Lower School Handbook

UPDATED AUGUST 2026

Lower School Campus
Early Childhood: Cub House - 2nd grade
Elementary School: Grades 3-6
2204 Briarwood Way
Birmingham, Alabama 35243
(205) 776-5800

Briarwood Christian School exists to provide a Christ-centered, transformational education that equips and inspires each student to glorify God by maximizing their God-given abilities. Our vision is to develop leaders who impact the world by glorifying Christ in every sphere of life.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
School Philosophy/Governance	1
School Distinctives	2
Student Conduct	5
Admissions & Enrollment	9
Attendance	9
Student Mobile Phone/Electronic Device Use	12
Social Media Policy	13
Use of Artificial Intelligence	14
Dress Code	15
Student Progress	16
Promotion Policy	16
Field Trips	17
After-School Care	18
Homework	18
Report Card and Grading Procedures	18
School Events & Co-curricular Activities	19
Student Records & Student Affairs	21
Office Policies & Procedures	22
Health & Safety	23
Physical Education Excuses	29
Transportation	29
Carpool	30
Safety Patrol	31
Parent/School Relations	31
Financial Responsibilities	40
Student Withdrawal	41
Other Policies	41
Appendix A – Pastoral Position & Guideline Paper	44

Introduction

This student handbook provides students, parents, and staff with a statement of the basic policies, procedures, and philosophy of Briarwood Christian School (BCS). Although the handbook is not intended as a comprehensive statement on these subjects, nor is it a contract, it is written to answer the most frequent questions asked about the policies and procedures of the school. In the handbook, no attempt has been made to explain the rationale for each policy or procedure, but it is important to realize that our policies and procedures are formulated as one way to implement our goals in Christian education and to provide for a safe, effective, efficient, and consistent approach to problems.

Commitment to these policies and procedures by students, parents, and staff enables the school to run smoothly, effectively, and efficiently. We believe that Christian education involves encouraging and training students for responsible action. These policies and procedures are basic guidelines, which should be viewed as one way to encourage and train students to recognize and assume responsibility for their actions. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of this handbook is to allow parents, students, and staff to be "of one mind" in the great privilege of training children to honor God with their whole lives.

The provisions of this handbook do not constitute a contract between BCS or Briarwood Presbyterian Church and any applicant, student, or student's family. BCS reserves the right to change the policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and information in the handbook at any time. The School Board approves major changes.

"Where there is no guidance, the people fall, but
in an abundance of counselors, there is victory." (Proverbs 11:14)

School Philosophy/Governance

General Philosophy

BCS, under the counsel and advice of the School Board as a standing committee of the Session of Briarwood Presbyterian Church, operates as a ministry of Briarwood Presbyterian Church. The school is a vital segment of the Christian Education program of the church. The opportunity for educational training, from the Cub House (formerly mother's day out) through high school, is to be provided from a distinctly Biblical foundation and perspective. The true nature of life, the study of every subject, and all co-curricular activities and events are to be viewed in relation to God and His inerrant Word. The school adheres to a standard of excellence in providing Christ-honoring education, which reflects a commitment to God's Word and academic excellence. The educational process will be measured by the criteria stated in Luke 2:52.

The school's educational process and commitment, both in and out of the classroom, will be directed to the development of Christian students to enable them to translate the different facets of their educational experience into Christian living. Although the primary emphasis is to provide an educational opportunity for Christian students, whether members or non-members of Briarwood Presbyterian Church, enrollment is not limited to Christian students. Evangelism, through proclamation of the gospel to students and parents, is an

important part of the school's educational process. The school is also committed to advancing Christian education in our region.

School Distinctives

Mission & Values

We exist to provide a Christ-centered, transformational education that equips and inspires each student to glorify God by maximizing their God-given abilities. Our vision is to develop leaders who impact the world by glorifying Christ in every sphere of life.

School Board

The School Board is a committee of the Session of Briarwood Presbyterian Church. The School Board is composed of 15 individuals nominated by the School Board and approved by the Session of Briarwood Presbyterian Church. Each member of the board serves a three-year term. Please contact the Superintendent's office for more information.

Statement of Purpose

Briarwood Christian School is a college-preparatory institution that exists to partner with parents in the education of their children so that students:

- Learn to love God with all their hearts, minds, and souls and to love others as themselves
- Learn to bring "every thought captive to the obedience of Christ"
- Advance in developing Christ-like character
- Grow and mature spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically through world-class academic and co-curricular programs in a Christ-centered environment
- Are well prepared for college and career and equipped to serve Christ and their communities through their callings

Sanctity of Human Life Statement

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 (Psalm 139).

