferson Street
Rockville, MD 20850

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date:

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Maryland

Bethel Ministries, Inc.

Plaintiff(s)

v.

Dr. Karen B. Salmon, et al.

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-01853

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: (Defendant's name and address) Linda Eberhart
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: John R. Garza
17 W. Jefferson Street
Rockville, MD 20850

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date:

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Maryland

Bethel Ministries, Inc.

Plaintiff(s)

v.

Dr. Karen B. Salmon, et. al.

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-01853

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: (Defendant's name and address) Dr. A. Skipp Sanders
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: John R. Garza
17 W. Jefferson Street
Rockville, MD 20850

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date:

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Maryland

Bethel Ministries, Inc.

Plaintiff(s)

v.

Dr. Karen B. Salmon, et. al.

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-01853

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: (Defendant's name and address) Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: John R. Garza
17 W. Jefferson Street
Rockville, MD 20850

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date: _____

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Maryland

Bethel Ministries, Inc.

Plaintiff(s)

v.

Dr. Karen B. Salmon, et. al.

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-01853

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: (Defendant's name and address) Elizabeth Green
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: John R. Garza
17 W. Jefferson Street
Rockville, MD 20850

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date:

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Maryland

Bethel Ministries, Inc.

Plaintiff(s)

v.

Dr. Karen B. Salmon, et. al.

Defendant(s)

Civil Action No. 1:19-cv-01853

SUMMONS IN A CIVIL ACTION

To: (Defendant's name and address) Beth Sandbower Harbinson
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

A lawsuit has been filed against you.

Within 21 days after service of this summons on you (not counting the day you received it) — or 60 days if you are the United States or a United States agency, or an officer or employee of the United States described in Fed. R. Civ. P. 12 (a)(2) or (3) — you must serve on the plaintiff an answer to the attached complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer or motion must be served on the plaintiff or plaintiff's attorney, whose name and address are: John R. Garza
17 W. Jefferson Street
Rockville, MD 20850

If you fail to respond, judgment by default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint. You also must file your answer or motion with the court.

CLERK OF COURT

Date: _____

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

EXHIBIT 1



bethel christian academy

Parent/Student Handbook
2017-2018

8455 Savage-Guilford Road · Savage, Maryland 20763
Main Phone: (301) 725-4673 · Fax: (301)490-0153
www.bethelchristianacademy.com

Dear BCA Parents and Students,

Welcome to Bethel Christian Academy! BCA is proud to offer many fine educational and spiritual opportunities to our students. The faculty and administration are committed to providing a learning environment in which students can grow spiritually, academically, physically, and socially so that they can fulfill the purpose of God for their lives. We trust that you will take opportunity to make the most of what we offer.

This handbook states school policies and procedures as well as general information that will help you to understand our vision and to know how you can fit in and become a valuable part of this exciting learning community.

May this be a great year in the Lord!

The Administration

Table of Contents

Welcome		Page(s)
I.	About BCA.....	7 - 11
	• Admissions Policy	
	• Statement of Nondiscrimination	
	• Statement of Faith	
	• Mission	
	• Vision	
	• Core Values	
	• Educational Philosophy	
	• Goals and Objectives	
II.	Academic Issues & Awards.....	12 - 23
	• Curriculum	
	• Library	
	• Computer Lab	
	• Technology Policy	
	• Internet Use	
	• Student Netbooks	
	• Tape Recording	
	• Specials & Electives	
	• Chapel	
	• Selection of Literature	
	• Homework	
	• Organizational System	
	• Preparedness for Class	
	• Field Trips	
	• Academic Performance	
	• Student of the Month Award	
	• Student of the Year Award	
	• Sequence of Courses	
	• Grading Scale	
	• Conduct and Work Habits	
	• Penmanship Rubric	
III.	Annual Events.....	23 - 24
	• Veterans Day	
	• Grandparents Day	
	• Christmas Program	
	• Moving Up Night	
	• Talent Show	
	• Easter Program	

- Evening of Excellence
- Carnival/Field Day
- Kindergarten Graduation
- 5th Grade Graduation
- 8th Grade Promotion

IV. Attendance..... 24 - 27

- Excused and Unexcused Absences
- Planned Absences
- Returning to School after an Absence
- Perfect Attendance
- Tardiness to School
- Tardiness to Class

V. Communication..... 28 - 31

- BCA Web Site
- RenWeb Student Information Online
- BCA Calendar
- Missing Homework
- Academic Progress
- Behavior Report
- Mid-Term Reports
- Report Cards
- Parent / Teacher Conferences
- Scheduling Conferences
- Visiting the Classroom
- Handling Concerns or Complaints
- Use of Telephone
- Parties

VI. Discipline 36 - 39

- Discipline Policies and Procedures
- Middle School Code of Conduct
- Behavioral Offenses
- Detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion

VII. Dress Code..... 39 - 40

- Hairstyles
- Uniform Options
- P.E. Uniform
- Field Trip Uniform

- Warmer Weather
- Colder Weather
- Clothing Items Not Permitted
- Undershirts
- Dress for Extended Care
- Sports Uniform
- Identification of Clothing
- Lost and Found

VIII. Extended Care..... 39-40

- Morning Care
- After-School Extended Care

IX. Extra-Curricular Sports..... 40 - 41

- Academic Eligibility Policy/Procedure
- Behavioral Eligibility Policy
- Athletic Participation
- School Colors & Mascot

X. Financial Information..... 41-45

- Payment Schedule
- Continuous Enrollment
- Tuition Refund
- Hot Lunch
- Other Fees
- Withdrawal

XI. Fund-Raising & Contributions..... 45

- Annual Fund-Raising
- Read-A-Thon
- Box Tops for Education
- Grocery Store Receipts

XII. Inclement Weather..... 46

- Delays
- Closings

XIII. Medical Policies..... 47 - 51

- School Emergency Medical Consent
- Medication
- Illness
- Injury or Illness at School
- Food Policy & Management of Food Allergies

XIV. Parent Involvement..... 51 - 52

- BCA STEM Initiative
- Volunteering
- Teacher Support
- Coaching

XV. Safety and Security Policies 52 - 54

- Student Safety
- Building Security
- Release of Students
- Security of Personal Property

XVI. Transportation..... 54 - 56

- Arrival
- Bus Service
- Bus Conduct
- Walkers
- Campus to Campus
- Dismissal

BCA reserves the right to make changes to policies or procedures at any time when deemed necessary by the administration and/or school board. Parents will be informed of such changes when they occur.

Please Note: Extended Care hours are considered part of the BCA school day. As such, all BCA policies apply during Extended Care.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Bethel Christian Academy (BCA) is a ministry of Bethel Assembly of God. BCA does not require that families be professing Christians in order to enroll their children in the school. However, it should be understood that BCA exists unashamedly for the purpose of reaching families with the gospel of Jesus Christ and training and equipping young people to serve Him.

Students are accepted for admission based on an evaluation of prerequisite skills or a qualifying score on the BCA entrance exam, an evaluation of previous grades and behavior, and a pre-enrollment interview. Preschool through kindergarten applicants must meet our age deadline of September 1, and may be required to spend part of the day in a BCA classroom (i.e., shadow). Bethel Christian Academy is not equipped to facilitate the needs of special needs students, and all new students are admitted under a Performance Plan by which their academic progress and their behavior are evaluated during the 1st quarter of attendance.

Enrollment of students in Bethel Christian Academy is a privilege, not a right. Parents must agree to support the BCA Core Values and school policies. Middle school students are required to sign a Code of Conduct and parents must agree to support the enforcement of the Code of Conduct. Parents must understand that continued enrollment of their child(ren) is dependent on their support of the school, its staff, and its policies.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Bethel Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin 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 in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

It should be noted, however, that Bethel Christian Academy supports the biblical view of marriage defined as a covenant between one man and one woman, and that God immutably bestows gender upon each person at birth as male or female to reflect His image. (Gen. 1:27, Gen. 2:23-24) Therefore, faculty, staff, and student conduct is expected to align with this view. Faculty, staff, and students are required to identify with, dress in accordance with, and use the facilities associated with their biological gender.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired of God, and inerrant in the original writings; that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life. (II Tim. 3:16,17; II Peter 1:20,21; Matt. 5:18; John 16:12,13)
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Ps. 83:18; Ex. 15:11; Mark 12:30; II Cor. 13:14; John 10:30; John 17:5,10; Phil. 2:5,6; Eph. 1:3-14)
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is true God and true man. (John 1:12,14; Luke 1:35)
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God, and that he sinned. He thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and in the case of those who reach moral responsibility become sinners in thought, word, and deed. (Gen. 1:26,27; Rom. 3:22,23; 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3,12)
5. We believe that God created mankind in His image, male and female (Gen. 1:27, Gen. 5:2) and, according to His word, marriage is a sacred union between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:18-24; 1 Corinthians 7:1-5; Mark 10:6-9; Romans 1:24-27) condemning a homosexual lifestyle (Romans 1:24-26, 1 Timothy 1:10).
6. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. (Rom. 3:24,25; I Peter 2:24; Eph. 1:7; I Peter 1:3-5)
7. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into heaven, and in His present life there for us, as High Priest and Advocate. (Acts 1:9,10; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; Rom. 8:34; I John 2:1,2)
8. We believe in the local church, which was established by Jesus Christ. We believe in water baptism by immersion, as a public confession of our identification with Christ. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; I Tim. 1:1-13; Titus 1:5-11; Heb. 20:25; Acts 2:41,42; I Cor. 1:2)
9. We believe in "that blessed hope", the personal, premillennial, and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. (I Thess. 4:13-18; Zech. 14:4-11; Rev. 19:11-16; 20:1-6; I Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 3:10)
10. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost. (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28,29; 11:25,26; Rev. 20:5,6,12,13)

MISSION

The mission of Bethel Christian Academy is to create an authentic Christian learning community to train students to know, love, and serve the Lord Jesus Christ and to equip them spiritually and academically to be lights to the world.

VISION

The Bethel Christian Academy vision is to produce academically equipped young people who demonstrate their commitment to Christ by exhibiting love toward others, strong biblical convictions, and a desire to impact the world for Him.

CORE VALUES

Academic Excellence

- ❖ Rigorous academic program
- ❖ Excellent Christian teachers
- ❖ Engaging learning environment
- ❖ Mastery-based learning
- ❖ Biblical world view

Authentic Christianity

- ❖ Salvation through faith in Jesus Christ
- ❖ The Word of God as the standard of truth
- ❖ Integration of faith with learning

Advancing Community

- ❖ Integrity in relationships
- ❖ Partnership with parents
- ❖ Participation in school events and activities
- ❖ Development of gifts and talents
- ❖ Meaningful opportunities for ministry & outreach

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.” Proverbs 1:7

The concepts of a Christian school philosophy of education are derived from the Bible. Therefore, at the foundation of education at BCA are the following convictions:

- * God is. He is sovereign in His world, and He is personal. (Ex. 3:14; Col. 1:16,17)
- * Christ is the Creator and the Sustainer of the Universe. (Gen. 1:1; Jer. 32:17; Col. 1:16)
- * Reality and truth are known through God’s general revelation in creation and through His specific revelation, the Bible, which is the Word of God. (Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- * Jesus Christ is the Truth and He is the Source of all truth, for in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (John 14:6; Col. 2:2,3)
- * True values are perceived in the Word of God, not in the reasoning of man apart from God. (Prov. 2: 1-22)
- * Life has a purpose. Man is to live his life as a response to his Creator and Savior, enjoying Him and endeavoring to please Him. (Prov. 19:21; Jer. 29:11; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 2:13; Rom. 8:28; Rom. 12:2))
- * God gives differing abilities to each student. In addition, spiritual gifts are bestowed at salvation. (1 Co. 12:7-11; Rom. 12:6-8)
- * Parents are responsible for the education of their children in the home, in the church, and in the school. The role of the school is to partner with parents in educating their children. (Deut. 6:6-9)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To provide a Christ-centered education, where the Word of God is an integral part of the entire curriculum and faith is integrated with all learning.
2. To instill an internal moral code of behavior in each student based on God's Word that will guide his/her in the decisions of life.
3. To maintain high academic standards with an educational program that will prepare a student to reach his/her fullest potential for the glory of God.
4. To impart to each student a sense of purpose and vision that will challenge him/her to give his/her utmost to fulfill the plan for which God has called him/her.
5. To train the whole individual:
 - A. ***Spiritually:*** to know Christ personally and to yield to His will in every area of his life. (John 3:16)
 - B. ***Mentally:*** to relate all truth to His truth and to discover and develop individual aptitudes; to cultivate critical thinking skills. (Prov. 4:7)
 - C. ***Socially:*** to understand and practice biblical principles for interpersonal relationships including conflict resolution. (Matt. 7:12)
 - D. ***Emotionally:*** to build a Christ-controlled personality, enabling each child to adjust to life's circumstances in a God-honoring way; to develop self-discipline. (II Tim. 1:7)
 - E. ***Physically:*** to develop a respect for the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit; to teach intelligent care of the body, and to encourage the yielding of the body as an instrument for God's use. (I Cor. 6:19,20)

ACADEMIC ISSUES & AWARDS

Curriculum

BCA uses a variety of curriculum materials including ABeka, BJU Press, Purposeful Design, Saxon Math, Shurley English, History Alive!, and Positive Action or CSI Bible. BCA has an objectives-based curriculum and some materials that are used in instruction have been specifically designed by the administration to meet those objectives. Consumable and non-consumable books are provided for student use. **If a book is lost or damaged, the student's account will be billed the replacement cost.**

Library

Students may check out books from the school library for two weeks to read at home. No new books may be taken out until checked-out books are returned. If a book is not returned or is damaged, the cost of the book will be added to the student's account at the end of the school year.

On occasion, students may be transported to the public library to obtain research materials.

Computer Lab

All students in 1st – 8th grade have computer class weekly where they learn keyboarding and software applications. Teachers may also use the computer lab to provide Internet resources to support instruction or for students to complete projects requiring computer use. The computer lab may be used after school hours if a student is working directly with a teacher on a school-related assignment.

Technology Policy

Students have access to school computers for the purpose of research and/or producing school-related assignments. To safeguard the computer equipment and ensure the safety of BCA students, the following restrictions regarding computer use apply:

- Students may not use school computers without the supervision of BCA staff or faculty.
- Computers may be used only for school-related assignments.
- No food or drink may be consumed in the computer lab.
- No applications or games may be installed on school computers by a student or faculty member without express authorization from the administration.
- Established procedures for storing data will be used at all times.

Internet Use

Because the Internet is an excellent resource to further students' studies, BCA has provided its students with limited Internet access. When accessing the Internet, the following rules must be followed:

- Students will only use the Internet for approved course work. Other use is strictly prohibited.
- No personal information (e.g., pictures, addresses, telephone numbers, and parents' names) will be posted on the Internet.
- Students who encounter inappropriate materials must immediately report the occurrence to the media supervisor.
- Students may view published web pages and cite information obtained from them appropriately. Caution must be taken to avoid plagiarism.
- Students will not vandalize, damage, or disable the work of another individual or organization.
- Students will not access, manipulate, alter or attempt to damage, disable or destroy technology or computer files.
- Students will not access, create or distribute harassing, pornographic, obscene, racist, sexually explicit, or threatening material, imagery or language.
- Students will not use school-provided Internet access for illegal purposes or for non-approved commercial purposes.
- Students and parents are required to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement each year in order to be allowed to use school computers.

Student Computers in the Classroom

Middle school students have access to netbook computers for use in producing various written assignments in the classroom. Student netbooks are not to be taken home. Parents and students are required to sign a special use agreement for the student to be permitted to use these computers. BCA provides middle school students with a Google account for doing assignments using Google Apps for Education.

Tape Recording

Bethel Christian Academy realizes that there are limited circumstances under which students may need to either tape record a class lecture or have another student tape record a class for them. However, it is the school policy that any students wishing to tape record a class or any part of the school day must obtain permission in advance from

the administrator. Any student who tapes a class or any part of the school day, regardless of the reason, without the express permission of the administrator is subject to suspension or expulsion.

