

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY!

Our mission at Tri-County Christian School is “to provide the Christian family with Christ centered educational experiences emphasizing the development of Christian character, educational excellence and preparation for a lifetime of service to God and man.” It is our belief that Christian education can best be provided by the combined efforts of committed Christians who join together in a cooperative effort. In a very real sense then, all of us here at Tri-County Christian School are part of a family. It is our hope that the special bond of Christ's love will make you feel at home.

Every good family needs rules and procedures. Use this handbook to acquaint yourself with the policies of Tri-County Christian School. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school office and/or the administrator. Please note that the school reserves the right to interpret rules and policies as individual situations and needs arise.

At Tri-County Christian School, we view the entire process of education as a means used by God to bring the student to Himself through personal faith in Christ and to develop a Christian mind in the student so that he/she may fulfill God's will for his/her life vocationally and personally. We pray that this will indeed be your experience as you join together with us to provide Christian education for your child(ren).

Our partnership with Freedom Project Academy for the 2023-24 school year is a privilege. All FPA students that are enrolled at TCCS are held to the same standards and spiritual integrity outlined in this Parent-Student Handbook.

USING YOUR HANDBOOK

This handbook has been carefully designed to provide parents with a quick reference guide to various aspects of Tri-County Christian School (TCCS). It clearly lays out the various philosophies, policies, beliefs, and procedures by which the school operates. All families are required to read through the entire handbook before beginning the enrollment or re-enrollment process. New families need to carefully study the Specific Admission Requirements section before making application to TCCS. The detailed Table of Contents and the Index (at the back of the handbook) will enable you to quickly obtain answers to various questions you might have throughout the school year. A Preschool/Kindergarten Quick Reference Guide is located in the index. Please retain this handbook for use in future school years. If you have any questions or need clarification regarding any school policy, please make an appointment with the administrator.

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I. MISSION AND EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

OUR MISSION

The Mission of Tri-County Christian School is to provide the Christian family with Christ-centered educational experiences, emphasizing the development of Christian character, educational excellence and preparation for a lifetime of service to God and man.

The Tri-County Christian School Association was originally created in 1981 to provide quality Christian education for Carroll, Ogle, and Stephenson counties. We believe that such Bible based education can best be provided by the united efforts of concerned Christians from various evangelical churches.

OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

1. All education takes place within a philosophical framework. For the Christian, that framework is found in the Bible. A truly Christian philosophy of education must find its starting point in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We believe that the Bible is both authoritative and inerrant and is God's complete revelation concerning all matters of faith and practice.
2. God is the Creator of all things and by His divine providence the sustainer of all things (Colossians 1:15-17 and Romans 11:36). Therefore, God is at the center of every aspect of life, including education. As a result, every academic subject bears a particular relationship to God, and that connection must be made manifest in our teaching. This process of integrating faith and knowledge is a prerequisite for developing a biblical worldview.
3. The Bible clearly teaches that man was originally created in the image of God, that is, in true righteousness and holiness. However, as a result of his sin, man fell from grace and is spiritually dead in trespasses and sin. From an educational perspective, the implications of this fact must be taken into account. Since man is a sinner by his Adamic nature and by his personal choice, he cannot know God, nor can he understand spiritual things (1Corinthians 2:2-14). God, though, has not left man in such a sorry state. Through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ and through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, man can be created anew. This new birth experience is a necessity in the student for a true Christian education to occur.
4. A proper view of man is one that recognizes all aspects of his being. That is, a true view will realize that man is comprised of a mind, a body, and a spirit. Apart from the spiritual life available in Christ, no person is complete. Any education that does not extend to the spiritual component of students is likewise incomplete. Christian education thus deals with the whole person; mind, body, and spirit.

5. The family was the first social unit instituted by God. God gave the responsibility for the nurture and upbringing of children to the parents (Deuteronomy 6:6-9). The Christian school exists to assist Christian parents in the solemn responsibility of parenting children in a godless society. The school cannot make up for the lack of spiritual values and training in the student's home.
6. The Christian educator is to be a guide or resource person in the wonderful experience of learning. Personal conversion is a necessity in the life of a teacher. The educator must have experienced the reality of what he/she is teaching or the result will be nothing more than hypocrisy and utter futility. It is necessary that the teacher be both a Christian and an educator. As a Christian, the teacher will have experienced the reality of God's power and will possess God's Spirit to empower his/her teaching. As an educator, he/she functions in accordance with those educational principles contained in the Scriptures. The Christian teacher should be a leader who exemplifies in his/her personal life what he/she is teaching.
7. A philosophy of education must speak to the purpose for which it is educating young people. In short, it must be the goal of a Christian school to produce young men and women who know how to think and act biblically in all areas of life. They must know how to distinguish God's wisdom from the wisdom of the world. Finally, they must be prepared to serve God in whatever vocation He leads them into.

OUR EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. For the spiritual growth of our students, we seek:
 - A. to teach the Bible as God's inerrant Word and to develop the proper attitudes toward it.
 - B. to teach the basic doctrines of the Christian faith as found in the Scriptures.
 - C. to lead the students into a personal, saving relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
 - D. to implant a desire to know and do the will of God.
 - E. to develop a biblical sense of right and wrong.
 - F. to assist students in developing for themselves a biblical worldview by integrating the Scriptures into their studies.
2. For our students' personal and social development, we aim:
 - A. to aid the students in developing a biblical self-image and personality based on a correct understanding and acceptance of themselves as God made them.
 - B. to assist the students in fully developing their own capabilities in Christ.
 - C. to teach students to respect and love their fellow man who are made "in God's image."
 - D. to promote physical fitness, healthy habits, and acknowledge the body as God's temple.
 - E. to teach the proper scriptural attitude toward material things and the need to use them for God's glory.
 - F. to impart a biblical view of life, stewardship of time and work, which are the prerequisite skills for all future endeavors.

3. Academically, the school strives:

- A. to teach and encourage the use of good study habits.
- B. to help the students acquire the necessary skills used in communicating with others, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- C. to promote high academic standards without frustrating the students.
- D. to teach the students according to their God-given abilities and achievement levels.
- E. to develop creative and critical thinking skills that proceed from biblical presuppositions.
- F. to enable the students to discuss current events and to relate them to God's plan for the world.
- G. to impart an understanding of an appreciation for God's world, a knowledge of man's role with his environment, and his responsibility to use it properly.
- H. to develop appreciation and enjoyment of the fine arts.

4. In working with the homes from which students come, the school wishes:

- A. to work closely with the parents in every aspect of the student's development.
- B. to assist families in making their homes Christ-centered.
- C. to help parents understand TCCS's mission.
- D. to encourage regular attendance and involvement in a local church.

II. RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS AND BELIEFS

THE TRI-COUNTY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Tri-County Christian School is an independent, not-for-profit, interdenominational ministry of the Tri-County Christian School Association. The Association was formed in 1981 to establish an interdenominational Christian school, which would make quality Christian education available to the general evangelical Christian community of the Freeport area. The school promotes only those common, central, biblical beliefs, which are shared by all conservative evangelical denominations.

TCCS is not connected to any one denomination. During any given school year, the members of Tri-County Christian School's Board of Directors represent a broad spectrum of churches, such as the Assemblies of God, Baptist, Christian Reformed, Church of God, Community, Evangelical Free, Free Methodist, Nazarene, Reformed, etc. Members of the school's staff also attend various conservative evangelical churches. During a typical school year, the student body is composed of families representing some 20 to 25 local churches.