School Verse/Motto - "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

School Colors - Blue & Gold

Team Name - Briarwood Lions

Graduate Profile

At BCS, under the authority of God's Word and for His glory, our students receive a Christ-centered, transformational education that equips and inspires all students to glorify God by maximizing their God-given abilities. They will develop into leaders who impact the world by glorifying Christ in every sphere and become:

Growing Disciples of Christ
Responsible Stewards
Compassionate Neighbors
Resilient Learners
Courageous Leaders

A **growing** disciple of Christ (Lk. 9:23, Rom. 12:1-2, Matt. 4:19-20, Col. 1:28-29, Jn. 15:18-19, Jn. 8:12)

- Endeavors to follow Jesus Christ faithfully
- Understands that man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever
- Realizes that knowledge of God is the most important knowledge one can have
- Cultivates a lifestyle of Spirit-filled virtue
- Knows, obeys and genuinely loves God's standards of behavior expressed in His moral law
- Recognizes, delights in and pursues the true, the good and the beautiful
- Engages faithfully in joyful worship and authentic fellowship in a local church
- Lives a lifestyle of evangelism and discipleship

A **responsible** steward (Gen. 2:15, Prov. 22:29, Matt. 25:21, Prov. 3:9, 1 Pet. 4:10, Ps. 24:1, Col. 3:23-24)

- Discovers and cultivates God-given abilities
- Applies Biblical principles to relationships, decision-making, finances, and daily work
- Pursues personal spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical health
- Delights in and cares for God's creation
- Creates and crafts with beauty, generosity, and excellence for God's glory and others' good
- Serves in joyful obedience in one's area of gifting and calling

A **Compassionate** neighbor (Jn. 13:34-35, Micah 6:8, 1 John 3:17, 1 Peter 3:8, Deut. 10:18, James 1:27)

- Seeks to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with their God
- Values and delights in the inherent dignity of all persons
- Evaluates accurately perspectives that differ from their own according to Scripture
- Recognizes and embraces the true greatness of service to others
- Loves and prays for others as a response to God's love for us
- Serves selflessly as an ambassador of Christ

A **Resilient** learner (1 Peter 1:13, Prov. 1:7, Ps. 25:5, Rom. 15:4, 2 Tim. 2:15, Jer. 17:7-8)

- Understands that learning is for the purpose of growing our ability to participate in fulfilling the Great Commandment, the Great Commission and the Cultural Mandate for God's glory and others' good
- Understands that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom
- Discovers joy in learning

- Understands our cultural moment in light of the Biblical story
- Thinks critically, logically and Biblically and is furthermore able to communicate those thoughts clearly, articulately and persuasively through both the written and spoken word
- Develops resilience in the learning process, becoming a lifelong learner
- Cultivates a community of other wise, resilient learners

A **Courageous** leader (Deut. 6:7-9, Ps. 78, Eph. 4:15, 1 Tim. 4:12, 1 Pt. 1:13, Mark 10:43-45, Heb. 13:7, Ps. 37:3)

- Humbly follows Christ as they seek to lead others to and for Him
- Desires to influence by glorifying and serving Christ in every sphere of life
- Leads in the sphere of influence with Christlike courage, conviction, humility and grace
- Leads by example in dealing with the challenges of the cultural moment with grace, truth and love

The Covenant of Honor

As a Christian school, BCS desires to build within students a strong sense of personal honor and integrity. For an honor system to be most effective, each person in the school community must believe in and support the principles upon which the system is based. During our 2018-2019 academic year, our students created a list of Biblically-centered characteristics that a BCS student should strive to emulate. In this light, the Covenant of Honor was created and now always applies to each student while the student is enrolled at BCS.

As a member of the Briarwood Christian School community:

I will dedicate myself to the ideas of truth and scholarship. (*Philippians 4:8)*
I pledge to demonstrate personal & academic integrity in all manners. I will refrain from dishonesty or deception of any nature.

I will learn to do good, to seek justice, and correct oppression. (*Isaiah 1:17)*
I will be reflective to reveal my own sin, which may bring about repentance. I will look at the cross of Jesus to see the display of God's justice against sin. In response, I will seek justice for the members of my community.

I will think of others before myself. (*Philippians 2:3-4)*
Through empathizing with those in my community, I will look to display servant leadership at all times. It is my intention to consistently encourage, listen well, and forgive others.

I will pursue excellence in my calling. (*Colossians 3:23)*
I will practice Christian stewardship by using the gifts that God has given me to the best of my ability, in accordance with God's will for my life.

I will love others. (*John 13:34)*
Because God first loved us, we can love one another in community. I commit to avoiding gossip and slander and commit to pursuing humility, trust, and acceptance in my relationships.

Philosophy of Discipline

The Bible clearly indicates that parents are responsible for the discipline, training, and instruction of their children. The Christian school exists to assist parents in their God-given responsibilities. Therefore, BCS seeks not to assume a task which God gives to parents but only to serve as the parents' appointed and authorized limited representatives in training and educating children. In formulating a philosophy of education and discipline, the school has attempted to align itself as closely as possible with the Bible's instructions to parents to provide the utmost consistency for the child between training to be taught at home and training received at school.