SPECIALS CLASSES

Art

All elementary students take art for the entire school year; it is a one-semester class for middle school students. Students learn basic art skills and art history as they work on projects using a variety of media. Since an art show is part of the Christmas and Easter programs, middle school art students are encouraged to attend those programs even if they are not performing on stage.

Music

All Readiness – 5th grade students take music for the entire school year; it is a one-semester class for middle school students. Classes focus on vocal music, but may also include experiences with recorders or bells. Students learn the basics of music theory and may sing different vocal parts in a group performance. Students perform at various programs and events which are mandatory. Therefore, advance notice must be given if the student is unable to attend a scheduled performance.

Physical Education

Students in PreK – 8th grade have P.E. once a week. In this class, students learn the rules and gain various sports' skills. Instruction in physical fitness is also emphasized and the students participate in the President's Active Lifestyle Program each school year. A student's grade will be affected if he/she is not properly dressed for P.E. (Please refer to the Dress Code section.)

Computer/Library

Beginning in 1st grade, students take a weekly Computer class in which they learn typing and how to use Microsoft Office applications. They are also provided with instruction regarding a variety of classic genres of literature and how to find books in the library. Students may check out books to take home.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVES

Electives for middle school students vary each year. They may include academic support classes or study hall as well as those listed below.

Drama

The focus of this class is to use drama to dynamically communicate God's principles

and His love. Foundations will be laid regarding the effective use of movement, music, staging, vocal expression, and character interaction. Students will perform such things as skits, monologues, drama to music, and will present a production at Christmas, Easter, and the spring Evening of Excellence.

Worship Dance

The focus of this class is to learn about the biblical basis for dance as a form of worship and the history of dance in the church. Students also learn a variety of dance movements for presentations at Christmas, Easter, and the Evening of Excellence as well as other school events.

All special programs are mandatory for performing arts students. Unexcused absences will result in the student receiving a zero for the performance. To be excused from a performance, arrangements must be made ***well in advance*** with the drama, music, or dance teacher, except in the case of an emergency.

Spanish

Middle school students may elect to take Spanish. These classes are offered once a week. Students who are planning to enter special academic programs in high school should determine early the language requirements and consider taking a language course each year. Due to BCA Spanish classes being offered only once/week, three years of BCA Spanish is equivalent to one year of daily Spanish instruction.

Life Skills

This basic course offers skills that all young people need such as hygiene and personal grooming, financial management, sewing, home repair, meal planning, and cooking.

Praise Team

At Middle School, worship for Chapel is led by students. In order to participate in leading worship, students must take Praise Team as an elective where they will learn how to lead others in worship. Instrumentalists and vocalists may take this class.

Public Speaking

This class is designed to give students instruction and opportunity to develop skills in preparing and presenting various types of speeches. In addition to individual speeches, students may engage in preparing for and participating in a debate.

Martial Arts

Students learn basic body control and discipline, basic blocking, kicking, punching, three basic forms, hands-on defensive techniques as well as one weapons form.

Student Leadership

This is not a scheduled class. It is a team of middle school students that works with a BCA staff advisor to plan events and work on projects for the advancement of the middle school. Students must apply to be on the leadership team. This team attends an annual conference for training in leadership skills. They meet during the lunch period and after school.

Chapel

Once a week the students participate in a Chapel service in which they have the opportunity to worship and hear a message that is relevant to them. Parents are welcome to attend. Once a month, student awards are presented during Chapel.

Selection of Literature

The reading and evaluation of literature is an essential part of each BCA student's education. Literature is evaluated by the administration to assess its appropriateness considering the maturity and reading ability of the students and the instructional goals of the course. The inherent worth of the literary work in terms of moral tone, gratuitousness of evil, and explicitness of evil is also evaluated. Because the teacher can point out an author's scripturally foolish perspective, works may be chosen to be used in the controlled environment of the classroom which are not suitable for independent, undirected reading. If a parent has a concern about a literature selection, the parent should contact the administration.

Homework

The purpose of homework is to support and enhance classroom instruction. It is assigned to achieve specific instructional objectives.

BCA provides students in grades 3 – 8 with an assignment planner in which to write all homework assignments. Time is given in class to copy assignments from the board. In addition, homework is posted on RenWeb on a weekly basis. This is as a reference for parents in the event that a question arises; it is not meant to be the primary source of homework information although every effort is made to keep it accurate and up-to-date.

Because students need time to pursue non-school-related activities and to enjoy family time, it is BCA's intent that homework not be excessive. It should be understood; however, that what is excessive for one student may not be excessive for others.

Expectations for Homework for the Average BCA Student

Preschool/PreK	No homework
Kindergarten	Approximately 15 minutes/night <i>as needed</i>

1st– 2 nd grade	Approximately 30 minutes/night
3 rd – 4 th grade	Approximately 45 minutes/night
5 th grade	Approximately 1 hour/night
Middle School	Approximately 2 hours/night

*The time the teacher estimates is required to complete the assignment may be noted on the assignment posted on RenWeb.

It is important to plan out long-term assignments to avoid an overload of homework at the last minute when projects are due. Students taking Algebra I should expect their homework load to be somewhat in excess of the above-stated guideline due to the advanced nature of the course.

Students who do not complete class assignments in the time allotted during class may be required to complete them at home. This work is not considered assigned homework, but indicates a lack of productivity in class and may result in the student spending more time than expected working at home. Some class work, however, cannot be completed at home, and failure to complete it in class will adversely affect a student's grade.

Students are expected to turn in homework on the day that it is due. Late homework is deducted a full letter grade and will generally be accepted only one day after the due date. Beyond one day late, the student will receive a zero. Missing assignments are noted on RenWeb and an email notification is sent to the parent. However, it is recommended that parents check to see that homework is completed each day and placed in the appropriate place in the student binder to be turned in on time.

Some subjects or assignments do not allow for work to be accepted late due to the nature of the assignment objective. For example, Math work is cumulative and if it is not completed for each lesson on time, the student's learning is impacted aside from the grade itself. Other assignments may need to be completed as a prerequisite to another learning activity and there is no instructional value to them being completed late. Therefore, in these cases, the teacher may refuse to accept the work late, and the student will receive a zero.

Although effort is made to avoid scheduling several major tests on the same day, there will be times when more than one quiz or test may fall on the same day. Students are encouraged to participate in class and to study throughout an instructional unit so that last-minute cramming will not be necessary.

Organizational System

Research has determined that the primary factor in a student's school success is organization. BCA supports this objective by requiring that all 1st – 8th grade students utilize a specific organizational system for all school supplies and schoolwork. The required supplies are listed on the school supply list.

The student binder is the core component of the BCA organizational system. Each student is required to have a 3-ring binder containing one set of rings and a zipper closure. First grade students need 2-inch rings and 2nd – 8th grade students must have 3-inch rings. The binder is to contain:

- a zippered pencil case (stocked with required items)
- 2-pocket folder (for home-school communication) – **NOT for homework**
- an assignment planner (provided by BCA)
- blank notebook paper
- at least 10 plastic dividers with tabs, but NO pockets

It is the student's responsibility to keep the binder stocked with paper and other supplies as listed on the school supply list. The teacher will train the students in the proper set up of the binder and will conduct regular binder checks. The students will regularly “purge” the binder of old school work with the teacher in class. Parents and students should not attempt to clean out the binder at home to avoid discarding things that may still be needed. Parents should, however, check to assure that everything in the binder is in its proper place and hold the student accountable for complying with the requirements.

In order for the binder system to work effectively, a few things are of paramount importance.

- Every worksheet, test, handout, homework assignment, etc. must be dated and placed in the rings in the appropriate subject section of the binder.
- Most recent papers are to be placed in the front of each section (right after the divider) to be easily accessible.
- Students are not to put work papers in “pockets” in the binder nor in folders. Students are not to use spiral notebooks.
- **BCA students do NOT use a separate homework folder.**

Preparedness for Class

For learning to occur, a student must be prepared. Students must avoid being:

- Unprepared for class – coming to class without textbook, paper, pencil, etc.
- Late to class – coming to class after school or the class period begins

When a student comes to class late or unprepared to do the work required due to lacking the necessary materials, he/she may have points deducted from his/her grade.

A school store is available at some campuses so that students may purchase supplies if necessary. Students may pay cash for the items or may have them billed to the parent if the parent signs an authorization to be billed.

Field Trips

Field trips are a worthwhile way to teach concepts and expose students to experiences they would not otherwise receive at school. Each class will attend some school-funded field trips during the school year. Additional field trips may be scheduled at the parents' expense. These are considered optional. Field trips are scheduled at various times throughout the year. Notification of the specific time and place of each trip will be provided during the year. Written parental permission is required for a student to go on a field trip. Although BCA has procedures to take care of students with medical issues on field trips, parents of students with severe medical conditions will be given the option of attending as a chaperone. BCA's policy is that if a student is considered medically unstable or determined to be ill on the day of the field trip, he/she will not be allowed to participate. Although all the teachers are trained in basic first aid procedures, they are not trained nor equipped to deal with severe medical emergencies.

If a parent does not send in a signed permission slip for a student to attend a field trip, the student is to remain at home that day. Students **will not** be allowed to call the parent that morning for verbal permission. They will remain at school working on a related assignment and/or schoolwork if there is staff to monitor them. Otherwise, the parent will be called to pick them up.

Parents will be given the opportunity to chaperone on field trips. If selected for a particular trip, the parent will receive confirmation notification from the teacher or the school office. ***Parents are not allowed to take younger siblings on field trips.***

It should be noted that all school rules apply on all field trips and on all school-sponsored events on the school campus and away from it. Students may not bring cameras or other electronic devices on field trips. Chaperones may bring cameras, but may not post photos of students other than their own on any Internet site.

Academic Performance

Honor Roll

A/B Honor Roll: Students who have earned all A's and B's and above and have at least an S (Satisfactory) in Conduct.

Principal's Honor Roll: Students who have earned all A's and have at least an S (Satisfactory) in Conduct.

All classes count towards honor roll for middle school. Only core classes count for 1st – 5th grade.

Academic Failure

Students who earn a final grade of F in any academic subject (math, English, reading, science, history, or Bible) will not be promoted to the next grade. It may be possible for the parent of a student in this situation to make arrangements with the administration for summer remediation if the student has earned an F in only one subject. Summer remediation does not apply to 8th graders who have earned an F. They will not graduate.

Students who earn a final grade of D in any academic subject (math, English, reading, science, history, or Bible) **will be required to receive 30 hours per subject of documented private tutoring during the summer.** The tutoring must be approved in advance by the BCA administration and a report from the tutor regarding the hours tutored and the student's progress must be provided. Students who have earned a final grade of D will have the notation "Promoted with Reservation" on their final report card.

Many BCA teachers are available to tutor students who need extra support. The rate for BCA teachers doing tutoring on campus is \$40/hour plus Extended Care fees payable to the school.

Student of the Month Award

Students who have exemplified a high standard in attitude, behavior, and academic diligence are honored as Student of the Month. Readiness – 5th grade students are nominated by their homeroom teacher. Middle school students are nominated based on having no missing or late work for the month and having received no demerits.

Student of the Year Award

At the end of the year, a student may be selected from 1st - 5th grade and middle school to receive the Student of the Year award. The selection is made based on character development, academic diligence/achievement, leadership, serving, and spiritual growth and maturity. This award is presented at the end-of-the year Awards Assembly.

Academic Program Overview

Preschool students are taught basic readiness skills and foundational academics such as letters, numbers, and Bible stories. In PreK, students begin to learn to read and increase

their knowledge and understanding of number concepts and handwriting skills. They also engage in enrichment learning in Social Studies and Science. Kindergarten students build on the foundation of phonics begun in earlier grades and truly master the fundamentals of reading. They also begin basic math computation. Kindergartners continue to improve handwriting and add composition to their skills along with more focused Social Studies and Science instruction.

In 1st – 8th grade, students are taught the core subjects of Bible, Math, Language Arts, Reading, History, and Science. An overview of the materials and specific subject matter is available on the BCA web site.

Student performance is assessed and recorded in a variety of ways. The parents of Preschool students receive a hard copy report of the student’s progress in meeting annual objectives. PreK students receive a Quarterly Progress Report available on RenWeb indicating their progress in meeting quarterly objectives. Students in grades Kindergarten – 8th receive a Report Card available each quarter on RenWeb. The scales used to measure student performance are listed below:

PreK Progress Scale

- CD = Consistently Demonstrates Skill
- MP = Making Progress in Demonstrating Skill
- NY = Not Yet Demonstrating Skill

Kindergarten Grading Scale

- E = Excellent [High proficiency]
- G = Good [Expected proficiency]
- S = Satisfactory [Developing proficiency]
- N = Needs Improvement [Lacks proficiency]

1st – 8th Grade Grading Scale

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 98 – 100 = A+ | 88 – 89 = B+ | 78 – 79 = C+ |
| 93 – 97 = A | 83 – 87 = B | 73 – 77 = C |
| 90 – 92 = A- | 80 – 82 = B- | 70 – 72 = C- |
| 68 - 69 = D+ | 59 - = F (Failing) | |
| 63 - 67 = D | I = Incomplete | |
| 60 - 62 = D- | (M) = Modification* | |

*Modifications are made only for students who have documented special needs.

Most graded assignments and written assessments are scored for actual number correct out of the possible points or for percentage correct. However, some activities and assignments may be scored using a more subjective method as described in the table below or by using a criteria-based scoring rubric. When these symbols or a letter grade are written on an assignment, it holds the numeric value shown on the chart on the next page. Teachers may, however, choose to give a more precise numeric grade.

A+ √++ = 100	Exemplary; exceeds expectations
A √+ = 95	High proficiency in meeting the assignment objectives
B √ = 85	Expected proficiency in meeting the assignment objectives
C √- = 75	Developing proficiency in meeting assignment objectives
D √-- = 65	Lacks proficiency in meeting assignment objectives, but some skill evident
F = teacher assigns %	Did not finish assignment, did not meet basic requirements, no proficiency demonstrated

Note: Students who have been determined to have cheated or plagiarized on an assignment may receive a zero in addition to other possible disciplinary consequences.

Conduct and Work Habits

Conduct

The Conduct grade reflects a student’s respectfulness, self-control, obedience, and ability to get along with others throughout the quarter. Behavior information is available on RenWeb and is updated on a weekly basis. If a student has earned four or more demerits during the quarter, an automatic email message containing the behavior report will be generated to the parent. This behavioral information will be considered when assigning the student’s Conduct grade on the quarterly report card based on the following rubric. However, the number of demerits is not listed on the report card nor does it appear on the student’s permanent record.

E = Excellent	Requires little or no correction.
G = Good	Occasionally needs verbal correction but he/she responds appropriately.
S = Satisfactory	Not rebellious, but requires redirection.
N = Needs Improvement	Requires multiple warnings and often requires additional consequences.
U = Unsatisfactory	Exhibits a pattern of misbehavior and/or has had a more serious behavioral offense

Work Habits

Students are expected to be prepared and attentive in class, to follow directions, and to complete work on time and in a quality manner. Students are taught specific study skills and are assisted with organization in class.

However, a student's personal work and study habits can impact his/her academic performance. The teacher will inform parents when a particular work or study habit is having a negative impact on the student's grade and comments may appear on the report card indicating a student's performance in this area.

Penmanship

Students in the elementary grades receive a grade in Penmanship and once they have learned to write in cursive, they are required to do so. Fifth – eighth grade students are required to write in cursive handwriting and their grades in a particular class may be impacted by a failure to do so or by illegibility. However, students in these grade levels do not receive a separate grade for penmanship.

ANNUAL EVENTS

Veterans Day

The week of Veterans Day, the Chapel service at each campus is dedicated to those who have served or are currently serving in the armed forces. Parents are welcome to join us for this special service.

Grandparents Day

BCA designates a day each year to honor grandparents. Grandparents are welcome to visit with their grandchild/ren in the classroom and enjoy a complimentary lunch. Please invite your child/ren's grandparents to attend.