Membership in the Tri-County Christian School Association is open to all families who enroll their child(ren) in one of TCCS's educational programs. Others from the general community are also eligible for membership if they are at least eighteen years old. To become an Association member, a person is required to be an active Christian believer and sign his/her full agreement with the Association's Mission Statement, Statement of Faith, and Educational Philosophy. The Board of Directors must approve all membership applications. The Association meets twice annually, in January and in May, to elect members to the Board of Directors and to approve other major policy or financial decisions. This elected Board of Directors meets monthly to carry out the Association's mission.

ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL

Tri-County Christian School is an active member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), which is the largest, and fastest growing Christian school association in the world. ACSI has more than 5,900 member schools which minister to over 1.4 million students. ACSI is an interdenominational fellowship which provides its member schools with a variety of services, e.g., legal guidance, regional teacher conventions, curriculum, and various student activities such as spelling bees, speech meets, math contests, athletic tournaments, etc.

Denominational Breakdown of Student Body

Our students come from around 25 different churches representing several denominations.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe the Bible to be the only inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe there is one God, infinitely perfect and eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the complete deity and perfect humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His substitutionary atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, in His ministry of intercession for His people, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that through sin he fell and is therefore spiritually dead in trespasses and sin.
5. We believe in salvation by the sacrifice of Christ received by grace through faith alone.
6. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit in this world, which includes the convicting of the loss of sin, the regenerating and indwelling of all who believe, and the empowering of believers for service and godly living.
7. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, the saved to the resurrection of eternal life, and the lost to the resurrection of eternal punishment.
8. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers under the headship of Jesus Christ.

STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Tri-County Christian School as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Tri-County Christian School families and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Tri-County Christian School in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by the Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11.)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Tri-County Christian School.

Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Tri-County Christian School's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Directors is Tri-County Christian School's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps 139.)

Statement of Nondiscrimination

TCCS admits students of any race, color, national and 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 or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and other school programs.

III. ADMISSION PROCEDURES (All Grades)

Admission to Tri-County Christian School is obtained by:

1. Completing our online application or a hard copy application (request in office).
2. Paying the registration fee.
3. Scheduling a family interview with the administrator.
4. Passing an entrance test. (if needed and requested by administrator)

It is essential that prospective families carefully read the specific admissions requirements listed on the next page paying special attention to the spiritual, family values and immunization/physical requirements. **The school seeks to minister to all children but finds that due to its limited financial resources and staff, it is unable to serve students who have severe academic or emotional needs.** Enrollment forms and information concerning current tuition rates and payment plans may be obtained by contacting the school office.

ANNUAL ADMISSIONS CALENDAR

February 1	Enrollment Begins
February 1	Families may apply for need-based financial aid
June 15	Families are informed of the amount of financial aid awarded
July 1	First of eleven tuition payments is due
August 5	Family loses slots in classes if first tuition payment is not received.

*Any requests for financial aid received after this date will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the financial aid committee as funds are available.

ANNUAL RE-ENROLLMENT

All students must be readmitted each year by submitting new enrollment online forms and paying the annual enrollment fee. A discount off the regular registration fee is given to families re-enrolling before April 1.

TCCS reserves the right to limit enrollment to existing families during the first two weeks of February.

All applications are taken on a first-come, first-enrolled basis.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

Students admitted to Tri-County Christian School shall be protected from influences negatively affecting their wellbeing. The school shall exclude students from classes who are currently infected with live (active) viruses from illness and diseases of communicable nature.

KINDERGARTEN ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicants must be five years of age by September 1. Under atypical circumstances there is an early entrance policy that must be adhered to. For further information please contact the Administrator.
2. Readiness test: The Brigance Kindergarten Screen is administered so as to determine a student's readiness for kindergarten.
3. Obtain all required immunizations.
4. A physical exam must be obtained within the previous 12 months prior to the first day of school. Vision and dental exams are also required in Kindergarten.
5. Present a copy of the child's birth certificate.
6. Enrollment is not official or complete until the school office has possession of both completed registration forms and payment of registration fees.

MANDATORY JULY TUITION PAYMENT

If a family fails to make its July 1 tuition payment by August 5, the school reserves the right to consider the family as having withdrawn from school and to assign the family's reserved classroom slot to someone else on the waiting list.

PRESCHOOL ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicants for three-day per week and five-day per week classes must be four years of age by September 1.
2. Applicants for two-day per week classes must be three years of age by September 1.
3. Health: All students enrolling must be potty-trained and be able to perform personal bathroom hygiene. Applicants must also present a physical exam obtained within the previous 12 months prior to the first day of school.
4. Present a copy of the child's birth certificate.
5. Immunizations: Required to be up-to-date.
6. Enrollment is not official or complete until the school office has possession of both completed registration forms and payment of registration fees.

PROBATIONAL STATUS OF NEW STUDENTS

All new students are accepted on a nine-week academic and behavioral probationary period.

PROPER GRADE PLACEMENT

The school reserves the right to place each student in the grade level or class that is best suited to his/her individual needs, developmental maturity and scholastic abilities.

SPECIFIC ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

1. Agreement with Tri-County Christian School's Mission/Beliefs:

All families are required to read the school's Mission Statement and Statement of Faith and understand that these statements are the foundation of the school's curricula, policies, and educational philosophy. Parents are also required to annually sign their agreement to have their children taught according to Tri-County Christian School's value system, Statement of Faith, philosophy of education, etc. All families will be asked to read and sign a statement that they agree with the Matthew 18 principle of solving conflicts. Any conflicts will be handled with the classroom teacher first. If not resolved, the teacher will contact the principal for a meeting with parents, teacher, and principal. If no resolution, the principal will contact the board president if further action is needed.

2. Lifestyle/Family Values:

Tri-County Christian School's biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christ-like. On occasion, the atmosphere, values, lifestyle, or conduct within a particular home may be counter or in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches. 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.

3. Student's Attitude and Cooperation Requirement:

All students whether they be from Christian or non-Christian homes are required to conform to and to maintain positive, cooperative, non-antagonistic attitudes towards Tri-County Christian School's biblical teachings, values, and lifestyle requirements. TCCS reserves the right to either dismiss or not re-enroll students who are antagonistic in these areas or who seek to propagate other opposing theological systems or lifestyles. Students and parents will receive a written explanation of classroom rules, grading practices, and discipline policy. Student and parents are asked to sign a form that they agree to and understand the classroom policies.

4. Birth Certificate

All entering new students must provide a copy of his/her birth certificate.

5. Immunization and Physicals:

All entering students must provide proof of having received required immunizations. In addition, state law requires that children entering preschool, kindergarten, and sixth grade must have a physical exam. New students coming from another state as well as homeschoolers are also required to have a physical. Documentation should be submitted to the office by the first day of school. If documentation is not received by October 15 the student will be excluded from school, according to state law, until documentation is received. In addition, all students entering kindergarten, second and sixth grades will be required to have an oral health examination before May 15 of that school year. All children entering kindergarten are required to have a comprehensive eye exam performed by a qualified eye doctor (such as optometrists or ophthalmologists).

6. Family Interview:

All new parents/guardians are required to be interviewed by the Administrator.

7. Entrance Testing/Screening: (Grades Preschool - 8)

Some prospective students, preschool through eighth grade are given entrance tests to determine grade placement and to determine if the school will be able to meet the student's academic needs. Students from TCCS's preschool are usually screened for developmental maturity before they are accepted into kindergarten.