Christmas Program

In December, BCA students perform in special programs to honor Christ's birth. Programs typically include drama, dance, and music.

Moving Up Night

In late January, parents are invited to attend this event and get a preview of the types of instructional activities and projects that their student(s) can expect in the next school year. Curriculum is available to review and teachers are present to answer questions.

Easter Program

In the spring, BCA students perform in special programs celebrating the Resurrection. Programs typically include drama, dance, and music.

Evening of Excellence

In the spring, students in 3rd – 8th grade participate in an “Evening of Excellence” by displaying projects created throughout the school year. Academic areas for which projects are displayed include Bible, reading, writing, science, history, and art. In addition, performances in music, drama, and dance may be presented.

Carnival/Field Day

At the end of the school year, BCA holds a spring carnival and middle school field day. There are activities and events for students in all grades.

Kindergarten Graduation

A special graduation ceremony is held during which students present performances related to things they have learned and receive a Kindergarten “diploma.”

5th Grade Promotion

The 5th grade promotion ceremony provides an opportunity for 5th grade students to perform and welcomes them into middle school.

8th Grade Graduation

Eighth-grade graduation is held on a special graduation night. All graduating students are required to attend.

ATTENDANCE

In order to gain the most from school, each student must be in regular attendance. Parents are encouraged to establish a pattern of regular attendance unless health prohibits. Students should not be taken out of school for an extended period of time. If a student is kept home for health reasons, a call must be made to the school before 10:00 a.m. At this time the parent may request homework assignments for the day. Absentee assignments may be picked up at the school office after 3:00 p.m.

Chronic absenteeism on quiz, test, or exam days will be brought to the attention of the administrators.

Students that arrive late, leave early, or are removed from class for a middle-of-the-day appointment that results in being away from school for three hours or more will be

credited with one-half day of attendance. According to state law, if a student is absent from school for an accumulated number of thirty-five days per school year, he/she will not be promoted. This includes tardies that have been converted to absences.

Students serving suspensions are considered absent for purposes of “Perfect Attendance.” See “Discipline Policies” for information regarding missed work due to suspension.

Excused Absences

Examples of excused absences are:

- Personal illness
- Death in family
- Appointment with doctor or dentist. (Such appointments should be made after school hours if at all possible.)
- Major traffic accidents and road conditions making travel dangerous.
- Family vacation (Prior notice is required.)

In order for an absence to be considered excused, the reason for the absence must be stated in writing and signed by a parent or guardian.

For excused absences, work may be made up according to the following guidelines. Assignments must be made up in the time equal to the number of days absent (i.e., one day absent - all make-up work must be made up in one day; two days absent - all make-up work must be completed within two days after returning.). This is to continue up to five days. Five days are the maximum number of days allowed for make-up work.

Tests or quizzes scheduled for the day a student was absent are to be taken the day the student returns unless the absence included the day(s) on which initial instruction was given for the test or quiz material. Students who are absent for an in-class review, however, are not given additional time to make up a quiz or test since instruction was provided and the student had the opportunity for personal study. Tests or quizzes for which the student was not present for the content instruction must be scheduled with the teacher so that appropriate instruction can occur prior to the quiz or test.

Unexcused Absences

If an absent student returns to school without an acceptable written excuse from the parent, the absence is considered unexcused. A student with an unexcused absence will receive a zero for all missed assignments and tests for that day. Assignments that were due that day may be considered late and the grade deducted accordingly.

Planned Absences

The student's teacher(s) should be notified at least two days prior to any planned absence. If prior notification is not received, the absence will be considered unexcused and the student will receive zeroes for assignments missed that day. Assignments that were due that day may be considered late and the grade deducted accordingly.

Teachers who are notified well in advance of a planned absence will do their best to provide the student with his/her work prior to the absence, which must then be handed in the first day the student returns to class.

Returning to School after an Absence

Upon returning from an absence, all students must furnish a note to their homeroom teacher from their parent or guardian stating the date(s) and reason for the absence, and the signature of the parent or guardian.

If a student is absent for three consecutive days, the medication technician (MT) should be notified regarding the situation. A note from a doctor is required upon the student's return to school for absences in excess of two days and for communicable illnesses (i.e., chicken pox, measles, lice, etc.).

Perfect Attendance

A Perfect Attendance award is given to students who have been physically in school for at least ½ day every day school is open. Regardless of the reason for a student's absence, if he/she was not physically present in school, he/she is not eligible to receive a Perfect Attendance award.

Tardiness to School

It is important that every student arrive at school with sufficient time to unpack his/her backpack and prepare for instruction. The arrival times for each campus are:

Middle School Campus Arrival 7:55 – 8:15 a.m.

Students must be unpacked and in the morning assembly by 8:15 a.m. or will be considered late, with the exception of bus students. Late students must check in and receive a ***late pass***. After 8:25 a.m., parents must come into the building to sign the student in.

Campus 3- Oakes Building Arrival 7:55 – 8:15 a.m.

Students must be signed in, unpacked, and in their classroom by 8:15 a.m. or will be considered late with the exception of bus students. Late students must check in and receive a ***late pass***. After 8:15 a.m., parents must come into the building to sign the student in.

Campus 1- Cox Building Arrival 8:00 – 8:25 a.m.

Arrival after 8:25 a.m. is considered late and parents must come into the building to sign the student in.

Excused Tardies/Lateness

Examples of excused tardies/lateness include (but are not limited to):

- Appointment with doctor or dentist. (Such appointments should be made after school hours if at all possible.)
- Major traffic accidents and road conditions making travel dangerous.
- Serious or significant family situations

In order for tardy to be considered excused, the reason (as indicated above) must be stated in writing and signed by a parent or guardian and provided at the time of arrival.

Unexcused Tardies/Lateness

If a student arrives to school after the designated arrival window without an approved written excuse from the parent, the tardy is considered unexcused. A student with an unexcused tardy will receive a zero for any assignments and tests/quizzes missed during that time. Teachers who accept homework at the beginning of a class period may consider work turned in after that time as late and deduct a letter grade.

Being in class is critical to student learning. Therefore, five (5) unexcused tardies will be converted to one day absent and will be noted on the student's report card. This will affect "Perfect Attendance". Thirty-five absences will result in a student not being promoted.

Tardiness to Class

For students who change classes, there is sufficient time between classes or from lunch/recess for students to get to the next class on time. Students who are late to class may have points deducted from their grade. Students who are legitimately kept late by a teacher or staff member should ask that teacher/staff member for a pass to enter their next class without penalty. Students should report to their classes promptly and then ask to sign out to the rest room. Students are not permitted to just go to the rest room between classes; they must have permission from a teacher.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between home and school is extremely important for partnership. BCA is committed to utilizing a number of means to provide parents with the information they need to enable their student(s) to excel.

BCA Web Site

The BCA web site is maintained for the purpose of providing information about the school and school events on the Internet. A monthly calendar, events bulletins, and information regarding enrollment are some of the things available on this site. The web site address is <http://www.bethelchristianacademy.com>. A link to the RenWeb parent portal is available on this website as well.

RenWeb

Bethel Christian Academy provides up-to-date school information online through RenWeb. Parents and students may access the student's account. The RenWeb web site provides attendance, health, academic and behavioral information as well as displaying homework assignments and information about school events and activities. Teachers can be contacted via email directly through RenWeb.

The "web forms" button on RenWeb allows parents to update student and parent information directly. Information such as changes in phone numbers or email addresses or emergency contact or pick up information can be updated using this option or by calling the school office.

BCA Calendar

The yearly and monthly calendars are posted on the BCA web site and on RenWeb. In addition, a shared Google calendar is available for parents to link to in order to keep up-to-date electronically in regard to BCA events. Monthly calendars are also sent home.

BCA Publications

Parents receive a monthly newsletter providing information about things that are happening in the school. A weekly email update is sent out to keep parents abreast of events and activities for the upcoming week.

Missing Homework

If a student has had a missing homework assignment during the week, it will be noted on RenWeb and an automated email notification will be sent. However, it is possible that by the time it is noted on RenWeb, the student will have already earned a zero. Therefore, it is important for parents to check the student's homework each night to ensure that completed assignments are in the binder to be turned in on time.

Academic Progress

Information regarding each student's academic progress and performance is available through the use of RenWeb. Grades on specific assignments and tests as well as the student's quarterly average are provided. In addition, email notifications are sent to the parents when the student receives a grade lower than 65% on an assignment or assessment. Teachers will also contact parents when a pattern of poor performance is noted.

Behavior Report

Behavior information is available on a weekly basis on RenWeb. In the event that a student has earned an excessive number of demerits during the quarter, an automated email notification will be generated to the parent detailing the offenses.

Mid-Term Reports

Since parents are able to access progress and performance information on a weekly basis via RenWeb, BCA does not publish a separate Mid-Term Report.

Report Cards

Report cards give the students' letter grades for each class. PreK students are issue a quarterly Progress Report. Comments may be included as appropriate. Report cards are officially posted on RenWeb at the end of each quarter. Final report cards are mailed. Report cards will not be accessible unless the student's financial account is up-to-date during the school year and paid in full at the end of the year.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are held twice during the school year. Readiness – 2nd grade conferences are scheduled directly with the teacher who sends out a notification of the date and a means of making an appointment.

In grades 3 – 8, the students have multiple teachers and the conferences are scheduled by the campus administrative assistant. Since these conferences may be with all of the student's teachers, it is not possible to have a conference with every parent on the day set aside for parent-teacher conferences. Therefore, priority is given to those parents whose students are earning two or more low C's or a grade below a C and for parents of new students. Other parents are welcome to schedule a conference on that day if there is a slot available or on another day after school. Middle school students are required to attend parent-teacher conferences.

Scheduling Conferences

Parents may call the school office or send an email when an appointment is desired with the teacher or administrator. **Teachers may not be seen for impromptu questions,**

conferences, or discussions, particularly at the beginning of the school day. All meetings with a teacher must be scheduled in advance.

Visiting the Classroom

Parents sometimes want to observe their student in the classroom environment. Observations in the classroom must be scheduled in advance with the teacher and are limited to one class period in order to avoid disruption to the classroom routine. Upon arrival, the parent is to sign in at the school office and obtain a visitor badge. The administrative assistant will notify the teacher of the parent's arrival.

Use of Telephone

Students are not allowed to use the school phone. In the case of an emergency, the school will contact a student's parents. Personal cell phones are not permitted and will be confiscated. Arrangements for after-school activities should be made prior to the day of the activity. Personal messages from parents cannot be taken to children during school hours unless there is an emergency.

Parties

Parents are welcome to provide refreshments during the lunch period for their student's birthday. In addition, there may be class or school-wide parties planned for a variety of reasons. Parents may be contacted to provide food contributions.

Invitations to personal parties are not to be distributed at school. A BCA family directory is available in RenWeb to facilitate relationship building. Parents may choose not to have their information displayed in the directory.

Handling Concerns or Complaints

The following procedure is used by BCA faculty and staff and is taught to the students. Parents are urged to use this procedure as well since it is the plan given in God's Word.

If you have a concern/complaint:

- **Pray.** Seek God.
- **Express your concern** promptly in a spirit of respect **to the proper person.** Concerns about a particular problem or situation should be expressed **to the individual involved.** Do not broadcast them. Express your complaint **only** to the person who should hear it. Unneeded worry, harm, and hard feelings result when problems and dissatisfactions are expressed to persons other than those directly involved. Your concern should be expressed to the administrator if you cannot work it out with that individual and no one else. (Matthew 5:23,24)

- Express it clearly and respectfully. Make sure the person to whom you are expressing your complaint understands the details of the situation and **exactly what you are complaining about and why**. Please focus on the issue and refrain from general accusations or personal attacks. Clearly state what you would like the person to do.
- **Pray about it.** Ask God to help you to make your complaint in such a way that it will result in a stronger partnership with the individual and the betterment of the school. Read and think about such passages as Ephesians 4:1-3 and Colossians 3:12-13. Pray about it.

If you overhear or are told a concern/complaint:

- Encourage the person communicating to express his/her concern/complaint only to the person who is a part of the problem or a part of the solution.
- Pray and ask God to take care of the situation. **Do not continue to listen to the details of the problem after you discern that you are not part of the problem or the solution.**

If a complaint is made to or about you:

- Understand what the complaint is and why it is being made.
- Give it prompt attention and agree on an effective solution.
- Make it a growth experience and learn from any mistakes.

Be sure to allow ample time for a problem to be resolved before contacting the administrator. Most of the problems that arise can be resolved by keeping the channels of communication open with the teacher. However, if a problem is not resolved, please contact the administrator for assistance in reaching a resolution. Administrators cannot address concerns of which they are not aware.

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

Discipline is a biblical principle by which individuals are trained in righteousness (Heb. 12:6-11). Consistent, loving discipline enables students to learn to do what is right and to grow in every area of their lives. We recognize that “no discipline seems pleasant, but painful” to the one being trained by it. However, the fruit of righteousness that results from discipline will ultimately benefit the individual and those around him/her. Our commitment is to apply discipline “with great patience and careful instruction” and to base all correction on the Word of God (2 Tim. 4:2). When correction is necessary, our goal is to lead the student to repentance and restoration in a spirit of grace while preserving his/her personal dignity.

Discipline Policies and Procedures

In order to maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning, the following behavior is not permitted.

- Being disruptive – intentionally causing a disturbance that draws class attention away from the learning task at hand
- Out of order – doing anything other than the task at hand whether it causes a disturbance or not
- Talking – persistent communicating during a time when talking is not permitted
- Rudeness – speaking/acting in an unkind, disrespectful, or demeaning manner to anyone; teasing
- Attitude lacking – displaying in word or action an unwillingness to submit to the instruction or correction of a teacher

When a student chooses to persist in any of these behaviors, the teacher will record the incident and will issue a consequence. A brief time-out during recess, lunch with the teacher, an essay assignment, a phone call to the parent, or other consequence may be issued. Behavior incidents which result in a consequence are noted through the posting of a demerit on RenWeb. If a pattern of misbehavior persists or an incident is more serious, a demerit will be given and the parent may receive a call from the teacher or an administrator.

- Intentional disobedience – serious willful rebellion/defiance

Intentional disobedience is considered a serious behavioral offense (*See Behavioral Offenses*) and is addressed as such. This behavior will be documented in RenWeb and the student will be sent to the administrator. The teacher or administrator will contact the parents to explain the incident and to discuss the disciplinary action to be taken.

Most BCA students receive no demerits throughout a quarterly grading period. Students who earn an excessive number of demerits in a quarter are considered to be in non-compliance BCA behavioral standards. A conference may be scheduled with the administrator and the parent(s) of any student who has exhibited a pattern of misbehavior. The administrator may place the student on a daily accountability plan or behavioral Performance Plan. Students who continue to demonstrate an inability or unwillingness to comply with BCA behavioral expectations may be asked to withdraw or may not be permitted to continue enrollment the following year.

Middle School Code of Conduct

While students in preschool through elementary school are still very much under the control of their teachers, middle school students are expected to take ownership of their education and to make a personal commitment to controlling their own conduct. Therefore, they are expected to conduct themselves in the following manner:

1. Speak and act respectfully to teachers and staff members
 - Make eye contact
 - Speak in a quiet tone of voice at all times
 - Endeavor to portray only positive body language (no eye rolling, etc.)
 - Receive correction in an affirmative manner (Hebrews 12:11 “*For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*”)
 - If a concern or conflict with an adult occurs, speak to the person respectfully in private at an appropriate time
 - Speak respectfully *about* those in authority
2. Speak and act respectfully to classmates
 - Communicate only positive things to others
 - Avoid talking *about* others (If it’s positive, say it to them. If it isn’t, don’t say it at all.)
 - Respect other people’s personal space
 - Respect other people’s belongings
 - Stay out of other people’s business
3. Obey school authorities (teachers, administrators, office staff, lunch room staff, extended care workers)
 - Do what you are asked to do without arguing or complaining
4. Comply with school rules
 - Be in the proper uniform/abide by the dress code
 - Be on time to school and class
 - Be prepared for class with assignments and materials
 - Do assigned work
 - Follow each teacher’s classroom rules and procedures
 - No gum chewing on school grounds
 - Respect school property

Behavioral Offense Policies and Procedures

Unfortunately, at times students commit offenses of a more serious nature. The offenses listed below may result in suspension or expulsion from BCA.

- Any communication of a sexual nature
- Cheating (including plagiarism)
- Destruction of property
- Forging a parent's signature
- Gossip/slander
- Harassment (incl. sexual)
- Inappropriate relationships (There is to be no physical contact or public displays of affection.)
- Leaving a designated area without permission
- Leaving school grounds
- Lying
- Offenses via the Internet and/or social media including, but not limited to, gossip, slander, threatening, teasing, bullying, profanity, crude communication, lying, and harassment, whether perpetrated on school property or from another location. A student may be required by the administrator to give access to his/her online accounts in the course of investigating such behavioral offenses. Refusal to do so may result in expulsion.
- Physical aggression/Fighting (whether the initiator/aggressor or not; includes hitting, punching, shoving, etc.)
- Possession of a weapon
- Possession of inappropriate items (e.g., alcohol, drugs, prescribed medications, or cigarettes)
- Profanity/crude communication
- Stealing
- Teasing/bullying/threatening
- Willful rebellion/defiance

This list of potential behavioral offenses is not exhaustive. The administration reserves the right to use its discretion in determining whether behavior is serious enough to warrant suspension or expulsion even for a first offense. In addition, it should be noted that engaging in illegal or biblically immoral behavior at any time, including when off the school campus is grounds for suspension or expulsion.

If a behavioral offense occurs, the parent will be contacted by the teacher who witnessed the offense or by an administrator. A demerit will be entered in RenWeb to

document the offense and to indicate the consequence. A meeting may be scheduled with the administrator.

If a second behavioral offense occurs, a conference with the parent, student, and administrator will be scheduled. The administrator may place the student on a daily accountability system and/or a behavioral Performance Plan.

Detention

The administrator may issue lunch/recess detention as a consequence for misbehavior. Detention consists of the student being detained in an isolated, but monitored, location. Detention may involve completing a written assignment regarding his/her misbehavior.

Suspension

If a behavioral offense requiring suspension occurs, the parent will be contacted by an administrator the day the offense is discovered. A demerit will be entered into RenWeb to document the offense and the disciplinary action to be taken. A meeting may be scheduled with the administrator. The suspension period will begin the day following discovery of the offense and will continue for a minimum of one school day.

Students who are suspended for a behavioral offense will automatically receive a grade of “U” (Unsatisfactory) in Conduct on the quarterly report card for that quarter. Since the student is not present in school during a suspension, he/she is not eligible for a “Perfect Attendance” award.

In the event that a student commits a second behavioral offense requiring suspension, the parent will be contacted to schedule a meeting for the parents and the student with the administrator. Prior to beginning the second suspension period, the requirements for ending the suspension will be agreed upon in writing.

After two suspensions, the student will be placed on behavioral probation for the remainder of the school year. Any additional behavioral offenses that occur during that period will result in the student being expelled or asked to withdraw.

Students who have been suspended more than once during the course of one academic year will be allowed to remain enrolled only under a behavioral Performance Plan.

In-School Suspension

BCA does not conduct in-school suspensions. All behavioral suspensions require that the student be completely removed from the school environment.

Out-of School Suspension

If a student is suspended from school, it has been deemed in the best interest of the student body to have the student completely removed from the school environment for a period. Clear requirements for the student's reinstatement will be communicated to the parent(s). Students who are suspended from school are not permitted to make up class work, quizzes, or tests that are missed. The student will receive zeroes. However, homework and projects completed at home may be submitted upon the student's return to school, but may be considered late.

Expulsion

If a student has been unresponsive to correction during the suspension process and/or there is no significant behavioral change over the time period determined by the administration, the student will be expelled or asked to withdraw from BCA. The administration reserves the right to expel for any one-time offense deemed of a serious enough nature.

DRESS CODE

The BCA administration desires to provide an environment in which students can focus on their schoolwork and on developing their identity in Christ. Experimenting with the styles of the surrounding culture is best left out of the Christian school environment as it distracts from that focus. **We ask that parents and students submit to the spirit of this policy by avoiding dress and grooming choices that may be questionable.**

All students are expected to be in their proper school uniform every day. Clothes should always look clean and well-kept and should fit without being tight or too short. Persistent uniform violations will be deemed non-compliance with the BCA Statement of Cooperation and Agreement and the parent may be contacted by the administrator and other consequences applied, such as calling the parent to bring the student the proper uniform.

Students in grade 3 – 8 are required to have their shirts tucked in and must wear a belt. If a student is not in the appropriate uniform for the day, the student will receive a uniform violation. Uniform violations for students in grades 3 – 8 will result in recess detention for the day. Recess detention may involve a written assignment.

Hairstyles

All students are expected to keep their hair clean, well-kept, and out of their eyes. Hair should be a natural color.

Jewelry

Jewelry that does not present a classroom or student distraction may be worn. However, only ears may be pierced and only girls are permitted to wear earrings. Students may not wear “smart” watches that have Internet access, chat features, or email applications. Traditional watches are acceptable.

UNIFORM OPTIONS

Option components are not interchangeable. ***These items MUST be purchased from Flynn & O’Hara Uniform Company.**

Option #1 for All Students

- *White, cardinal, or navy blue polo shirt (short or long sleeves) with flame logo
- Navy blue or khaki/tan colored uniform pants
- Belts worn must be plain black
- Socks should be navy blue, black, white, tan, or *cardinal
- **Entirely black** shoes (*black sole, black strings/Velcro, minimum embellishments*) with heels not to exceed one inch

Option #2 for Readiness - Elementary Girls Only

- White Peter Pan blouse (short or long sleeves)
- *Plaid jumper (length should be at the knee)
- Socks or tights should be navy blue, black, white, tan, or *cardinal
- **Entirely black** shoes (*black sole, black strings/Velcro, minimum embellishments*) with heel not to exceed one inch

Option #3 for Middle School Girls Only

- White oxford blouse (short or long sleeves)
- *Plaid uniform skirt (length should be at the knee)
- Socks or tights should be navy blue, black, white, tan, or *cardinal
- **Entirely black** shoes (*black sole, black strings/Velcro, minimum embellishments*) with heels not to exceed one inch

P.E. Uniform (1st – 8th grade only; to be worn only on designated days)

- *White logo gym shirt
- *Navy blue logo gym shorts (no shorter than mid-thigh)
- *Navy blue logo sweatpants & *sweatshirt (Sweatpants to be worn over the shorts during the school day. Wearing a sweatshirt is optional.)
- White **crew-style** socks (no skin visible)
- Athletic shoes (not fashion sneakers)

- BCA athletic spirit wear items may be worn with the PE uniform on the student's PE day.

Field Trip Uniform (*All students must have a field trip uniform.*)

- *Cardinal polo shirt (short or long sleeves) with the flame logo
- Navy blue uniform pants
- Plain black belt
- Navy blue socks
- Entirely black shoes (unless otherwise specified)

Warmer Weather

In the fall and spring, students in Readiness – 5th grade may wear:

- Bermuda-length uniform shorts
- Bermuda-length uniform skorts (girls only) – may be worn with tights if desired
- *White, cardinal, or navy blue polo shirt (short or long sleeves) with the flame logo
- Sock color should be navy blue, black, white, tan, or cardinal

Colder Weather

A *Prescott Red cardigan, plain navy blue cardigan, or the *BCA logo fleece jacket may be worn in the classroom. Non-uniform sweaters and jackets are not permitted.

Clothing Items Not Permitted

- Shorts out of season or shorts or skorts by middle school students
- Corduroy pants
- Casual pants (e.g., pockets on the leg, top-stitching on seams or pockets, back pockets with flaps, skinny, boot-cut, or bell-bottom style)
- Boots
- Long-sleeved shirts under short-sleeved uniform shirts

Undershirts/Clothing

All underclothing worn under a shirt should be a color that is not readily visible through the student's shirt. This includes undershirts and bras. Underclothing with any emblem, decal, pattern, or artwork is not permitted. Undershirts should not extend beyond the outer shirt.

Dress for Extended Care

Students who remain at school for afternoon Extended Care are to remain in their school uniform unless participating in a BCA-sponsored activity that requires other attire (e.g., BCA sports, dance instruction).

Sports Uniforms

The sports fees cover the cost of team uniforms for BCA competitive sports teams.

Identification of Clothing

Since the students wear uniforms, it is necessary that all items of clothing be labeled with the student's name. BCA cannot be held responsible for the loss of a student's clothing.

Lost and Found

The *Lost and Found* is located in a designated place in each building. Every month these items are given to a local charity. Students are responsible for having their name on their belongings. BCA accepts no responsibility for discarding or donating items that have been left unclaimed in the Lost and Found.

EXTENDED CARE

Morning Care

Students who need to arrive at school early may be dropped off according to the guidelines and times listed below:

Cox Building Gym: 6:30 – 7:30 a.m. Students in any grade

After 7:30 a.m. ONLY Readiness – 5th grade

Middle school students who are dropped off at Campus 1 will be transported to Campus 2 at 7:25 a.m.

After that, they MUST go directly to Campus 2.

Middle School Campus Fellowship Hall: 7:30 – 7:55 a.m.

Oakes Building – No morning care provided

Cold breakfast available at Campus 1/Oakes Building only between 6:30 and 7:15 a.m.; purchases are billed to the student's account.

All students must be signed in to morning Extended Care. If brought to the Cox Building, the student must be signed in by his/her parent. Middle school students may sign themselves in or be signed in by the morning care worker. Supervision of students by school staff begins when a student is signed into Extended Care. BCA assumes no responsibility for students prior to 6:30 a.m. at Campus 1/Cox Building, prior to 7:30 a.m. at Middle School, or for students who have not presented themselves to have their presence acknowledged.

After-School Extended Care

The Extended Care program is available to Bethel Christian Academy students only. Extended Care hours are considered part of the BCA school day. As such, all BCA policies apply during Extended Care.

Afternoon Extended Care is offered from 3:00 - 6:30 p.m. at Campus 1/Cox Building for students in Readiness – 2nd grade. Students in grades 3 – 8 have afternoon Extended Care at Campus 3/Oakes Building. *Parents must sign all students out of Extended Care in the afternoon/evening.* BCA does not assume responsibility for any students on the property after Extended Care closes (6:30 p.m. or when the last registered student is picked up.)

Student Behavior in Extended Care

Students are expected to conduct themselves in the same manner as expected during the school day. When behavioral offenses occur, they will be documented by the Extended Care Coordinator and may result in the student receiving a demerit. Extended Care behavior will be reflected on the students' Conduct grade on their quarterly report card.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR SPORTS

Academic Eligibility Policy/Procedure

Eligible students in 5th grade and up may try out for the BCA sports teams. Students wishing to participate in the competitive sports program at Bethel Christian Academy must maintain at least a C in all subjects. Academic eligibility is determined at the end of each quarterly grading period. If a student falls below a C during the season at the evaluation period, he/she will be removed from the team.

Behavioral Eligibility Policy

Students must demonstrate acceptable behavior in all school situations to be permitted to try out for and to participate in competitive sports. A Conduct grade of at least S (Satisfactory) is required. If, during the season, a student's Conduct grade falls below an S, he/she will be removed from the team. A student who is suspended for any behavioral offense may be removed immediately from the team at the judgment of the administration.

Athletic Participation/Commitment

It will be necessary for students to attend practices scheduled after school hours. It is the responsibility of the parent to make arrangements for the student to be picked up when practice is over. Students who are not picked up will be placed in Extended Care, and the parent will be charged. Parents should not remove a student athlete from

participation on a BCA team as a family disciplinary measure as it can adversely affect the entire team. Participation in BCA sports is both a privilege and a commitment.

Students wishing to participate in athletics must have an annual **athletic physical**. The Sports Authorization form documenting the physical exam is in addition to the regular health inventory. If a student has been absent due to sickness during the school day, he/she will not be allowed to participate in a scheduled game the same afternoon.

A sports fee is charged for students who play competitive sports to cover the cost of uniforms, referees, gym charges, and league fees. BCA has boys' and girls' competitive basketball, girls' competitive volleyball, and cheerleading. In addition to competitive sports, intramural sports, and sports clinics may be offered.

School Colors & Mascot

BCA's school colors are navy blue and burgundy. The school mascot is the Eagle, taken from Isaiah 40:31 "*Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*" BCA sports teams are the Eagles.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Payment Schedule

Bethel Christian Academy uses the FACTS Tuition Management Company. An account must be set up by the parent upon enrollment with BCA for automatic debits through FACTS for tuition and other school expenses. FACTS provides a monthly statement with itemized information regarding expenses due. Payment options include:

1. **Annual Plan** - full tuition for the year paid on or before July 25. Parents choosing this plan receive a 2% discount upon payment by cash, check, or money order. This discount does not apply to credit card payments.
2. **Semester Plan** – 50% payment no later than July 25 or the first month the student is enrolled if enrolled after July 25 and 50% payment due December 1.
3. **Bi-Monthly Plan** - payments starting July 10 and continuing until April 30 by direct debit or credit card.
4. **Monthly Plan** - Multiple monthly payments of equal amount beginning no later than July 25 or the first month the student is enrolled if enrolled after July 25 and continuing until April 30 by direct debit or credit card.

Throughout the school year, payments will be withdrawn according to the date set by the parent in FACTS. **Delaying a payment to another date or the next month will not be permitted.** All tuition must be paid by April 30.

If a student is enrolled in BCA's Summer Camp, arrangements for school year tuition for the next year can be made to begin in August and run through May 30. However, in that case, all tuition and fees must be paid for that school year in full before a student may participate in graduation or receive a final report card.

Tuition accounts that are past due at the end of a month will result in a student's report card being blocked on RenWeb and the student/parents will not be permitted to incur additional charges for Extended Care or hot lunch until a student's account is made current.

Bethel Christian Academy assesses a 1.5% late fee per month on any unpaid balance. If a student's account becomes more than 30 days in arrears, **the student will be removed from class attendance until the account is brought up-to-date.** If it becomes necessary to send an account to collections, Bethel Christian Academy reserves the right to assess a collections fee of 33% of the outstanding balance. Final report cards will not be mailed until the account is paid in full, and students may attend summer camp only on a cash basis.

Continuous Enrollment

Bethel uses a continuous enrollment contract. This means that upon acceptance, parents sign an Educational Agreement that is continuous from year to year.

That means students are automatically enrolled for all subsequent years until graduation unless the parent gives the school written notice by February 28 of the current school year that they are withdrawing the student for the following year.

Therefore, unless written notice is received by the Finance Office by February 28 of the current school year, the expectation is that the student will attend Bethel Christian Academy for the entire next school year and the parent will pay the annual tuition.

A tuition deposit is withdrawn in two \$100 installments in March and April via FACTS. Required annual medical forms are mailed to the parents during the summer to be returned by the beginning of the next school year.

Tuition Refund

BCA's general policy is that tuition obligations and payments are not refundable. Parents should refer to the Educational Agreement that they signed upon enrollment for details.

Hot Lunch

Bethel Christian Academy offers a hot lunch program. A hot lunch menu is published monthly. Two options are available for purchasing hot lunch:

- Purchase of a meal plan to cover the entire year's lunches
- Be billed for individual lunches

Students who bring their lunch are not permitted to bring soda, and candy is discouraged. Students do not have access to a microwave oven.

The hot lunch menu includes pizza on Fridays. Each student will receive one slice of pizza at the regular lunch cost. Additional slices are \$1.00 each. Students who are planning to get pizza must sign up on Thursday so an accurate order can be placed.

Other Fees

Most of the costs involved in educating a student at BCA are included in the tuition. However, there are some specific fees that apply to certain situations as listed below.

Preschool Snack Fee

This fee covers the cost of the state-mandated snack provided by the school each day.