IV. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES

TCCS's academic goal for each individual student is that he/she experiences success while working up to his/her God-given capabilities. The school strives to preserve each child's self-image while effectively educating his/her mind. The school thus aims to place each child at a level of instruction that will allow him/her to experience this success without undue frustration and stress. Grade placement may be determined through entrance testing

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Tri-County Christian School aims for its students to achieve above national grade levels. This is necessary because the national grade level across America has been lowered substantially over the past four decades. Presently, a majority of students in Tri-County Christian School score an average of twelve to eighteen months above the national norm on standardized national achievement tests. In an average year approximately 75% of TCCS students score above national grade level. The school feels this is a desirable goal since our children will live in a society in which the mastery of basic skills will be essential to their vocational success.

ACCELERATED MATH TRACK

On the middle school level, Tri-County Christian School offers flexible math tracks. This allows accelerated students to skip either 5th or 6th grade math, enabling them to take Algebra I in 8th grade.

ATHLETICS – See Section XIII

BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

The book rental fee covers the cost of most required textbooks and workbooks. Pen, pencils, homework planners, notebooks, crayons, glue, etc., are to be supplied by the parents. Students are responsible to pay for any excessive wear or damage to the textbooks they have on loan from TCCS. The school provides each 1st Grade student and any new students in grades 2-8 with an NIV Study Bible.

CONFERENCES WITH TEACHERS

Regular parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice annually for all grades Preschool - 8. If parents desire conferences at other times, they should contact teachers before 8:15 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m. to set up a conference. Whenever problems arise, parents should always follow the

principles of Matthew 18 and personally confer with their child's teacher before having any discussion with other parents, teachers, the administrator or a board member. In the event that the parent is dissatisfied with the teacher's response, the teacher would set up an appointment for parent and teacher to meet together with the administrator.

CUMULATIVE FILE REVIEW RIGHTS

State law gives parents full rights to review the contents of their children's academic cumulative files. Parents are required to present a written request to the school 24 hours in advance. Parents may request that any non-academic material of a derogatory nature be removed from their child's file.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Emphasis is placed upon the students' masteries of academic fundamentals and upon their spiritual development for service in the Kingdom of God. The school uses traditional textbooks published by various leading publishers, both Christian and non-Christian. These publishers include A Beka, Bob Jones (BJU), Scott Foresman, Saxon, ACSI's Purposeful Design, and Summit Ministries. The school's curriculum is designed for the average and above average student. It places strong emphasis on the basic skills of reading, writing, and math, as well as on moral and spiritual values. Starting in kindergarten, phonics are used as the basis of all reading and spelling instruction. TCCS's basic curriculum covers the following subject areas: Science, Social Studies, History, Spelling, Math, Reading, Physical Education, Bible, Music, and Language.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

TCCS offers students a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Besides several basketball teams, students also have opportunities to participate in various spelling bees, speech meets, writing contests, math competitions, spirit week, Christmas programs, etc. Students who participate in after school extra-curricular activities must have a parental permission slip on file in the school office.

FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

Tri-County Christian School believes that children learn as much from their teacher's attitudes and role modeling as from planned classroom instruction. In light of this conviction, members of the school's faculty are selected for both spiritual maturity and professional ability. All full time teachers in grades Preschool–8 hold professional teaching credentials.

FIELD TRIPS

One of the most profitable experiences a student can have is a well-planned field trip. Teachers schedule field trips when appropriate and with an educational goal in mind. Students must have a permission slip, signed by a parent, before being permitted to go on field trips. Seatbelts must be worn by all passengers while on any school-related activity. Students are expected to abide by all regular school rules and the school's dress code while on field trips. They must have their teacher's permission to take any technology, including cellphones and hand-held games on field trips. Volunteer parent drivers are necessary since the school does not own a bus. Drivers who volunteer to drive on school events need to be aware that the school's insurance does not cover them in the event of an accident. All volunteer drivers are asked to provide the office with documentation showing that they carry adequate insurance on their vehicles and a current driver's license.

GRADING SCALE

Kindergarten - Even though no letter grades are given, they will receive report cards. The following evaluations will be used: "4" for Good, "3" for Satisfactory, "2" for Needs Improvement, and "1" for Not Yet Introduced.

Grades 1 through 8:

A+	100	C	80-82
A	95-99	C-	75-79
A-	93-94	D+	73-74
B+	90-92	D	71-72
B	88-89	D-	69-70
B-	85-87	F	0-68
C+	83-84		

It is important that children be encouraged to work to the best of their abilities, but parents must remember that all students cannot be expected to receive A's or B's.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

TCCS believes that homework is an integral part of the school program and that homework should reinforce skills and concepts learned in class. Homework teaches students to work independently as well as prepare students for upcoming class topics. Homework also develops study habits which are essential for success in later grades.

Students in grades 1–5 are usually not assigned specific homework on weekends. Exceptions to this policy would occur when a student chooses to do work on long-term assignments such as book reports, science projects etc., or when a child is in need of remedial work. The following guidelines govern nightly homework assignments:

Grades 1–2	10-30 minutes
Grade 3	10-45 minutes
Grades 4-5	30-60 minutes
Grades 6-8	30-90 minutes

If a student fails to complete regular classroom assignments he/she may be required to complete that work as homework. The above guidelines are of a general nature and are aimed at the average student. Slow working or weaker students will usually exceed these guidelines.

JUNIOR HIGH HOMEWORK POLICY

All homework must be completed the following day unless otherwise stated by the teacher. Students missing school for illness or other excused absences will be given the number of days absent plus one to turn in all homework assignments (for example, if a student misses three days he or she will have four days after returning to finish all assignments). Any student leaving for an extended vacation should get assignments from all teachers before leaving. Teachers should be notified one week prior to the student’s absence. Upon returning students will be given an additional two days to complete assignments.

All late assignments will be given an automatic 10% grade deduction per day.

JUNIOR HIGH GPA (Grade Point Average)

Students in grades 6–8 receive letter grades in P.E. that are used in calculating their Grade Point Averages when determining honor rolls.

HONOR ROLL POLICY

A student is eligible for the A honor roll if they have an A average for their core subjects and special subjects: i.e. P.E., etc. The same criteria would be applicable for the B honor roll.

All course work would receive a percent grade. All “specials” would be combined for a percent that would be averaged with the other core subjects.

MAKE-UP WORK POLICY

Make-up work should be completed in a reasonable time after the student returns to school. It will sometimes be done at recess, after school, at home, or during special classes at the discretion of the teacher. Students are given the number of days absent plus one day to complete homework due to illness.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL ORIENTATIONS

Back-to-School orientations for all grades are held each fall. Preschool and kindergarten parents and students are asked to attend special daytime student orientations where students are introduced to their teachers, tour the school campus, and are shown their classrooms.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

The school needs and welcomes parent volunteers to participate in various activities such as field trips, parties, and other special events. Please contact your child's teacher if you are able to help. See Field Trips on page 19 for specific driver requirements.

PARTIES AT SCHOOL

Tri-County participates in three parties during the school year for elementary grades. The Autumn Party is held at the end of October, Christmas Party in December and Valentine's Party in February. We do not hold private parties for children.