Technology Fee

Students in 3rd – 8th grade have a greater exposure to technology during the school day and may be required to type and print out class assignments. This fee offsets some of the cost of this technology use and printing. However, this fee does NOT imply that every student may print out every assignment for every class at school as this is not practical within school-day time constraints. Homework assignments that are required to be submitted as a hard copy should be printed at home and brought to school on the date due.

Sports Fee

Athletic fees are assessed for each individual sport for uniforms, gym use, transportation, league fees, and referee costs.

Damaged/Lost Book Charges

BCA does not charge parents an annual book fee. Non-consumable books are on loan to the student and should be cared for accordingly. A charge will be assessed to cover replacement of lost or damaged non-consumable books. A student's account is also charged to replace any lost consumable books.

Graduation Fee

A graduation fee will be applied to the accounts of Kindergarten and 8th grade students in April. This fee covers such things as caps and gowns, certificates, receptions, and

end-of-year trips. If the student's account is not paid in full (including the graduation fee) at the time of graduation exercises, the student will not be allowed to participate.

Transcript Request Fee

A fee of \$15.00 will be charged for each transcript requested to be sent to another school. Transcripts are not given directly to the parent.

Extended Care Fees

All students in Readiness - 8th grade will be charged the hourly rate of \$5.25 whether using Extended Care on a daily or occasional basis. Families with more than one student will receive a discount of 50% for each additional student utilizing Extended Care. It is school policy that students be supervised at all times. Therefore, students not picked up by 3:00 p.m. will be placed in Extended Care and parents will be charged.

In addition, Extended Care enrichment activities may have a separate materials and participation fee. **If a student is involved in one of these activities his/her account will be charged for Extended Care as well.** Students involved in BCA competitive sports are not charged for Extended Care during practice and game times.

Extended Care is available on a half-hour basis. Parents will be billed monthly for all accrued charges, and charges will appear on the monthly statement. Extended Care privileges will cease should a student's account become delinquent.

If children are not picked up by 6:30 p.m., parents will be charged \$1.00 for every minute thereafter. For the second child, parents are charged \$.50 for every minute after 6:30 p.m.

Withdrawal

If it is necessary to withdraw a student before the end of the school year, a Withdrawal form must be completed and submitted to the Student Accounts office and BCA hardcover books and other school materials (i.e., novels, sports uniforms, and library books) must be turned in. The school will need the name and address of the school to which the student will transfer so that records can be sent and will only be released if all financial obligations are met. School records are not given directly to the parent. See "**Tuition Refund**" for policies regarding financial obligations when withdrawing.

FUND-RAISING & CONTRIBUTIONS

Annual Fund-Raising

BCA may conduct fund-raisers during the school year and opportunities are provided

for contributing to the growth and development of the school. Donations may also be solicited for specific needs such as technology for the classrooms.

Read-A-Thon

During the summer months, BCA promotes reading for our students through a Read-A-Thon program. Students solicit pledges for each book that they read. When the students return in September, they turn in their pledges along with their signed reading list. Students reading a certain number of books will be acknowledged during Chapel in the fall.

Box Tops for Education

Bethel Christian Academy collects Box Tops for Education which are used toward the purchase of needed equipment for the school (e.g., gym equipment, and projectors). Students may bring in box tops throughout the school year.

Grocery Store Receipts

Parents are asked to select Bethel Christian Academy as their designated school on grocery store club cards. With these funds, the school is able to purchase things such as educational videos, printers, and athletic equipment.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

BCA follows the same inclement weather procedure as Howard County. BCA information may also be posted on www.bethelchristianacademy.com and on RenWeb.

Delays

When there is a delay, the regular arrival time for students will correspond with the called delay.

However, the delay for morning Extended Care is specified as follows:

- 1-hour delay, Extended Care opens at 7:30 a.m. at both campuses. No breakfast is available.
- 2-hour delay, Extended Care opens at 8:30 a.m. at both campuses. **If school is cancelled for the entire day, there is no Extended Care.**

Closings

If Howard County schools are closed due to inclement weather, BCA will also close. However, there may be times when the public schools were already closed for a holiday

or other event and BCA is open. In that situation, the BCA administration will make a decision regarding closing and will post the information on the BCA web site, and on RenWeb, and will send out an email to parents by 6:00 a.m.

The BCA administration reserves the right to make an independent decision regarding the return of students to school after a snowfall that may differ from Howard County. If BCA is opening on a day that the county is still unable to do so, the administration will post the information on the BCA web site, and on RenWeb, and will send an email to parents by 6:00 a.m. that morning.

When extreme weather conditions make it necessary to close school earlier than usual, announcements will be made on TV and radio for Howard County; BCA will also try to contact parents by phone or email. Students must be picked up as soon as possible.

If school has to close early because of weather conditions, bus riders will be provided bus transportation home. Afternoon Extended Care will be cancelled.

MEDICAL POLICIES

The Health Department requires immunization records for all students. No student will be permitted to attend school without a completed immunization form or waiver on file by the first day of school. New immunization records are only required when the student receives a new vaccine.

A doctor and the parent must complete a Health Assessment form for each student. These forms may be obtained from the school office and will remain on file in the office. Forms are to be updated when there is a change in the student's physical condition.

Students who become ill or need to take medication are to go to the school office. A trained Medication Technician (MT) will be available to assist these students.

All students who wish to participate in competitive sports must undergo an annual **athletic physical** and submit a Sports Authorization form signed by the doctor that is dated after June 15th of each year in addition to the regular health assessment. The

Sports Authorization form must be submitted to the school before a student may practice or participate in any competitive sports.

School Emergency Medical Consent

Parents are to complete and sign an Emergency Medical Consent form giving Bethel Christian Academy and its officers permission to obtain medical assistance if an injury seems serious. This includes having the child transported to a medical facility if necessary.

Emergency contact information must be kept updated throughout the year. Updates can be made by calling the school office or by using the “web forms” on RenWeb. Parents are to pick up their sick child within one hour of being called.

If the Emergency Medical Consent form is not on file by the Wednesday of the first week of school of the new school year, the student will not be allowed to attend classes until the Emergency Medical Consent form is received.

**If a student is sent home during the school day due to sickness or is home all day sick, he/she will not be permitted to attend any after-school activities.*

Medication

BCA follows Maryland statutes regarding medication. No prescription or over-the-counter medications (including aspirin, Tylenol, ibuprofen, cough drops, throat lozenges, vitamins, and homeopathic remedies) will be given to any student for any reason without **a written doctor’s order**. A doctor’s order for medication must be completed every year. This form with dosage and time requirements will be kept on file in the health office. Whenever possible, students should take medication at home. However, when necessary, a Medication Technician (MT) will administer medication at school.

Parents must give the first dose of any new prescription or over-the-counter medication prior to the student coming to school. This does not include PRN or emergency medications (e.g., EpiPen).

Medications to be given at school under a doctor’s order must be brought to the office by the parent. Medication is not to be sent to school in lunch boxes or other containers. Students found with medication will have it taken away and parents will be notified. If a student goes to morning Extended Care, all medications should be given to the adult worker. All medication is administered by a trained MT when the student is at school. On field trips, medications may be administered by the teacher if needed. The MT will notify the parents when additional medication is needed at school.

All medications must be in their original containers. When filling a prescription, parents should request a school bottle from the pharmacy. All medications must be supplied by the parents for school use. Any leftover medications will be returned to the parent at the end of the school year.

In compliance with school health standards (COMAR 13A.05.05.05--.15), medications are stored in a locked cabinet. Access to this space is under the authority of the MT and administrator.

A record will be maintained in the school office indicating each time a medication is given. Upon administering medication, the parent will be notified what medication was given, at what time.

Emergency medication (i.e., epiPen) is available at the school for allergic reactions that are unforeseen. Parents must have signed an authorization for their student to be given this medication in the case of an unforeseen emergency.

Illness

A student is considered sick if he/she has/is:

- A fever. That is defined as a temperature of 99.0 or greater. A student should be fever-free without medication for *more than* 24 hours before returning to school.
- Vomiting or diarrhea. A student should not have thrown-up or had diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Starting on antibiotics. A student is contagious until he/she has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Yellow, green or any color mucous. Whether it is blown out or coughed up, colorful mucous indicates infection. A physician should evaluate the student because he/she may need antibiotics.
- Inflamed, crusty, red, or runny eyes. A student with these symptoms needs to be evaluated by a doctor for possible conjunctivitis. If bacterial conjunctivitis is diagnosed, the student will need antibiotic eye drops. The student must be symptom-free or on medication for 24 hours or have written clearance from a doctor to return to school.
- Stiff Neck. A student must be symptom-free or have a note from a doctor to return.
- Unusually sleepy, lethargic, or grumpy. A student must be symptom-free for 24 hours.

- Skin lesions that are severe, weeping, or pus filled. The student must be symptom-free or on medication for 24 hours or have written clearance from a doctor.
- Nausea. Student must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Difficulty breathing or wheezing. A student must be symptom free for 24 hours.

The state health department has issued the following information regarding communicable diseases and quarantine times.

- Ringworm. A student suspected of having ringworm needs to be evaluated by a doctor. The student may return 24 hours after beginning of treatment and requires a doctor's statement to verify medication and treatment. Area must be covered with a dressing at school.
- Strep Throat. A student with sore throat and fever should be evaluated by a doctor for possible strep throat. A student may return 24-48 hours after beginning treatment with antibiotics.
- Chickenpox. Student may not return to school for 6 days from onset of rash and all pox should have dry scabs.
- Conjunctivitis. Student must be symptom-free, on antibiotics for 24 hours, or have written clearance from a doctor.
- Impetigo. A student may return 24 hours after beginning treatment or with written clearance from a doctor.
- Fifth Disease. Parent must notify the school nurse.
- Lice. Student may return to school after receiving treatment with a pedicilize shampoo and all nits have been removed

Students displaying any of the above symptoms should not be sent to school. Parents will be called to pick them up.

Injury or Illness at School

All students who are injured or become ill during the regular day will be escorted to the school office. In case of injury, a teacher or staff member will escort the student to the MT's office and an accident report will be completed. Basic first aid will be provided. Parents will be notified if the injury is more serious than a minor bruise or scrape and proper professional medical attention will be sought.

If a student is complaining of a sickness (e.g., headache, stomachache, sore throat) and/or is running a fever, the parent will be called and is required to pick the student up **within one hour**.

Working parents should make arrangements before the school year begins regarding who will be responsible for picking up a sick child. BCA does not have the resources to provide care for a sick child while parents complete their day at work or try to find someone to pick up their child. Therefore, since a staff member must be designated to stay with a sick child, **parents will be charged an extended care fee of \$5.25/hour for the time the student remains in school beyond the required one-hour pick-up window.**

When parents send a student to school, they should be aware that other students will be present and that the students may be playing on the blacktop, on the field, in the gym, and on playground equipment. There are inherent risks involved in the activities associated with multi-student play and playground play in general. As such there is an “assumption of risk” on the part of the parent that is not transferred to the school or the school personnel. Therefore, barring “contributory negligence” on the part of the school or the school personnel, the parent bears the sole responsibility for any medical expenses incurred as a result of injury while the student is on school property.

Food Policy and Management of Food Allergies

BCA will assist in providing students who have food allergies with a safe school environment which allows them to participate in all aspects of school life with their peers. The school recognizes that nut and peanut allergens are the most likely to cause a life-threatening allergic reaction. BCA provides a table in the lunchroom where students who have food allergies may choose to sit and eat. Students are encouraged to wash their hands before and after eating. Students are prohibited from sharing food. All tables are cleaned between lunch shifts.

When planning a party in the classroom, special arrangements can be made for students with allergies. If a parent is bringing in food for a birthday, notice should be given to the teacher so that student allergies can be taken into account. Arrangements can be made with the teacher or MT for the refrigeration of foods for a child with allergies if medically necessary.

While it is important to prevent exposure to food allergens whenever possible, BCA cannot and does not guarantee total elimination of these foods at school. The school does not completely ban any particular food. In addition, the school is not responsible for checking every ingredient in a meal when a child purchases hot lunch. It is the parent’s responsibility to have checked the ingredients of the prepared food.

Parents are asked to fill out a health history for their child prior to school. All health records are reviewed and appropriate staff is informed when there is a child in class

who has a food allergy. Staff members who care for students are trained in the administration of the EpiPens in an emergency. The school cannot be held negligent in not providing for a child whose parent has not indicated the existence of an allergy.

*For more details, please refer to the BCA Health and Safety Manual.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The administration desires to promote parent partnership. Opportunities to get involved may include:

The BCA STEM Initiative

This initiative needs parents to help out in a variety of ways.

- Share your expertise by conducting a workshop, demonstration, or activity in the classroom.
- Help to create/compile a resource booklet of parents willing to come in on a scheduled basis to conduct an activity.
- Lead or participate with a focused STEM club for an Extended Care club session.
- Lead or assist a team in a STEM-focused competition such as *Technovation* or *Destination Imagination*

Parents In Partnership (PIP)

BCA's parent organization is made up of committees that focus on various aspects of school support. At the beginning of the school year, parents are invited to join a committee such as the Prayer Committee, the Events Committee, or the Teacher Support/Appreciation Committee. New committees may form as parents express interest and are available to provide leadership.

PIP committees facilitate parent volunteers to do such things as:

- Helping with school programs
- Helping with the student Thanksgiving luncheon
- Manning a station at the annual Field Day and/or Carnival
- Leading an Extended Care club
- Assisting with vision or hearing screening
- Tutoring students who need additional academic support
- Copying and/or laminating materials for a teacher
- Being a "room parent"
- Assisting in the library
- Monitoring lunch and/or recess
- Arrival car duty

Coaching

Coaches are needed for soccer, basketball, baseball, running club, and cheerleading squad. It is not necessary to have a child on the team in order to volunteer to coach. For more information about coaching requirements, contact the Athletic Director.

SAFETY & SECURITY POLICIES

Student Safety

At times, unexpected events occur for which staff and students need to be prepared. BCA has specific procedures for fire or other disasters that may occur including locking down the school from intruders. The school conducts fire drills and other types of safety drills during the school year.

In the event of an actual crisis requiring a school lockdown, parents will be contacted by email and provided with specific information and guidelines for picking up their child.

Building Security

To ensure the security of BCA students and staff, all exterior doors are kept locked. No one is to be let into the building except through the designated entrance. All parents and visitors are to sign in at the school office and get a visitor badge before proceeding into the school areas of the building. If someone is noticed in the building without a visitor's badge, he/she will be directed to the school office to sign in. **Parents are required to make an appointment to visit the classroom or to meet with a teacher.**

BCA buildings are monitored by security cameras inside and outside. Anyone on the Bethel Assembly and BCA property may be recorded at any time while on the property. Note that a person's coming onto the church or school property is considered consent to record. There are no cameras in the classrooms.

Release of Students

Students are released only into the care of their parents unless written authorization has been given to release the student to another individual. Such written authorization is kept on file in the school office. When anyone arrives to pick up a student, he/she must be listed as an authorized individual and must show one of the following means of identification: BCA car sign or photo ID. In the case of parents who are separated or divorced, legal documentation must be on file indicating which parent has legal custody of the children or that the custody is held jointly. BCA cannot deny a parent access to his/her child or refuse to release the child to a parent without legal documentation.

If the student is to be picked up by someone who does not regularly do so, the parent should send in a note to that effect that day. Students are not permitted to call parents at dismissal time to get permission to go home with a friend.

Security of Personal Property

In order to ensure that a student's personal property is not lost, stolen, or broken, BCA prohibits bringing any non-school-related items to school. If a student violates this prohibition, BCA cannot be held responsible for loss or damage. Should an item be brought to school against school policy, the item will be confiscated and must be claimed by a parent. This includes, but is not limited to, hand-held electronic games, CD players, iPods, cell phones, cameras, and sports equipment. Reading material brought to school may be confiscated by the student's teacher or an administrator if it is deemed inappropriate for school. Prohibited items that are confiscated from students may be examined for content.

Students in Readiness - 2nd grade are provided with a locker or cubby space in which to store their personal school-related items. In 3rd – 8th grade, students are required to have locks for their lockers and school-related items are to be kept with the student in the classroom or placed in the student's locker. Lockers are to be accessed only before and after school and during designated locker breaks. Lockers should be kept locked at all times. Students are not to give out their locker combinations to friends. In the event that an item becomes missing, the student should notify the teacher immediately so that a search can be conducted. Locker inspections are conducted on a regular basis, and the BCA administration reserves the right to search student lockers, backpacks, and personal possessions at will. Any student found to have taken another student's or a teacher's belongings will be subject to suspension or expulsion.

Cameras, phones, and other electronic devices may not be brought by students on field trips. Chaperones may bring cameras, but may not post photos of students other than their own on any Internet site.

TRANSPORTATION

Arrival

Middle School Campus **7:55 – 8:15 a.m.**

Students must be unpacked and in the morning assembly by 8:15 a.m. or will be considered late, with the exception of bus students. Late students must check in with the appropriate person and receive a *late pass*. After 8:25 a.m., parents must come into the building to sign the student in.

Campus 3 – Oakes Building 7:55 – 8:15 a.m.

Students must be signed in, unpacked, and in their classroom by 8:15 a.m. or will be considered late with the exception of bus students. Late students must check in with the appropriate person and may receive a *late pass*. After 8:15 a.m., parents must come into the building to sign the student in.

Campus 1 – Cox Building 8:00 – 8:25 a.m.

Arrival after 8:25 a.m. is considered late and parents must come into the building to sign the student in.

Beginning at 8:00 a.m., the parent is to pull up to the curb as far forward as possible and discharge the student(s) at the designated entrance. The driver should remain in the car while the student gets out of the car. At the Cox Building, staff members will be at the curb to assist students until 8:25 a.m.

Bus Service

Families living in Howard County are encouraged to use the free public busing available to and from Campus 1. Students must be at least 5 years-old to ride the school bus. 3rd – 8th grade bus riders are then shuttled to and from their respective campuses. A list of the bus stops is available from the school office.

Bus Conduct

Students are expected to maintain the same behavior standards on the bus that they do during the school day. Any student not complying will receive the following:

- 1st Offense: Verbal warning
- 2nd Offense: 1 week of bus suspension
- 3rd Offense: Removal of bus riding privileges

Walkers

Students who live nearby are permitted to leave the campus at the end of the school day to walk home only if written permission from their parents is on file.

Campus to Campus

Parents are asked to sign a general transportation permission slip allowing BCA teachers or staff to transport students between campuses and to the local public library for a variety of reasons (e.g., to use the gym, for special presentations, research).

Dismissal

Students at each campus are to be picked up on a staggered schedule.

- Readiness – Kindergarten – 2:40 p.m. at Campus 1/Cox Building
- 1st & 2nd Grade – 2:45 p.m. at Campus 1/Cox Building
- 3rd, 4th, 5th Grade – 2:50 p.m. at Campus 3/Oakes Building
- Middle School – 2:50 p.m. at the Middle School Campus

At 3:00 p.m., all students who have not been picked up will be signed into Extended Care.

Parents are to stay in line for the student to get in the car. ***Parents and/or pick-up designees will not be allowed to enter the building to pick up students during the 2:30 – 3:00 p.m. dismissal window.*** Parents or other pick-up designees who want to come into the building to get a student, must park in a parking space (not the pick-up line) and wait until 3:00 p.m. to come in and sign out the student.

If a parent needs to pick up a child for ***early dismissal***, contact with the school must occur in advance and pick-up ***must occur before 2:30 p.m.***

All cars must display a BCA car sign with the student's name to identify the car as an authorized vehicle for picking up the student. Written authorization is required for anyone other than the student's parent(s) to pick up the student. Anyone picking up a student without a BCA car sign will be asked to park and come in to show his/her identification.

For any parents who have students in middle school and at one of the other campuses, the middle school student should be picked up first. The parent should then proceed to the other campus.

Only students that ride the bus, are participating in sports, or who attend afternoon Extended Care will be transported from the Middle School on the BCA shuttle. Parents should not wait at one building for their student to be brought over from other buildings for regular pick up as there is not enough room on the shuttle to accommodate this.

All students are to remain on the school grounds upon arriving in the morning and are not to leave until dismissed at the end of the school day unless signed out by an authorized person.

EXHIBIT 2

Chapter 150

(House Bill 150)

Budget Bill

(Fiscal Year 2018)

AN ACT for the purpose of making the proposed appropriations contained in the State Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, in accordance with Article III, Section 52 of the Maryland Constitution; and generally relating to appropriations and budgetary provisions made pursuant to that section.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That subject to the provisions hereinafter set forth and subject to the Public General Laws of Maryland relating to the Budget procedure, the several amounts hereinafter specified, or so much thereof as shall be sufficient to accomplish the purposes designated, are hereby appropriated and authorized to be disbursed for the several purposes specified for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017, and ending June 30, 2018, as hereinafter indicated.

PAYMENTS TO CIVIL DIVISIONS OF THE STATE

A15000.01 Disparity Grants

General Fund Appropriation, provided that this appropriation shall be reduced by ~~\$8,443,550~~ \$2,414,665 contingent upon the enactment of legislation ~~level-funding the grants at the fiscal 2017 amount~~ modifying the formula for disparity grants.

Further provided that \$10,000,000 of this appropriation for Baltimore City may not be distributed as a grant to Baltimore City until the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) certifies that Baltimore City has appropriated for fiscal 2018 an additional \$10,000,000 for the Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) over the fiscal 2017 Maintenance of Effort appropriation. If MSDE does not certify that Baltimore City has appropriated an additional \$10,000,000 for the school system, then the funds may not be distributed as a grant to Baltimore City, and authority is hereby granted to transfer \$10,000,000 to R00A02.01 to be provided as a grant to BCPS. If the funds are not transferred for

Ward Museum	33,423
Young Audiences of Maryland	85,000

R00A03.04 Aid to Non–Public Schools

Special Fund Appropriation, provided that this appropriation shall be for the purchase of textbooks or computer hardware and software and other electronically delivered learning materials as permitted under Title IID, Section 2416(b)(4), (6), and (7) of the No Child Left Behind Act for loan to students in eligible nonpublic schools with a maximum distribution of \$65 per eligible nonpublic school student for participating schools, except that at schools where ~~at least 20%~~ from 20% to 40% of the students are eligible for the free or reduced–price lunch program there shall be a distribution of \$95 per student, and at schools where more than 40% of the students are eligible for the free or reduced–price lunch program there shall be a distribution of \$155 per student. To be eligible to participate, a nonpublic school shall:

- (1) Hold a certificate of approval from or be registered with the State Board of Education;
- (2) Not charge more tuition to a participating student than the statewide average per pupil expenditure by the local education agencies, as calculated by the department, with appropriate exceptions for special education students as determined by the department; and
- (3) Comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

The department shall establish a process to ensure that the local education agencies are effectively and promptly working with the nonpublic schools to assure that the

nonpublic schools have appropriate access to federal funds for which they are eligible.

Further provided that the Maryland State Department of Education shall:

- (1) Assure that the process for textbook, computer hardware, and computer software acquisition uses a list of qualified textbook, computer hardware, and computer software vendors and of qualified textbooks, computer hardware, and computer software; uses textbooks, computer hardware, and computer software that are secular in character and acceptable for use in any public elementary or secondary school in Maryland; and
- (2) Receive requisitions for textbooks, computer hardware, and computer software to be purchased from the eligible and participating schools, and forward the approved requisitions and payments to the qualified textbook, computer hardware, or computer software vendor who will send the textbooks, computer hardware, or computer software directly to the eligible school, which will:
 - (i) Report shipment receipt to the department;
 - (ii) Provide assurance that the savings on the cost of the textbooks, computer hardware, or computer software will be dedicated to reducing the cost of textbooks, computer hardware, or computer software for students; and

- (iii) Since the textbooks, computer hardware, or computer software shall remain property of the State, maintain appropriate shipment receipt records for audit purposes.

Further provided that a nonpublic school participating in the Aid to Non-Public Schools Program R00A03.04 shall certify compliance with Title 20, Subtitle 6 of the State Government Article. A nonpublic school participating in the program may not discriminate in student admissions on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing herein shall require any school or institution to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings. However, all participating schools must agree that they will not discriminate in student admissions on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sexual orientation. The sole legal remedy for violation of these provisions is ineligibility for participating in the Aid to Non-Public Schools..

6,040,000

R00A03.05 Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today

Special Fund Appropriation, provided that this appropriation shall be for a Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) Program that provides scholarships for students who are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program to attend eligible nonpublic schools. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) shall administer the grant program in accordance with the following guidelines:

- (1) To be eligible to participate in the BOOST Program, a nonpublic school must:

- (a) participate in Program R00A03.04 Aid to Non-Public Schools Program for textbooks and computer hardware and software administered by MSDE;
- (b) provide more than only prekindergarten and kindergarten programs;
- (c) administer assessments to all students in accordance with federal and State law; and
- (d) comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Title 20, Subtitle 6 of the State Government Article, and not discriminate in student admissions on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing herein shall require any school or institution to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings. However, all participating schools must agree that they will not discriminate in student admissions based on race, color, national origin, or sexual orientation. If a nonpublic school does not comply with these requirements, it shall reimburse MSDE all scholarship funds received under the BOOST Program and may not charge the student tuition and fees instead. The only other legal remedy for violation of this

provision is ineligibility for participating in the BOOST Program.

- (2) MSDE shall establish procedures for the application and award process for scholarships for students who are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program. The procedures shall include consideration for award adjustments if an eligible student becomes ineligible during the course of the school year.
- (3) MSDE shall compile and certify a list of applicants that ranks eligible students by family income expressed as a percent of the most recent federal poverty levels.
- (4) MSDE shall submit the ranked list of applicants to the BOOST Advisory Board.
- (5) There is a BOOST Advisory Board that shall be appointed as follows: 2 members appointed by the Governor, 2 members appointed by the President of the Senate, 2 members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates, and 1 member jointly appointed by the President and the Speaker to serve as the chair. A member of the BOOST Advisory Board may not be an elected official and may not have any financial interest in an eligible nonpublic school.
- (6) The BOOST Advisory Board shall review and certify the ranked list of applicants and shall determine the scholarship award amounts.
- (7) MSDE shall make scholarship

awards to eligible students as determined by the BOOST Advisory Board.

(8) The amount of a scholarship award may not exceed the lesser of:

(a) the statewide average per pupil expenditure by local education agencies, as calculated by MSDE; or

(b) the tuition of the nonpublic school.

(9) In order to meet its BOOST Program reporting requirements to the budget committees, MSDE shall specify a date by which participating nonpublic schools must submit information to MSDE so that it may complete its report. Any nonpublic schools that do not provide the necessary information by that specified date shall be ineligible to participate in the BOOST Program.

(10) Students who received a BOOST Program scholarship award in the prior year who still meet eligibility criteria for a scholarship shall receive a scholarship renewal award. For students who are receiving a BOOST Program scholarship for the first time, priority shall be given to students who attended public schools in the prior school year.

Further provided that no scholarship awards shall be made after March 8, 2017. Any unexpended funds not

awarded to students for scholarships in the 2016–2017 school year shall be encumbered at the end of the fiscal year and available for scholarships in the 2017–2018 school year.

~~Further provided that up to \$150,000 of the appropriation may be used by MSDE to cover the reasonable costs of administering the BOOST Program.~~

Further provided that MSDE shall submit a report to the budget committees by December 15, 2017, that includes the following:

- (1) the number of students receiving BOOST Program scholarships;
- (2) the amount of the BOOST Program scholarships received;
- (3) the number of certified and noncertified teachers in core subject areas for each nonpublic school participating in the BOOST Program;
- (4) the _____ assessments _____ being administered in accordance with federal and State law by nonpublic schools participating in the BOOST Program, _____ as well as student performance on those assessments.
For nonpublic schools administering norm referenced assessments, the nonpublic schools shall provide to MSDE the results for all students receiving BOOST Program scholarships to whom assessments were administered.
For those nonpublic schools administering non-standardized assessments, the nonpublic schools shall

provide to MSDE the results for all students receiving BOOST Program scholarships to whom assessments were administered and how students receiving BOOST Program scholarships performed in comparison to students who did not receive BOOST Program scholarships. MSDE shall report these assessment results reported by nonpublic schools to the budget committees in an aggregate manner that does not violate student data privacy;

- (5) in the aggregate, for each BOOST Program scholarship awarded (1) the nonpublic school and grade level attended by the student; (2) the school attended in the 2016–2017 school year by the student; and (3) if the student attended the same nonpublic school in the 2016–2017 school year, whether, what type, and how much nonpublic scholarship aid the student received in the 2016–2017 school year and will receive in the 2017–2018 school year;
- (6) the average household income of students receiving BOOST Program scholarships;
- (7) the racial breakdown of students receiving BOOST Program scholarships;
- (8) the number of students designated as English language learners receiving BOOST Program scholarships;
- (9) the number of special education

students receiving BOOST
Program scholarships;

(10) the county in which students
receiving BOOST Program
scholarships reside;

(11) the number of students who were
offered BOOST Program
scholarships but declined them, as
well as their reasons for declining
the scholarships and the
breakdown of students attending
public and nonpublic schools for
students who declined scholarships;
and

(12) the number of students who
received BOOST Program
scholarships for the
2016–2017 school year who are
attending public school for the
2017–2018 school year, as well as
their reasons for returning to public
schools

~~6,850,000~~
~~2,055,904~~
~~6,850,000~~
5,500,000

SUMMARY

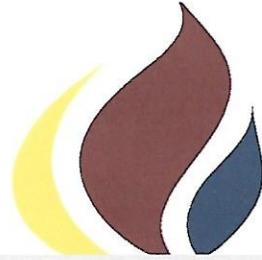
Total General Fund Appropriation	29,816,020
Total Special Fund Appropriation	11,540,000
	<hr/>
Total Appropriation	41,356,020
	<hr/> <hr/>

CHILDREN’S CABINET INTERAGENCY FUND

R00A04.01 Children’s Cabinet Interagency Fund	
General Fund Appropriation	18,655,376
	<u>18,555,376</u>
	<hr/> <hr/>

MARYLAND LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM CENTER

EXHIBIT 3



bethel christian academy

March 13, 2018

Dear Ms. Kearns:

This letter is BCA's response to the question raised by the BOOST Advisory Board regarding how Bethel Christian Academy's student handbook "reconciles with" the assurance BCA signed regarding non-discrimination in student admissions.

As a condition of participating in the BOOST program, BCA indicated that it does not "discriminate in student admissions on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sexual orientation."

BCA's Statement of Nondiscrimination reads as follows:

Bethel Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin 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 in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

BCA also states as follows:

Bethel Christian Academy supports the biblical view of marriage defined as a covenant between one man and one woman, and that God immutably bestows gender upon each person at birth as male or female to reflect His image. (Gen. 1:27, Gen. 2:23-24) Therefore, faculty, staff, and *student conduct* is expected to align with this view. Faculty, staff, and students are required to identify with, dress in accordance with, and use the facilities associated with their biological gender.

As I understand it, the BOOST Advisory Board has raised a concern that this secondary statement is somehow incompatible with BCA's assurance that it does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation in student admissions.

BCA believes that its admissions policies and practices are consistent with its assurance.

The statement about marriage and gender identity by its very terms is a statement of belief and expected conduct that applies only to BCA students (and faculty and staff) indicating that a student *has been admitted*. It says nothing about applicants for admission or the admissions

process. Bethel Christian Academy does not ask any questions about sexual orientation at all during the admissions process and is willing to enroll any student who meets the academic criteria and whose past school conduct has not been demonstrably disruptive in a previous school. Once a student is admitted, he/she is expected to comply with behavioral expectations and is subject to disciplinary action for violation of those behavioral standards, including engaging in sexual behavior of any type, whether heterosexual or homosexual.

Because the assurance pertains only to admissions decisions, the conduct policies that BCA applies to already-admitted students are irrelevant to the assurance it signed to participate in the BOOST program.