PRIVATE PARTIES AND VALENTINE CARDS

Each school year across America children's feelings are crushed when they are "left out" of the private party invitation circuit. At TCCS we would ask that families consider the feelings of the left out children by doing the following:

Bring invitations for all students in your child's class or mail invitations.

We would ask that private parties be planned so that no one or two students are left out while the rest of the class is invited. This principle also applies to Valentine's Day. It expresses the greatest "true" love when valentines are given to everyone in the group. Let's show the compassion of Christ.

BIBLE INSTRUCTION AND CHAPEL

Bible instruction is integrated in each classroom throughout the day. Students also receive formal instruction at each grade level. This includes prayer and teaching from the Bible. It may also include singing of praise and worship songs, Scripture memorization, Bible games, etc. An effort is made to lead every student to accept Christ as his/her personal Savior. Students from many denominations attend Tri-County Christian School. It is not the school's purpose to weaken their denominational ties but rather to provide them with a basic understanding of the fundamental principles of successful Christian living and of the basic events, characters, and doctrines of the Bible. Once a week, chapels are held. Parents are invited to attend these chapel services. Tri-County Christian School uses the NIV Bible in all Bible classes with reference in older classes to the NLT version.

Note: Bible studies are not optional. Students' continuation at TCCS requires that they diligently apply themselves in these classes.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued four times per year, at the conclusion of each 9-week grading period. In addition, students in 1-8 are issued a midterm report for all quarters.

RETENTION POLICY

Whenever the school feels the retention of a student is necessary, a conference will be scheduled with the parents, classroom teacher, and administrator. The desired goal of this conference is to gain parental consent for retention. We recognize this consent is a vital component for the retention to be effective. Generally, the school will not retain a student without parental consent. However, in some instances in which the school believes that promotion would be educationally detrimental to a student, the school reserves the right to retain a student if he/she plans to continue as a student at TCCS. A student may not fail more than one core subject in order to move on to the next grade level.

SERVICE PROJECTS

As part of its mission, Tri-County Christian School seeks to train students for service to their community. Each classroom chooses a community service project which involves students in either ministering to various groups in the Freeport area or carrying out work projects.

VISITING CLASSROOMS

Parents are allowed to visit their child's class from time to time but the school does ask them to observe the following procedures.

1. Please pre-arrange a mutually agreed upon time with the teacher.
2. Remember that a short visit does not give a full picture of what occurs throughout the whole school day.
3. Keep the visit fairly short since a parent's presence in the classroom may intimidate other children in the class.
4. Arrange a later conference time to discuss any concerns which may have risen from their visit.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a huge part of what makes Tri-County Christian School possible. TCCS families are asked to be a part of our Family Volunteer Program. The purpose of the program is to reduce the operating costs of the school (keep tuition costs down), by providing volunteer opportunities to our families. Having essential tasks performed on a volunteer basis prevents us from having to pay staff for additional hours in order to accomplish these tasks.

This program is based off of well-established programs successfully being used in other schools and has been highly successful since its start. We have seen volunteerism increase as families have had greater success in finding ways to help out and to get connected.

V. FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

At Tri-County Christian School, the actual cost of educating students is subsidized by the gifts of faithful donors and by the financial sacrifices of the staff. The goal for the school is to provide adequate facilities, equipment, and instruction for the development of Christian character in the lives of those young people entrusted to its care. In order for the school to achieve these goals, parents are expected to do their part by paying all financial obligations when due.

FINANCIAL AID

The school awards financial aid annually as funds are available. Aid is available for students in full-day, 5-day Pre-K, full-day Kindergarten through 8th grades. The maximum amount awarded in these need-based financial grants is 45% of the family's total tuition. Families applying for financial aid are required to document their financial status by submitting a completed financial aid application (available through the school office) with copies of their previous year's federal tax return. Applications are reviewed by a three-member Financial Aid Committee. Financial Aid applications should be submitted to the office after enrollment opens at the earliest date possible as financial grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

NECESSITY OF GIFT INCOME

Tri-County Christian School depends upon four sources of income: tuition, fees, fundraising and gifts. Since tuition only provides a portion of the total operating budget, the school depends heavily on gifts from school parents, grandparents, area churches and dedicated patrons. It has been the intent of the school to keep the tuition as low as possible so that all families can afford to enroll their children. Every gift, whether large or small is gratefully received. We believe that God will greatly use every gift to enhance the ministry of the school.

ON-GOING FUNDRAISERS

We all know the vital part fundraising plays in the life of Tri-County Christian School. Some of our fundraisers are big projects, like our annual dinner auction. These fundraisers bring in the majority of our fundraising money. Tri-County Christian School also participates in some ongoing fundraisers that help us bridge “the gap” between the cost of tuition and our actual expenses.

- AmazonSmile
- General Mills Box Tops for Education
- iGive
- Scrip

REGISTRATION FEE

There is an annual registration fee for both first time and returning children. This fee must be paid before a student is considered officially enrolled.

TUITION AND FEE PAYMENT POLICIES

- Tuition is divided into 11 monthly payments, July through May, for your convenience. The Tri-County Christian School support fee (a one-time charge) is due with your July or August payment.
- All tuition installment payments are due by the first of the month and late after the 15th.
- If payment is not received by the end of the month, the student(s) may not be allowed to attend classes the following month until tuition is brought current.
- A child shall not be permitted to enroll for subsequent years until all prior tuition is paid. Tuition payments should be sent to the school office in clearly labeled envelopes.

VI. DAILY SCHEDULE AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

SCHOOL HOURS

Preschool

Half Day Schedule 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Full Day Schedule 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Grades K – 4

Regular Schedule 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (Tardy after 8:35 a.m.)

Half Day Schedule 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Grades 5 - 8

Regular Schedule 8:30 a.m. – 3:10 p.m. (Tardy after 8:35 a.m.)

Half Day Schedule 8:30 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.

Students arriving before **8:15** need to report to Latchkey.

TARDY POLICY/PROCEDURE

The TCCS school day starts at 8:30 a.m. Doors will be locked at 8:30 a.m. and students are considered tardy after the 8:35 a.m. bell. Students must be in their classroom by that bell. One of the most valuable life skills that a student can learn is taking the responsibility of arriving everyday on time. The whole tone of a student's day is set in the first part of the morning.

A student arriving tardy must have a parent sign them in at the office. A tardy pass will be given for either excused or unexcused tardiness. An excused tardy is defined as bus, medical or dental (with documentation), traffic/accident, family emergency or weather-related issues.

Three unexcused tardies in a semester will result in contact from the school. All unexcused tardies after three in a semester will result in consequences that could entail detentions with further unexcused tardies requiring a meeting with the school administrator.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissal will be granted for family emergencies, school activities, and medical or dental appointments (with documentation) that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours.

Three unexcused early dismissals in a semester will result in contact from the school. All unexcused early dismissals after three in a semester will result in consequences that could entail detentions with further unexcused early dismissals requiring a meeting with the school administrator.

ABSENT POLICY/PROCEDURE

Regular attendance is an important factor in a child's adjustment to school and is imperative to good learning. Please avoid any unnecessary absences.

If your child is absent due to illness or emergency, please notify the school office (815-233-1876 or tccsoffice@tricitychristian.org) by 8:55 a.m. A student who misses more than one hour of school, morning or afternoon (and is not at a school-related event), will be considered to have been absent 1/2 day.

An excused absence is defined as medical (with documentation), unavoidable family emergency, death in the family, court appearance or pre-approved absences. Any absence that does not fall under one of these reasons will be counted as an unexcused absence.

FAMILY VACATION POLICY

In the event of a family vacation during the school year, the parents should give the teacher at least a one week notice of an extended absence. Parents who choose to take a family vacation assume responsibility for helping the child with all schoolwork missed. Students will be given the amount of days missed plus one day to complete homework while away.

VII. HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

Tri-County Christian School has conferred with the county health department for assistance in controlling communicable diseases. To protect all children as much as possible, the following policies will be followed.

1. Many diseases are not easily detected during the communicable period; however; the following symptoms are often warnings or signs of a communicable disease. Children should be kept home if they display any of the following symptoms:

diarrhea, nausea or vomiting, sore throat, excessive runny nose, headache, fever (100.4 degrees or more), earache, red or discharging eyes, chronic sneezing, skin eruptions or rashes, flushed skin or chills, swollen glands.

Students must be free of fever (without medicine), diarrhea and vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school. (Fever free refers to an oral temperature below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit per Illinois Department of Public Health guidelines.)

2. Children, who are at school when these symptoms appear, will be isolated from other students and their parents will be notified to pick them up. To protect other students from communicable diseases the school requires that students who become ill with the following communicable illnesses; COVID, influenza, measles, chicken pox, mumps, scarlet fever, hepatitis, impetigo, conjunctivitis, aids, and streptococcal sore throat, not return to school until they are definitely beyond the contagious stage and are free of all open sores or other possibly contagious symptoms. The school reserves the right to require a written release from a physician or the health department before a student is allowed back in class.

DISPENSATION OF MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Medication may be administrated to children at school if it is absolutely necessary for the critical health and wellbeing of the student. **Under no circumstances may students keep medication or vitamins on their person for self-administering.**

The following guidelines must be adhered to:

1. **All medications will be kept in the office.** Daily (once a-day) medications will be dispensed during the noon hour according to a prearranged schedule. P.R.N. inhalers may be self-administered but will need a special permission form completed by the physician and the parent.

2. **Written physician instructions must be provided** to the school detailing the name of the drug, size of dosage, and the time when the medication is to be given.
3. **A signed parental request** from the parent or guardian of the pupil is necessary requesting that the medication be administered by the school staff. Medications should be brought to the school by the parent or guardian.
4. **Medication, in original container**, must be brought to the school appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician and should not exceed a one-month supply.
5. The school staff will administer Tylenol or Ibuprofen to students on the condition that (1) authorization is given in the emergency section and (2) parents are available to give verbal consent over the phone.
6. Medication permission slips (doctor and parent) must be renewed each school year.
7. Please note: Cough drops, essential oils, and non-prescription drugs are also considered medication.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

It is absolutely essential that parents keep all emergency information completely current so that they may be quickly contacted in the event of illness or injury. The school will not be held responsible for any health problems caused by its inability to contact parents due to inadequate or outdated emergency information.

HEAD LICE

It is our health policy that students are not allowed in class with either live or dead lice eggs or nits in their hair. Please contact the school office for additional details.

ILLNESS DURING SCHOOL DAY

If a child becomes ill during the day or exhibits a temperature of 100.4 degrees or more, the school will attempt to contact the parents. If the parents cannot be reached, the school will contact the next authorized person listed on the registration form. In the event that neither can be reached, the school will employ whatever means are reasonable or necessary in its discretion for the aid of the child.

VIII. DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS

Tri-County respects individual differences but also believes that it is important that all students be dressed for success. Research in education and business has indicated that how a person dresses affects both his/her self-esteem and his/her performance.

The following guidelines have been prepared in accordance with our **Statement of Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality** to provide consistency. They are to be followed by all students.

1. Boys and girls should be dressed neatly, tastefully, and appropriately. Clothing should be clean, in good repair, and proper fitting. Girls are expected to wear proper undergarments according to their stage of development.
2. **Specifics for K – 8th Grade Girls: Acceptable pants are: jeans, khakis, athletic pants, and dress pants.** Pants must be worn at or above the top of the hip and have no holes or rips. A belt must be worn for pants with a loose waistline. Dress and skirts should be **no more than 4 inches above the top of the knee**. Girls in lower grades are asked to wear shorts under their dresses. Leggings or jeggings may be worn underneath skirts, dresses, and long sweaters/tops as long as the **top covers the student's bottom completely in ALL times and in ALL activities**. Sweatpants are not permitted.
3. **Specifics for K – 8th Grade Boys: Acceptable pants are: jeans, khakis, athletic pants, and dress pants.** Pants must be worn at or above the top of the hip and have no holes or rips. A belt must be worn for pants with a loose waistband. Sweatpants are not permitted.

Exception for Preschool Students: Sweatpants are permitted.

4. Shirts must cover the back and midriff **at ALL times in ALL activities**. The collar of the shirt must be modest and not cut too low. Shirts must be proper fitting and not see through. Unacceptable shirts include: tank tops, tank sweaters, spaghetti strap tops, and clothing advertising unacceptable practices or glorifying questionable personalities.
5. Students may wear shorts or capris to school from April 1st through October 31st. Shorts must be **no more than 4 inches from the top of the knee**. Biker/spandex shorts may be worn as long as the **top covers the student's bottom completely in ALL times and in ALL activities**.
6. Hair styles should be clean, neatly trimmed, and in one of the four natural colors (black, brown, blonde or red).
7. Earrings are not permissible for boys.
8. Visible tattoos, markings, or bodily piercings (other than the ear for girls) are not allowed.

9. Shoes must be worn at all times during the school day. Sandals must securely hold the shoe to the foot. Flip-flops and slippers are not acceptable footwear. In general, shoe must be appropriate for the safety of the student in the event of an emergency.

The items outlined do not necessarily comprise a complete list of questionable practices in contemporary dress. On occasion there may be a situation where something may have to be brought to the attention of a student and/or the family, recognizing there is always a degree of subjectivity involved. The decision of the school must prevail. The school reserves the right to change its rules and policies as situations or individual needs arise. **Violations of these principles are subject to the consequences laid out in the Discipline Policy Framework.**

IX. STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

CAMPUS SECURITY RULES

During the school day: Students may **never** leave the school grounds without parental permission. Students may not be removed from campus by someone other than their custodial parents during the school day without prior clearance through the office. Persons lacking preauthorization must have either (1) a written note from the parent or authorized person or (2) definite phone verification by the parent or authorized person. Verbal verification without a note may not be honored.

All students coming on campus before 8:15 a.m. or remaining after 3:30 p.m. must be supervised. Students **must be** supervised at all times while on campus. They must stay within view of supervisors.

Neither the school nor its staff members will be responsible for any items brought from home by the student whether for use in the classroom or at recess.

DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Discipline and its application at Tri-County Christian School is grounded in Scripture (see particularly Proverbs 12:1, 13:18 & 24, 22:15; I Corinthians 13; Ephesians 5:1-4; Hebrews 12; and Revelation 3:9).
2. Discipline at Tri-County Christian School seeks the following objectives:
 - a. To develop and maintain the optimum learning environment.
 - b. To correct behavior which is disruptive or destructive to the learning environment.
 - c. To train students in positive Christ honoring behavioral patterns that will be essential to them as adult believers and citizens.
 - d. To remove, as a last resort, disruptive or rebellious students so that the learning environment may be maintained.
3. The school's policies apply to students while they are at school, in vehicles on a school sponsored activity, on public school buses, or at a school-recognized function. Students and parents will receive a written explanation of classroom rules, grading practices, and discipline policy. Student and parents are asked to sign a form that they agree to and understand the classroom policies.
4. Actions which give evidence of disregarding school rules (disrespect, lack of courtesy, and other such misconduct) shall be handled by the teacher in such ways as he/she deems best. Situations which are habitual or flagrant will be referred to the administrator.