In light of the foregoing, I am confident you will agree that there is no incompatibility between BCA's admissions policies and the assurance it executed to participate in the BOOST program.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Claire M. Dant
Principal

EXHIBIT 4

STATEMENT TO THE BOOST ADVISORY BOARD
BY CLAIRE M. DANT ON BEHALF OF BETHEL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Good morning. My name is Claire Dant. I am the Principal of Bethel Christian Academy. Thank you for allowing me to make a statement this morning. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify the intent of the policy statements in the Bethel Christian Academy handbook regarding student admissions.

First, I would like to share a brief history of our school. From its inception in 1985, Bethel Christian Academy has had an "open enrollment" policy. Any student who can meet our academic standards and is likely to thrive in our structured environment is welcome to join our school community regardless of religious beliefs or sexual orientation. We do not discriminate in admissions. However, our school mission includes sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with students and families and training students to serve Him according to the Bible. We believe it is important that students and parents understand the environment in which the student is being enrolled and the requirements of BCA students. Therefore, we communicate our mission and core values to all families that are considering enrollment.

Due to our religious beliefs and the related requirements for BCA student conduct, our handbook includes a statement regarding marriage and gender. You will note that this additional statement expresses our biblical belief regarding these things and specifically refers to faculty, staff, and student conduct". It was our intent to be clear about the expectations for BCA faculty, staff, and students. Since we certainly have no control over persons who are not affiliated with our school, the use of the words faculty, staff, and students indicates that the statement applies to those who had been admitted to the school, actually supporting our policy of non-discrimination in admissions.

The BOOST bill states that "Nothing herein shall require any school or institution to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings." Therefore, a statement of our religious beliefs does not violate the program requirements. A statement of policy regarding *student conduct* also does not violate the requirement that the school not discriminate in *admissions*. The expected conduct of BCA students is governed by the religious and moral teachings of the school. Therefore, it is our position that BCA's policies and practices do not violate the requirements to participate in the BOOST Scholarship program.

Finally, I think you should know that I have had several parents contact me who will be unable to attend Bethel without the BOOST Scholarship. It is for those families that I am here today. Thank you.

EXHIBIT 5



bethel christian academy

May 29, 2018

Dear Ms. Kearns and the BOOST Advisory Board:

Following is Bethel Christian Academy's response to the additional questions posed by the BOOST Advisory Board via the letter dated May 25, 2018.

In the second paragraph of your letter is the statement that "***The law prohibits discrimination in student admissions but it can be argued that it is problematic if a school admits a student and then summarily expels the student based on sexual orientation.***" I would first like to assert that this is not what BCA does.

1) Does your school discriminate in student admissions on the basis of sexual orientation?

As stated in my March 13 letter, "BCA believes that its admissions policies and practices are consistent with its assurance" and "there is no incompatibility between BCA's admissions policies and the assurance it executed to participate in the BOOST program." From its inception in 1985, Bethel Christian Academy has had an "open enrollment" policy. Any student who can meet our academic standards and is likely to thrive in our structured environment is welcome to join our school community regardless of religious beliefs, experience of same-sex attraction, sexual self-identification, past participation in same-sex behavior, beliefs about marriage, or beliefs about sexual morality.

2) If your school was to discover that one of its students was in violation of the school's religious or moral teachings concerning sexual orientation, what would the school do to address it?

Since Bethel Christian Academy has a policy of "open enrollment", there is no requirement that families or students who apply or attend the school must *agree* with the school's Statement of Faith or specific beliefs. They are simply asked to *acknowledge* that the school has such a statement and that the school's core values include teaching from a biblical worldview.

My March 13 letter stated that an admitted student "is expected to comply with behavioral expectations and is subject to disciplinary action for violation of those behavioral standards, including engaging in sexual behavior of any type, whether heterosexual or homosexual." The school behavioral standards address student actions. A student's *private beliefs* about sexual morality and marriage would not be in violation of BCA's student conduct policy although they may be different from BCA's religious or moral teachings about sexual morality.

When BCA responds to a violation of school rules, its primary hope in virtually all circumstances is to bring the student into compliance with behavioral expectations and thus be fully restored and reconciled to the school community. This biblically-mandated approach is what guides BCA.

Along with this letter, BCA is submitting a written statement that was emailed just prior to the May Advisory Board meeting and a statement from a BCA parent who has benefited from the BOOST Scholarship.

Sincerely,

Claire M. Dant

EXHIBIT 6



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

August 8, 2018

Clair Dant, Principal
Bethel Christian Academy
8455 Savage-Guilford Rd.
Savage, MD 20763

Dear Ms. Dant,

At its June 21, 2018 meeting, the BOOST Advisory Board determined that the following statement in Bethel Christian Academy's handbook violated the nondiscrimination clause contained in the BOOST law:

"Bethel Christian Academy supports the biblical view of marriage defined as a covenant between one man and one woman, and that God immutably bestows gender upon each person at birth as male or female to reflect His image. (Gen. 1:27 Gen: 2:23-24). Therefore, faculty, staff, and student conduct is expected to align with this view. Faculty, staff, and students are required to identify with, dress in accordance with, and use the facilities associated with their biological gender."

The Board concluded that a handbook recipient may reasonably view this statement, on its face, as a prohibition on students with a non-heterosexual identity because it expects all students to align their conduct to the view of marriage as a covenant between one man and one woman (i.e., heterosexual). A non-heterosexual student may reasonably view the policy as one that allows denial of admission or discipline or expulsion on the basis of his or her sexual orientation. Therefore, the Board concluded that this policy, on its face, was in conflict with the nondiscrimination clause contained in the BOOST law.

In reaching this decision, the Board recognized the specific non-discrimination in admissions provision that the Maryland General Assembly added to the BOOST law to assure that public funds would not be available to schools that had admissions policies that were discriminatory. In reviewing the school's admission policy, the Board did not pass judgment on religious principles, which is not the Board's role. The Board applied the following principles in making its decision:

1. Admission means acceptance as a student at the school;
2. The BOOST law requires nondiscriminatory treatment throughout the process of acceptance as a student at the school;

BOOST Letter to Bethel Christian Academy – Savage

August 8, 2018

Page 2

0077

3. A bona fide admission means that the school will not take into account the student’s sexual orientation when offering entry to the school, nor will the school discipline or expel a student because of the student’s sexual orientation, as this would make acceptance at the school illusory (i.e., a sham admission);
4. A discipline policy that focuses on conduct or behavior without regard to the sexual orientation of the student does not violate the nondiscrimination clause contained in the BOOST law; and
5. A discipline policy that, on its face, singles out conduct or behavior based on the sexual orientation of the student for discipline or expulsion does violate the nondiscrimination clause contained in the BOOST law.

Although our decision was not favorable to Bethel Christian Academy, the Board wishes Bethel Christian Academy and its students success in the upcoming school year.

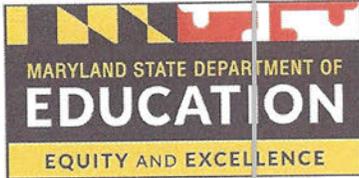
Sincerely,



Matthew Gallagher
Chair, BOOST Advisory Board

cc: BOOST Advisory Board
State Board Members
Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
Amalie Brandenburg
Monica Kearns
William Reinhard
Gayle Secrist
Elizabeth M. Kameen

EXHIBIT 7



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

CERTIFIED MAIL

December 12, 2018

Claire Dant, Principal
Bethel Christian Academy
8455 Savage – Guilford Road
Savage, MD 20763

Dear Principal Griffen:

A letter dated August 8, 2018 from the BOOST Advisory Board notified you of the Board's June 21, 2018 determination that the Bethel Christian Academy student handbook contained statements that violated the non-discrimination in admission requirement set forth in the BOOST law. The law governing compliance with the BOOST non-discrimination clause states that a nonpublic school that does not comply "shall reimburse MSDE all scholarship funds received under the BOOST program and may not charge the student tuition and fees instead." Ineligibility for participating in BOOST is also a legal remedy. Based on that law, the BOOST Advisory Board has disqualified your school from the BOOST program for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years.

The BOOST Advisory Board voted to enforce the BOOST statute to require schools that had discriminatory admissions policies and accepted BOOST scholarship funds to reimburse MSDE for those funds. Our records indicate that for the 2016-2017 school year, your school had 17 awardees with a total scholarship value of \$46,800 and for the 2017-2018 school year, your school had a total of 18 awardees with a total scholarship value of \$55,800. The total amount of BOOST Scholarship funds distributed parents and Bethel Christian Academy is \$102,600.

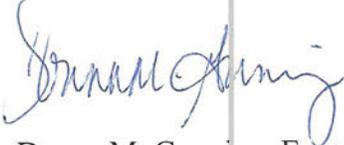
This letter and the attached invoice provide notice that payment of the above described debt is due and owing. As a reminder, pursuant to the law, the school may not charge the student tuition and fees to replace the BOOST Scholarship funds that the school is ineligible to receive.

A check in the full amount should be made payable to the Maryland State Department of Education and mailed to: MSDE, 200 W. Baltimore St, 2nd Floor Accounts Receivable, Baltimore MD 21201.

Ms. Claire Dent
December 10, 2018
Page Two

If the school can demonstrate that it is financially unable to pay this indebtedness in one lump sum, payment in installments may be arranged. Please contact Kausar Syed at 410-767-7420 or kausar.syed@maryland.gov by **January 15, 2019** to discuss possible installment payments.

Sincerely,



Donna M. Gunning, Executive Director
Office of Policy and Fiscal Analysis

c: Valerie Carpenter
Kausar Syed

EXHIBIT 8

Handbook Language of Schools Disqualified From BOOST Program

1. Trinity Lutheran Christian School

Trinity Lutheran Christian School and Early Learning Center is a religious institution providing an education in a distinct Christian environment, and it believes that its Biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christ like.

On those occasions in which the atmosphere or conduct, inside or outside the school, is counter to or in opposition to the Biblical lifestyle the school teaches, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, living in, condoning, or practicing homosexual lifestyle or alternative gender identity; promoting such practices; or otherwise having the inability to support the moral principles of the school. (Leviticus 20:1 3a, Romans 1:27, Matthew 19:4-6). As such, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student of a same sex marriage or relationship.

Revised:

Trinity Lutheran Christian School & Early Learning Center is a religious institution providing an education in a Christian environment. We hold to the Biblical standard, believing the Biblical role is to work in conjunction with students and their families to be Christ-like.

2. Grace Academy

Grace Academy's Biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christ-like. On occasion, the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home may be counter or in opposition to the Biblical lifestyle the school teaches. If the moral principles of the applicant are in conflict or do not align with those of the Grace Academy Statement of faith, Grace Academy reserves the right to refuse admission of an applicant or discontinue enrollment of a student as pursuant to Title IX of the Civil Rights Act: Section 714a.

This includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

Sexual immorality, homosexual orientation, or inability to support the moral principles of the school. In such cases, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student.

Revised:

Grace Academy's Biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christ-like. On occasion, the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home may be counter or in opposition to the Biblical lifestyle the school teaches. If the moral

principles of the applicant are in conflict or do not align with those of the Grace Academy Statement of Faith, Grace Academy reserves the right to refuse admission of an applicant or discontinue enrollment of a student.

This includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

Sexual immorality, or inability to support and follow the moral principles of the school. In such cases, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student.

3. Highland View Academy

Highland View Academy (HVA) admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities accorded or made available to HVA students. We do not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies and procedures, scholarship awards, athletic or other school-administered programs. We do, however, reserve the right to deny admission to any individual who cannot benefit from enrollment based on past academic achievement, disqualifying learning difference or physical limitations, or whose personal or family lifestyle is not in harmony with the stated philosophy of Highland View Academy.

Furthermore, Highland View Academy **does not admit or retain** individuals who engage in sexual misconduct, **homosexual conduct**, or the encouragement or advocacy of any form of sexual behavior that would undermine the Christian identity or faith mission of Highland View Academy and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Revised:

Furthermore, Highland View Academy does not admit or retain individuals who engage in sexual misconduct, or the encouragement or advocacy of any form of sexual behavior that would undermine the Christian identity or faith mission of Highland View Academy and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

4. Spencerville Adventist Academy

Spencerville Adventist Academy **does not admit or retain** individuals who engage in sexual misconduct, which includes non-marital sexual conduct, **homosexual conduct**, or the encouragement or advocacy of any form of sexual behavior that would undermine the Christian identity or faith mission of Spencerville Adventist Academy and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Spencerville Adventist Academy will respond to homosexual behavior rather than to feelings or attractions and welcomes as members for the student body, all whose behaviors meet the standards of the Seventh-day Adventist church. Students can remain in good standing if they conduct their lives in a manner that is consistent with teachings

of the church relating to sexual orientation and behavior. A student stated same-gender attraction will not be considered a violation of school policy, however, the school does require all in the student community to abstain from sexual conduct/activity. Homosexual behavior is inappropriate and violates the teachings of our faith, and includes not only casual relations between members of the same sex, but all forms of physical intimacy that give expression to homosexual feelings.

5. Takoma Academy

Takoma Academy, as a Christ-centered learning community, welcomes all those whose behavior and lifestyle are consistent with the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Regarding Human Sexuality, students can remain in good standing providing they conduct their lives in a manner that is consistent with the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist church on sexual orientation and behavior. Takoma Academy **does not admit or retain** students who engage in sexual misconduct, which includes but is not necessarily limited to, non-marital sexual conduct or **homosexual conduct**; or those students who practice or appear to advocate for any form of sexual behavior or orientation that in the judgment of the school's administration is inconsistent with the Christian identity, teachings, beliefs, or faith mission of Takoma Academy and the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Revised:

6. Atholton Adventist Academy

Inappropriate sexual activity—students can remain in good standing providing they conduct their lives in a manner that is consistent with the teachings of the Church on sexual orientation and behavior. Atholton Adventist Academy **does not admit or retain** students who engage in sexual misconduct, which includes but is not necessarily limited to, non-marital sexual conduct or **homosexual conduct**, or those students who practice or appear to advocate for any form of sexual behavior or orientation that in the judgment of the school's administration is inconsistent with the Christian identity, teachings, beliefs, or faith mission of Atholton Adventist Academy and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

7. Frederick Adventist Academy

Frederick Adventist Academy is a Seventh-day Adventist Christian school. Because of our beliefs, we prohibit students from engaging in any sexual conduct/activity, **including same sex relationships**. We have chosen to define sexual conduct/activity to include anything that advocates for, promotes or supports the **homosexual lifestyle** in any forum, including in social media. Sexual conduct/activity also includes any consensual sexual behavior that occurs before marriage, such as sexual intercourse, public displays of affection, intimate contact, **homosexuality or behavior that exhibits a same sex relationship**, pornography, and actions (for example, spending the night with someone of the opposite sex), that may lead to situations of temptation, regret and immoral conduct.

Since FAA **does not knowingly admit** a student who practices the following behaviors, the first offense on any of the following fundamental points **makes the student liable for suspension or dismissal ... improper sexual conduct** including sexting on phone or any social network.

8. Arnold Christian Academy

Sexual acts outside the bounds of marriage, including fornication, adultery, **homosexuality**, polygamy, and any other sexually immoral practice, are prohibited by God and are unprofitable for man. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 Thessalonians 4:1-8, Hebrews 13:4)

Christ-Centered Approach

Promotion, **admission policies**, discipline, classroom décor, environment, staff philosophy, and all aspects of the educational experience are first and foremost Christ-honoring and Biblically-oriented. The Bible is the source of absolute principles of life and conduct. Christ is upheld as the answer to all student problems.

9. Celebration Christian Academy

It should be noted that CCA supports the biblical view of marriage defined as a covenant between **one man and one woman**, and that God immutably bestows gender upon each person as male and female to reflect His image. Therefore, faculty, staff, and **student conduct is expected to align with this view.**

10. Broadfording Christian Academy

As a matter of conviction and policy, BCA disapproves of habits that debilitate the mind, spirit, and body, or are contrary to federal and state law. These include the use of illegal habit-forming drugs, alcoholic beverages, smoking and **sexual immorality**. The following habits and actions, which are contrary to Biblical growth and development and impair the group spirit, are not considered acceptable for BCA students: 1) cruelty; 2) obscenity in language, behavior; 3) disrespect and defiance; 4) immodest/dress code; 5) fighting; 6) cheating; 7) abusiveness; 8) sexual harassment; 9) lying; 10) stealing.