The following pages include the TCCS Prohibited Behaviors List (with levels) and the Disciplinary Framework relating to the levels. The administrator has, at all times, the authority to suspend a student. The length of any suspension can be from 1-10 days unless further days are required and approved by the board of directors. Suspensions will be reported to the parents or legal guardians immediately with a full written statement of the reason(s) for suspension.

Behavioral Probation: Decisions regarding probation status are made by the administration in consultation with the teacher(s) involved. The probationary period will last for a period of nine weeks. If at the end of the probation period there is no significant improvement, as determined by the teacher and administrator, recommendation for expulsion will be given to the Board of Directors.

Prohibited Behaviors

Behavior that does not significantly violate the rights of others or cause a safety issue	Behavior that does not significantly violate the rights of others or cause a safety issue	Significantly violate the rights of others, cause a safety issue for self or others, and/or chronic behavior of previous levels	Requires immediate removal, are chronic level III behaviors, and/or require administration involvement	Require immediate removal and require administration and/or law enforcement involvement
Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talking in class without permission 2. Eating and drinking during class 3. Note passing during class 4. Littering in the building and campus 5. Violation of the dress code 6. Going to or through off-limit areas without permission of the teacher 7. Personal grooming during class (including make-up application and hair brushing) 8. Being unprepared for class (without books, paper, pencil, homework) 9. Causing a distraction in class 10. Gum chewing 11. Horseplay 12. Failing to return anything without a parent's signature 13. Failing to do homework 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public display of affection 2. Improper behavior and/or disrespect toward other students or teachers/staff 3. Unedifying speech/profanity 4. Possession of prohibited items on campus except for items listed under Level IV and Level V offenses 5. Tampering with, destruction of, or harm to others property 6. Gossip/slander - depending on subject matter 7. Classroom behavior that is inappropriate or unruly 8. Being in an out of the designated area (e.g. behind building, parking lot, playground) 9. Unauthorized absence from a detention 10. Improper behavior on a bus 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct disobedience/defiance towards teachers or staff 2. Improper behavior and/or disrespect toward other students or teachers/staff (repeated offense) 3. Cheating, first offense 4. Lying, first offense 5. Any type of bullying (verbal or physical) 6. Skipping class (Truancy) 7. Classroom behavior that is inappropriate or unruly (repeated offense) 8. Forgery, first offense 9. Impure speech or gestures (swearing or vulgar language) 10. Vandalism 11. Leaving campus without permission 12. Plagiarism 13. Harassment (sexual, verbal, or physical) - could go to Level V if brought before the Board of Directors and found guilty 14. Gambling (any type) 15. Use of cell phone or other electronic devices during the 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cheating, second offense 2. Stealing, first offense if not a felony 3. Fighting 4. Possession and/or use of tobacco on/off-campus, first offense 5. Lying, second offense 6. Tampering with technical equipment/computer 7. Forgery second offense 8. Any threat - verbal, physical. etc. to a teacher, student, parent or school employee 9. Gambling - second offense 10. Any possession of inappropriate pictures of the human body and/or inappropriate written messages 11. Destruction of school property 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possession of a firearm or weapon on campus 2. Possession of illegal substances on campus, including drugs and/or alcohol 3. Possession and/or use of tobacco on campus, second offense 4. Criminal misconduct on or off campus 5. Assaulting a faculty or staff member or another student 6. Immoral conduct such as fornication and/or homosexual practices, which are contrary to Biblical teaching, on or off-campus 7. Conviction of a felony act 8. Possession or use of prescription medicine without being administered by the school nurse or school personnel. 9. Excessive/persistent behavior or conduct that is unacceptable.

Disciplinary Framework

Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inform student of rule violated b. Describe expected behavior c. Contact parent if necessary d. Debrief and re-teach expected behavior e. Inform the student of appropriate consequences f. Incident and consequence may be documented g. Detention assigned by teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inform the student of the rule violated b. Describe expected behavior c. Contact parent if necessary d. Debrief and re-teach expected behavior e. Inform the student of appropriate consequences (possible removal of privileges) f. Incident and consequence may be documented g. Detention assigned by a teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Immediate removal of the student from situation b. Inform the student of the rule violated c. Describe expected behavior d. Conference with school administrator (as needed) e. Contact parent f. Incident and consequence documented by administration g. Removal of privileges h. 1-5 days of school suspension i. A student placed on Behavioral Probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Immediate removal of the student from situation b. Inform the student of the rule violated c. Describe expected behavior d. Conference with school administrator e. Contact parent f. Contact law enforcement (as appropriate) g. Incident and consequence documented by administration h. Removal of privileges i. 5+ days of school suspension j. A student placed on Behavioral Probation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Immediate removal of the student from situation b. Inform the student of the rule violated c. Describe expected behavior d. Conference with school administrator e. Contact parent f. Contact law enforcement (as appropriate) g. Incident and consequence documented by administration h. Immediate expulsion of the student

GENERAL OUTSIDE RULES

1. While students are waiting before school or to be picked up after school, they are to follow all directions given by the supervisors/teachers.
2. Balls may not be kicked or thrown against buildings. Stones, sand, snowballs, and objects other than balls are never to be thrown on school grounds.
3. Students are not permitted to play roughhousing type of games where other students are knocked down or where one student jumps on the back of another. Any form of fighting, even play fighting, will not be tolerated.

GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT

Students shall:

1. Show respect for the rights and property of others.
2. Show respect for teachers and their authority.
3. Take proper care of school property.
4. Abide by the TCCS Technology Acceptable Use Policy.
5. Abstain from the use of tobacco, alcohol, and narcotics both at school and away from school.
6. Abstain from the use of all forms of profanity.
7. Abstain from gum chewing while on campus, including sports practice.
8. Abstain from the use of questionable music.

PLAYGROUND RULES

1. Playground equipment must be used only as it was originally designed to be used. (No standing in swings or on tables, no running up slides, no throwing jump ropes, jumping or flipping off climbing bars, etc.)
2. No bikes or skateboards are allowed on the playground.
3. Balls are not to be kicked or bounced off the walls of any building.
4. Objects are not to be thrown (sand, toys, rocks, etc.). Students are not to be handling sand, rocks or sticks.
5. Obtain permission before retrieving balls from the parking lot.
6. Practice the golden rule - Don't snatch. Share balls, etc.
7. No pushing, fighting, pulling on clothing, tackle football, or wrestling allowed. This includes "King of the Mountain".
8. No name calling, teasing, taunting or profanity shall be allowed.
9. Students are to get a drink of water and/or go to the restroom before or after recess. They may not enter the building without permission.
10. Students may never leave the playground without permission.
11. Observe rules for four square, tetherball, etc.
12. Baseballs and/or metal cleats are not allowed on the playground. Only tennis balls may be batted.

13. Students must stay within full view of their supervisor at all times except when given permission to do otherwise.
14. No form of tag or roughhousing is allowed on the slide or other playground equipment at any time.
15. Students are discouraged from bringing toys to school except for show and tell. Toys are brought to school at the student's own risk.
16. All students, preschool through 8th grades, are required to wear shoes on the playground at all times.
17. Whoever takes a ball out is responsible for bringing it in.
18. Students are to walk in line to and from the playground area. No running.
19. Candy and gum are not allowed.

PRIVILEGE TO ATTEND

Attendance at Tri-County Christian School is a privilege and not a right. Students forfeit this privilege if they or their parents do not conform to the standards and ideals of work and life at TCCS. The school will insist on the withdrawal of a student at any time for (1) inappropriate behavior or (2) if, in the opinion of the school, he/she does not conform to the spirit of the ministry of the school, or (3) is corrupting the morals and values of other students whether inside or outside the school. The school reserves the right to interpret rules and policies as individual situations and needs arise.

RESPECT FOR SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Students are expected to respect all school property.

CELL PHONE POLICY

TCCS does not allow students to carry nor use cell phones on campus unless there is a special circumstance that has been approved by a teacher or administrator. Students who bring their cell phones to school and leave them in their backpacks in their lockers, do so at their own risk. If there is a need for the student to use their cell phone, they may come up to the office and with permission, make their call on the cell phone from there.

SCHOOL POLICY RE: SEXUAL ABUSE/HARRASSMENT PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING:

It is against both biblical principles and federal law for a student or adult staff member to sexually harass students. Legally, sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted behavior, of a sexual nature, that makes a person feel uncomfortable, unsafe or threatened.

Since sexual harassment behaviors are both biblically unacceptable and illegal they will not be tolerated on school grounds, on school buses or at any school activities.

For a more thorough explanation of the *TCCS Safety Policies and Procedures Manual (Child Services) – 2022-23*, please refer to www.tricountychristian.org under the **Policies and Procedures** tab.

Mandated Reporting

In Illinois teachers and school personnel are “mandated reporters”. Mandated reporters are required by law to report suspected child abuse (physical abuse, physical neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse) to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.” John 15:12

All children and young people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted, or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person’s life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting young people’s well-being, behavior, academic and social development right through into adulthood.

At TCCS we are committed to providing a caring, loving, and safe environment for all students. At times conflict may occur that is recognized as being different from normal peer conflict. This behavior would be recognized as bullying. All types of bullying are unacceptable at our school and will not be tolerated. It is our desire and expectation that anyone who is aware of any type of bullying that is taking place is expected to tell a member of staff immediately. All students should feel able and responsible to tell and when bullying behavior is brought to our attention, prompt and effective action will be taken. We seek to implement a plan that deals with bullying incidents in order to protect students and to help all parties to relate in a way that exhibits biblical standards.

It is vital that students realize that **TELLING** an adult is essential. Anyone who is aware of any type of bullying that is taking place is expected to tell a member of staff immediately.

Definition: Bullying occurs when a person or group is intimidated, frightened, excluded or hurt by a pattern of behaviors directed at them by others. (Greg Griffiths, “Bullying in Schools:-The Hidden Curriculum (2003)).

Bullying generally takes one of four forms:

- Physical – hitting punching, kicking, slapping, or any form of violence
- Verbal – teasing or verbal abuse-including putdowns, insults, name-calling, body shaming, threats or racial/sexual remarks
- Social – gossip, rumor spreading, alienation
- Cyber (Electronic) – using the internet, email, or text messaging to single out, embarrass, spread rumors, and/or reveal secrets about others

TCCS recognizes that not all behaviors should be considered bullying or a willful violation of this policy. Behaviors will be assessed by the teacher and/or administrator and addressed according to the following procedures:

- All parties involved will be spoken to in order to confirm all the facts of the situation. This will include victim, bully, and other bystanders who witnessed event.

- Acknowledgement of the allegation of bullying and assessment of student safety must take place within 24 hours of the report.
- Parents of victim and bully will be informed throughout the process. This may also include bystanders.
- Pertinent staff members will be notified and students will be monitored to ensure the situation is resolved in a satisfactory manner.
- Correction will follow the discipline policy in the Parent-Student Handbook with the administrator, at all times, having the authority to suspend a student. In cases of more severe situations, a student may be expelled from school upon action by the Board of Directors as outlined in the handbook. The age of the student involved will be taken into account when establishing appropriate discipline.

X. SEVERE WEATHER CLOSINGS & DISMISSALS

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL EVENTS

All school-related meetings, sporting events, and other activities shall be cancelled whenever classes are dismissed early due to severe/dangerous driving conditions such as snow storms, ice storms, severe cold, severe tornado warnings, etc.

CLOSINGS OR EARLY DISMISSALS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

Should it become necessary to cancel, delay the start of, or dismiss school early due to inclement weather or a disaster, parents will be notified as quickly as possible through announcements on the following television stations:

WTVO (17)

WREX (13)

WIFR (23)

Families will also receive communications through email, text, and Facebook.

It is the usual policy of TCCS to follow the decisions of Freeport District #145 in regard to school closings, delayed starts, and early dismissals. However, there may be exceptions when TCCS will make a decision on closing or staying open differing from Freeport District #145. Primarily in situations where Freeport District #145 would need to close school due to extreme temperatures, TCCS may decide to remain open.

In the event of delayed starts and early dismissals, students who ride district #145 buses are able to utilize their regular buses but on an adjusted schedule.

POLICY REGARDING WINTER RECESSES AND WINTER CLOTHING

Students usually go outside for recess whenever possible. In order to go outside the temperature must be “feels like” 20 degrees or above. Thus, the school requests that students wear warm coats, hats, and gloves to school. When snow is available, students are allowed to play in it if they bring proper snow gear to school. Sleds may only be brought to school on special pre-announced “snow play” days. At no time are students allowed to make snowballs and throw them at another student.

XI. HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

SCHOOL PHONE NUMBERS

Main Office (815) 233-1876

OFFICE HOURS

Regular School Year 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Summer Hours (M/W/F) 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

During off-hours messages may be left on the school office answering machine.
(815) 233-1876

WEEKLY NEWSLETTERS

A weekly newsletter will be texted and emailed on Thursdays. Announcements for this newsletter must be submitted to the school secretary by 8:30 a.m. Wednesday or by Tuesday morning in the event of a shortened week.

CONTACTING TEACHERS

Parents are asked to phone teachers after 3:20 p.m. Every teacher has an email address. This will be provided to parents at the Back-to-School Orientation.

DIRECTORY OF SCHOOL FAMILIES

Each year in the fall, a school directory is available to families on FACTS Family Portal. This directory includes general information regarding all school families, staff members, and board members. This information is not to be released to anyone outside the school, nor is it to be used by anyone outside the school for the purpose of soliciting families.

SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Tri-County Christian School's academic year is 176 pupil attendance days long. Tri-County Christian School's annual school calendar adheres closely to the Freeport District #145's calendar so as to facilitate bus transportation. The occasional difference between calendars usually relates to different inservice days or District #145 dismissing at noon. Classes usually commence around the middle of August and conclude around June 1 depending on the number of snow days used by the school.

The school calendar is distributed at the beginning of each school year. The school attempts to remind parents of upcoming events in its weekly announcement sheet. It is essential that the office be notified of all newly scheduled school activities so that they may be recorded on the school's master planning calendar. Please check with the office before scheduling additional events.

SENDING NOTES OR MONEY TO SCHOOL

Please send all written notes or monies to school in clearly labeled envelopes. Please itemize what monies are for on the check.