NOTE: Reconsideration granted without any revision.

11. Woodstream Christian Academy

Evidence of deviant behavior of a sexual nature (e.g., promiscuity, pregnancy, and **homosexuality**) **will be grounds for expulsion**. Issues of a sexual nature will be dealt with using the Bible as a guide while maintaining confidentiality.

12. Bethel Christian Academy

It should be noted, however, that Bethel Christian Academy supports the biblical view of marriage defined as a covenant between **one man and one woman**, and that God immutably bestows gender upon each person as male and female to reflect His image. (Gen. 1:27, Gen. 2:23-24). Therefore, faculty, staff, and **student conduct is expected to align with this view**. Faculty, staff, and students are required to identify with, dress in accordance with, and use the facilities associated with their biological gender.

Highland View Academy (HVA) admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities accorded or made available to HVA students. We do not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies and procedures, scholarship awards, athletic or other school-administered programs. We do, however, reserve the right to deny admission to any individual who cannot benefit from enrollment based on past academic achievement, disqualifying learning difference or physical limitations, or whose personal or family lifestyle is not in harmony with the stated philosophy of Highland View Academy.

Furthermore, Highland View Academy does not admit or retain individuals who engage in sexual misconduct, or the encouragement or advocacy of any form of sexual behavior that would undermine the Christian identity or faith mission of Highland View Academy and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Academic Policies

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Down Grades

A student who has lower than a C- (One D or more) in any subject, including attendance, at each four week check.

Consequences:

Student will be restricted from participating in sports (practices, games, and tournaments), will be required to attend daily study halls for the next four weeks, and may be restricted from other extracurricular activities. At the end of the four weeks, if their grade has been risen to a C-, they will be removed. If not, they will be placed on downgrades for the next four weeks.

* Any student who has at least 2 Ds or 1 F at the end of the quarter/midterm, will be placed on Academic Probation for the following term.

*If the student has not raised their grade to 1 D or higher by the end of the semester, their Academic Probation will be reconsidered for the following quarter.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

A student placed on Academic Probation for the above-listed reasons will meet with the Academic Standards Committee and will have to sign an Academic Probation Contract that is catered to their specific needs, consequences may include, but are not limited to, daily study halls, dormitory restrictions, weekly faculty family meetings, one-on-one tutoring, and restriction from extra-curriculars, etc. The student must abide by the terms of the contract in order to remain enrolled at HVA. Parents/guardians reserve the right to be present at the Academic Standards Committee in which

the terms of the Academic Probation contract are outlined, Violations of the Academic Probation Contract will be dealt with as insubordination.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/CHEATING

Academic integrity is a critical aspect of the educational process. Students are expected to do their own work at all times. Copying a classmate's work, allowing someone to copy work, obtaining answers to quizzes or tests by any dishonest means, and plagiarism are examples of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is using another person's words or ideas and passing them off as your own, whether by putting your name on the work or failing to properly give credit to the source. "Cutting and pasting" from internet sources without properly citing the source is another example of plagiarism. When the student has any question in regard to what constitutes plagiarizing or cheating, it is their responsibility to check with the teacher.

Academic Dishonesty Penalties

1st Offense:

The student will receive a zero for the work on which the cheating occurred; the student will meet with Administrative Council; an academic dishonesty form will be placed in the student's file and a copy given to the parent/guardian. The student will sign an academic probation contract which stipulates that any further cheating throughout their academic career at HVA will result in more serious consequences. The student will also be removed from any leadership position (Class and SA offices, sports captain, etc.)for the remainder of the year.

2nd Offense

The student will receive an F in the class for the semester if the first offense was in the same class for that year. Students who have two offenses even in different classes will be ineligible to participate in extra-

Expectations in Regard to Conduct; Sexual Harassment and Awareness

Purpose

This document details Takoma Academy's policies regarding sexual harassment, compliance with federal and state laws, definition of terms, and procedures for handling sexual harassment complaints.

Policy

Our policy is to maintain an awareness of the kinds of conduct which may be construed as sexual harassment so that such problems can be avoided and/or eliminated from our work/school environment. With this document we want to send a clear message that Takoma Academy will not tolerate acts of sexual harassment nor will we tolerate retaliatory behavior in response to an employee or student's complaint of harassment. In like manner, specious or false claims of sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Such actions will result in a timely review, and if warranted, disciplinary action.

Compliance

Takoma Academy values the right of all staff/students to work, study, and teach in an environment free of sexual harassment. Such behavior demeans human dignity, erodes morals and runs counter to the Christian mission and principles on which this school operates. In addition to being in violation of Takoma Academy policy, sexual harassment constitutes illegal educational discrimination under Federal and State statutes, the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and Title IX of the Education Reform Act Amendment of 1972.

Definition

Sexual harassment constitutes, but is not limited to, welcome or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other written, visual, verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature, whether occurring on campus or off, and occurring at any time, by any student or community member:

- Such conduct has the purpose of interfering with an individual's employment, academic performance, social life or creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive work/study environment or
- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment, social, spiritual, academic program or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or enrollment decisions affecting such individual.
- Examples of such behavior include but are not limited to:
 - Making threats of a sexual nature.
 - Touching or grabbing of a sexual nature, deliberate impeding or blocking movement, any intimidating interference with normal work or movement
 - Basing employment or educational decisions or practices on submission to sexual favors.
 - Welcome or unwelcome sexual advances, gestures, contact or jokes of a sexual nature, comments, subjecting employees or students to ridicule, slurs, or other derogatory actions of a sexual nature.
 - Displaying sexual pictures, photographs, cartoons, and graffiti.
 - Making improper or suggestive comments about a person's anatomy.
 - Letters, notes, e-mails, instant messages or social media communications that are cruel, demeaning, discriminatory or intimidating in nature

Atholton Adventist Academy Handbook

Infractions include, but are not limited, to:

1. Harassment—any attempt to violate another student's rights. This may be physical, sexual, or verbal harassment; mishandling another student's property; or threatening another student.
2. Aiding and abetting—urging or helping another student to do something that is against the school rules, covering up for another student who is in violation of school rules
3. Theft—removing, hiding, or using property belonging to others.
4. Controlled substances—actual possession, use, transfer, or sale of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug-related substances
5. Fighting or assault—violent bodily contact that hurts or has the potential to hurt someone physically or emotionally
6. Vandalism—destruction that has a permanently damaging effect upon church, school, or student property. This would include property owned by church or school employees or loaned by others for school use.
7. Outlawed materials—the use of materials that are dangerous to the health and safety of students, teachers, or guests of the school, such as matches, fireworks, chemicals, firearms, and knives
8. Insubordination or abusive language—a belligerent or abusive act or statement that is directed at any employee of the school. It includes more than a simple refusal to do something. It is an aggressive, insulting, profane, or disruptive type of abuse.
9. Safety—actions that endanger the health, safety, or welfare of students, teachers, or guests of the school. Failing to behave in harmony with safety procedures. Using physical education equipment without teacher supervision, direction, or approval.
10. Inappropriate sexual activity – which includes, but is not limited to: kissing, fondling, long hugs, unwanted touches and holding hands.

Consequences: Level III behaviors are considered to be major problems that require immediate action by both the staff, Administration, and the parents or guardians. Level III behavior referrals will be handled in the following manner:

- a) Referring classroom teachers may not be required to telephone parents for Level III behaviors. Rather, the principal shall arrange a conference with the parents as soon as possible. The teacher may be asked to be present at the conference, discipline hearing, or other meetings considering Level III behaviors.
- b) Each accumulation of three (3) Level II referrals of a student being referred for a Level III behavior within a sixty (60) day period may result in movement of the student to the next step in Level III.
- c) Movement through the Level III steps results in the following actions to be taken at each step:

Step 1: A 1-day suspension and disciplinary probation

Step 2: A 2-day suspension with a recommendation to the School Board for a hearing regarding the student's continuation at the school

Step 3: An immediate recommendation that the student be withdrawn at once. Due process hearings may be conducted at the request of the parent.

Disciplinary Probation: Under circumstances described in the Student Behavior Code, a student may be placed on disciplinary probation. During this probation time, students

- Will be required to obtain their teachers' review of their behavior
- May not be allowed to attend any extra- or co-curricular activities held at or by the school.

verified by a physician's note. All absences without an approved note are considered unexcused. Students who miss more than 10 percent of the total yearly school days may forfeit promotion to the next grade or lose credit for classes.

The student will be responsible for completing and turning in any missed assignments, projects, and tests for full credit work when s/he returns due to an excused absence. The formula will be (2) business days of deadline extension for every (1) missed day due to an approved absence. Long-term assignments must be turned in on time. Any exceptions to this policy are to be referred to the board for further consideration.

Excused absences and tardiness will be granted for the following reasons:

- Medical/legal appointments involving the student
- Personal illness/injury
- Death in the immediate family
- Individual situations that are declared by the administration to be of an emergent nature

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

We realize parents do take their children out of school for reasons other than those stated above. Please realize this is an unexcused absence.

PREARRANGED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Frederick Adventist Academy supports quality family time and encourages families to plan their family vacations during scheduled school vacations. Missing multiple days of school has a negative impact on a student's educational experience. Valuable class interaction is missed when absences occur. When planning vacations, parents need to consider the following policy:

A pre-arranged absence request must be submitted to the teacher in advance of the planned absence/s. Students will be granted no more than five (5) pre-arranged absences each year. Upon approval from administration, the student will be responsible to collect, complete, and turn in any assignments, projects, and tests before leaving, or when he/she returns per classroom policy. Full credit is given only if the above criterion is met. When a student misses school due to a pre-arranged absence, the parent is responsible for providing instruction in all missed class work. Teacher-directed activities such as presentations, debates, experiments, etc, cannot be made up. Absences in excess of the approved five day limit will be subject to attendance and late work policies.

Note: In accordance with Maryland State Law these **planned leave absences** will not be excused, but no penalties will be incurred.

Teachers are not expected to repeat class work/instruction for unexcused absences and students may not receive full credit for such assignments.

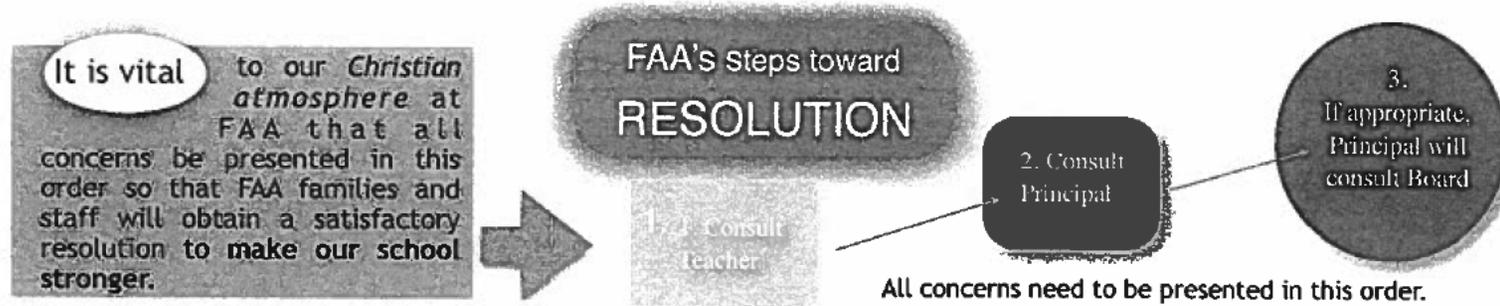
TARDINESS

Parents are requested to have students arrive at school early enough so that they can be in their seats and ready for morning worship at 8:15 am. When students enter the classroom after 8:15, the morning routine, including worship, is interrupted and valuable instruction is compromised for all students in the class. Students who arrive after 8:15 am are required to stop at the school office to obtain a late slip before entering their classroom.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES/TARDIES

FAA maintains a strict tardy policy. Students should allow sufficient time to take care of before-school needs, such as visiting lockers or the restroom. Students who are consistently tardy/absent will have their records reviewed by Administration. Parents can check their child's attendance records through Renweb.





1. It is expected that the student obey all school rules and regulations and render prompt and cheerful obedience to the directions of the teachers.
 2. Since FAA does not knowingly admit a student who practices the following behaviors, the first offense on any of the following fundamental points makes the student liable for suspension or dismissal
 - Spreading atheistic ideas or undermining the religious ideals or faith upheld by the school.
 - Swearing or using indecent language, indulging in vulgar conduct or suggestions, possessing or displaying obscene pictures or articles.
 - Using tobacco, alcohol, or recreational drugs in any form, having them in one's possession, or furnishing them to others.
 - Gambling or betting.
 - Dishonesty, including theft, willful deception in violation of school rules, cheating on exams or class work or any phase of school business.
 - Improper sexual conduct including sexting on phone or any social network.
 - Discussion of inappropriate topics found in theaters, videos, books, TV programs, etc., is not permitted on the school grounds.
 - Aggressive physical or verbal behavior that may or may not lead to physical harm of any of the students.
 3. Respect school property. Student(s), as well as the parent(s) or guardian(s), will be held accountable for any damage done by the student to school property.
 4. Respect FAA teachers, staff, and other students.
 5. Play equipment and play area may not be used except during school hours and then only with teacher supervision.
 6. Do not ride bicycles during school hours. The school is not responsible for their safekeeping.
 7. Do not bring knives, guns (real, toy, gesture, or any other facsimile thereof), or anything normally used as a dangerous weapon to school.
-
8. Do not bring chewing gum to FAA at any time, including before and after school, club, and athletic events. Gum chewing is not permitted and will result in a fine.
 9. Do not bring toys or electronic devices to school unless approved for education purposes by the classroom teacher. FAA is not responsible for broken, lost, or stolen items.
 10. Do not bring cell phones to school. If parents feel cell phones are necessary, they should be left in lockers or turned in to teachers before school begins. Cell phones and other electronic devices will be confiscated if seen or heard during school hours without specific teacher permission. While on campus, students are expected to follow internet use guidelines signed off by parent and student during the registration process.

Serious Misconduct (major write-up)

A student who violates the basic principles of the school by engaging in certain disapproved practices may receive serious discipline, a fine, or dismissal from school. The disapproved practices include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Using profane language, using God's name in vain, or the possession of or displaying obscene literature or pictures, or indulging in lewd conduct or suggestions.
2. Using tobacco; the misuse or illegal possession of drugs or narcotics in any form.
3. Drinking or possessing alcoholic beverages.
4. Gambling and/or betting.
5. Participating in dishonesty including theft, cheating, lying, and willful deception regarding violation of school regulations in any phase of school work, or business.
6. Meeting persons at any unauthorized time or place, and/or engaging in improper social or sexual conduct.
7. Failure on the part of a student to conform to the stipulations of any discipline which has been administered.
8. The use, handling, or possession of air pistols, firearms (or toy facsimile), knives, lighters, matches, firecrackers, or explosives.
9. Engaging in willful destruction or vandalism of school property or property of others on or off the campus.
10. Tampering with doors, fire alarms, security systems, or fire-fighting equipment.
11. Unlawful entry to any school facility.
12. Copying or unauthorized use of school keys.
13. Fighting.
14. Leaving campus without permission.
15. Bullying.
16. Harassment/Sexual Harassment.
17. Inappropriate use of electronic devices.
18. Willfully defying the authority of school officials.
19. Any student who becomes a clear and present danger to the life or safety of school personnel or students.

Sexual Misconduct

Spencerville Adventist Academy may, at its sole discretion, not admit or retain individuals who engage in sexual misconduct, which includes non-marital sexual conduct, or the encouragement of advocacy of any form or behavior that would undermine the Christian identity or faith mission of Spencerville Adventist Academy and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.