TELEPHONE MESSAGES

You may leave messages with the office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. An answering machine is on during off hours. Students and teachers will not be called out of classes except in emergencies.

XII. TRANSPORTATION

BUS TRANSPORTATION

The school does not provide bus service but Illinois State Law allows for private school students to be transported on public school buses if the student lives (a) more than one and one-half miles from Tri-County Christian School's campus and (b) on a regular scheduled public school bus route. For the past several years Tri-County Christian School students have been transported on buses from the Freeport school district. In order to meet various bus schedules, Tri-County Christian School allows students flexibility in regards to arriving late to school or getting dismissed early. Parents wishing to investigate the availability of bus service for their children must personally contact Freeport School District at the following number:

Freeport Bus Garage (815) 232-0580

CAR POOLS

Whenever it is workable, many families from the out-lying areas car-pool their children back and forth to school. New families may contact the school office in late summer to either obtain the names of other families who live in their neighborhood or to place their names on a car pool list.

SEATBELT, AIR BAG, AND CONVERTIBLE AUTO POLICIES

Seatbelts must be worn by all students while traveling on any school-related activity. This includes the transporting of students across town for basketball practice and games. Students less than 5'2" in height or 100 lbs. in weight are not permitted to ride in the front passenger-side seats of vehicles equipped with air bags unless they are riding with their own parents. Students may not be transported in convertibles while on any school events.

LIABILITY INSURANCE NOTICE

Drivers who volunteer to drive on school events need to be aware that the school's insurance does not cover them in the event of an accident. All volunteer drivers are asked to provide the office with documentation showing that they carry adequate insurance on their vehicles and a current driver's license.

XIII. ATHLETICS

Tri-County Christian School provides its fourth through eighth grade students with the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular, interscholastic sports. It should be understood by all participants and parents that classroom academics take priority over the extra-curricular, interscholastic sports program. Items related to this understanding are addressed in the separate athletic code provided to and signed by both participants and parents.

ANNUAL ATHLETIC FEE

Each athlete (including participating homeschoolers) is required to pay an annual sports fee.

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Athletes must sign and follow the school's Athletic Code of Conduct as a condition for playing on a TCCS team. This code, which is handed out to families each fall, details the expectations TCCS has for both players and parents.

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

Christian school athletics should clearly reflect the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christian athletes have an obligation to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that is pleasing and honoring to the Lord. Competition and participation in athletic events contributes to the physical, mental and spiritual development of Christian school students. It provides students with the opportunity to test and display their skills before others. In the heat of competition players and parents must conduct themselves as Christians in their relationships with game officials, spectators on both sides, and with opposing team players. Christian athletes should perform with a total release of their mental and physical energies to the glory of God. In Christian school athletic contests the Holy Spirit must supersede individual school and team spirit. God's Word says "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." (Gal. 5:25) Christian school crowds and players should remember that Jesus Christ is in the audience at every contest.

PARENT ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES

Even in athletics, TCCS believes that parents have the ultimate responsibility to see that their children learn eternal values and develop healthy bodies for the glory of God. Therefore, parents must view themselves as partners with the coaches in using athletics to mold and shape godly character and faith. As partners with the coaches, TCCS parents are expected to spiritually and physically support coaches through prayer, following the Matthew 18 principle, helping setup/take down equipment, transporting players to games, encouraging their children, and picking up their children promptly after practices. Parents are also expected to assist in fundraising activities.

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

1. To provide a Christian environment for players to glorify God and to develop their athletic talents.
2. To instill in the players an attitude about sportsmanship and respect for players, coaches, fans and officials, that is consistent with biblical values.
3. To provide a Christ-like witness to the players and spectators of the other teams with whom we compete.

SPORTS INSURANCE

The school does not carry sports insurance on its athletes. Parents are, therefore, fully responsible for providing medical insurance for their children who participate on any TCCS sports teams.

SPORTSMANSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Players and fans should enter each contest with great enthusiasm. However, at no time will name-calling, booing, or degrading opponents and referees be tolerated of TCCS parents, fans, or athletes. If there is any conduct that is inappropriate, that individual will be asked to immediately leave the athletic event.

TEAM PHYSICALS

All students participating in sports must furnish evidence that they have had a physical exam within one year prior to the date that practices begin.

XIV. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

ANNUAL RE-ENROLLMENT

All students must be readmitted each year by submitting new enrollment forms and paying the annual enrollment fee. A discount off the regular registration fee is given to families re-enrolling before April 1. Enrollment begins February 1. TCCS reserves the right to limit enrollment to existing families during the first two weeks of February. All applications are taken on a first come, first-enrolled basis.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

Students admitted to Tri-County Christian School shall be protected from influences negatively affecting their wellbeing. The school shall exclude students from classes who are currently infected with live (active) viruses from illnesses and diseases of a communicable nature.

DEALING WITH CONFLICTS

The Bible in Matthew 18 gives specific instructions on how to deal with interpersonal relations. Tri-County Christian School puts into practice this Matthew 18 principle. Accordingly, if a problem develops, first go to the teacher involved and try to resolve the issue. If not resolved, the teacher will contact the principal for a meeting with parents, teacher, and principal. If no resolution, the principal will contact the board president if further action is needed.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Hot lunches are available to students in grades Preschool - 8. The office will distribute instructions on procedures for ordering hot lunches with the first lunch menu. Due to the lack of facilities and microwaves, the lunch staff is not able to warm up individual lunches which students bring from home. Volunteers are needed on a daily basis to help serve these hot lunches. Please contact the office if you are able to help serve, even if it's only once per month. In addition, no soft drinks or full-size candy bars (or any candy larger than snack-size) are allowed at lunch.

LATCHKEY SERVICES

Latchkey services are offered on school days. As needed, these services are available between 6:00-8:15 a.m. and 3:15-6:00 p.m. The morning latchkey supervisor is on campus by 7:00 a.m. unless a request is made for an earlier time. Arrangements for earlier availability with the latchkey worker should be made in advance (24 hours). The afternoon session of latchkey is not available on half days of school.

Punch cards are used by the latchkey worker and must be purchased in advance. Time is charged by the ¼ hour. To find out what the current latchkey charges are, call the school office. Late fees will apply whenever students are not picked up by 6:00 p.m.

MILK PROGRAM

Milk in cartons is available to all students for their lunches. Students in classes with a midmorning snack may purchase milk for snack time. Prices and ordering instructions for lunch and milk go out with the first menu.

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PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Office Phone: (815) 233-1876

Preschool Hours: **A.M. Classes** 8:30-11:30 and **Full Day Classes** 8:30-3:00

Kindergarten Hours: **Half Day Classes** 8:30-11:30 and **Full Day Classes** 8:30-3:00

Admission Requirements/Procedures: See Pages 13-16

Dealing with Conflicts: See Page 46

Dress Code: See Page 30-31

Discipline Procedures Overview: See Pages 32-39

Financial Policies: See Pages 24-25

Health Issues: See Pages 28-29

Miscellaneous: See Pages 47

Orientation for Parents: Held first week of school during evening hours

Orientation for Students: Held first day of school

Parent/Teacher Conferences: November and February

Parties: See Page 21

Screening for Kindergarten: See Page 14

Severe Weather Closing: See Page 40

Visitors in Classroom: See Page 22

Volunteering in Classroom: See Page 22

Transportation (Buses): See Page 43