Discipline may be correctly viewed as both a process and a product. God expects parents or other authorities to discipline children to develop a child who consistently becomes more self-disciplined, requiring less supervision as they mature. Then as a self-disciplined adult, the process begins again as that adult, qualified by self-discipline, assumes the role of training the next generation. God's ultimate purpose in charging parents with this task is to prepare children to enter into and mature within God's spiritual family and to respond to Him with respect and obedience based on their former training by their parents. BCS's philosophy of education and discipline exists to serve and further this ultimate spiritual goal.

God-given responsibilities in the discipline process exist not only for parents and teachers, but also for students. During school hours and at other school-related and school-supervised functions, students are to respond to school faculty and supervisory staff members with the same obedience, same respectfulness, and in the same spirit that should be present under biblical standards when they respond to their parents or guardians. Failure to maintain a biblical attitude of respect and obedience toward school authority, which manifests itself in improper behavior or violated standards, will result in disciplinary action appropriate for the violation. The school expects that parents will support the administration of such disciplinary action by encouraging obedience and respectfulness to the action of the school.

The aim of discipline is restoration and renewal. Our desire is not merely for behavior modification but heart transformation that can only come through repentance and spiritual renewal through our Lord, Jesus Christ. Only while operating within this philosophy of discipline can the educational process reach its maximum potential.

BCS is committed to the philosophy and principles of Christian education. Student conduct which works against school philosophy will not be condoned. The guidelines listed in this handbook are based on Christian principles, appropriate standards of conduct, and common sense. Guidelines provide boundaries for security and freedom. We trust that our students would respond with positive attitudes and conduct.

Student Conduct

In a spirit of love and acceptance, we believe each student is uniquely gifted and deeply valued by God. We want to emulate the great esteem God has for each individual student in trying to bring out the best in our students. We expect exemplary behavior that is honoring to Christ, your families, and this school.

BCS reserves the right to suspend or expel a student for misconduct on or off school campus, and without regard for whether the form of misconduct is identified specifically in this handbook, and without regard for whether it is specified as improper off campus.

While the school has no control over student activity by students off campus that is not school sponsored, and does not supervise student conduct off campus that occurs during an activity that is not school sponsored, misconduct during such activity may come to the attention of school authorities and may result in the administration of discipline, including suspension or expulsion.

School property, and the property of others, shall be protected. Defacing or damaging school property, or the property of others, which is malicious or careless in nature, and which results in destruction or damage will result in both appropriate disciplinary action, and the replacement of such property by the student or the student's parents or legal guardian.

Respect for authority is expected of each student for any staff member at any time either in or out of school. Any student who is intentionally disrespectful to a staff member may be subject to disciplinary action.

Conduct and attitude will be respectful and should not interfere with the teaching, learning and discipleship in the classroom. Disruptions in class, unruly or unkind behavior, lying, stealing, or repeated violations of prescribed school policy will not be allowed.

Violation of Rules
Any violation of school rules will subject the student to one or more of the following disciplinary actions.

Means of Discipline
Based on the nature of the infraction, disciplinary action can be placed in one of the following categories:

- Mild - Generally administered by the teacher
- Moderate - Administered by the teacher or the Principal
- Serious - Administered by the Principal
- Very Serious - Administered by the Principal with the advice and approval of the Superintendent

Mild
Mild disciplinary cases will be handled by the individual teacher in harmony with their own methods and abilities consistent with school policies. These could include, but are not limited to, reprimands, missing a recess, spending lunch or recesses in the office, silent lunch, cleaning a room, or writing an essay or letter of apology.

Moderate
Moderate discipline is administered by the teacher or Principal after the school has exhausted other methods. This may include in-school suspension.

Serious

The school reserves the right to suspend any student for a serious infraction of school rules. All suspensions will be administered by the Principal with the advice and approval of the Superintendent. Suspensions will generally take place the day following notification to the student and parents.

Suspensions may be given for a period of up to five days. A suspension is an unexcused absence from school. For every day of suspension, a 3-point deduction per course for the current grading period will be assessed.

Examples (but not limited to) for which suspensions may be given are:

- Fighting on school property, aboard buses, or at school functions
- Physical Harm - hitting, biting (see policy below)
- Foul or inappropriate language, flagrantly abusive language, racial disrespect, disrespectful conduct, or harassment/bullying (see policy below)
- Inappropriate comments or joking of a sexual nature
- Possession of weapons, including knives/pocketknife or an object being used as a weapon with the intention of threatening or harming others
- Cheating on any test or assignment; in addition to suspension, the student will receive a zero on the test or assignment
- Use of computers in a manner that is inconsistent with the school's purpose, philosophy, or policies
- Bypassing any security measure installed on computers without faculty permission
- Leaving school without permission.
- Other serious infractions or behaviors deemed by the Administration to be inconsistent with the school's mission, philosophy, and policies

Very Serious

Very serious discipline may result in expulsion, which is permanent dismissal from school.

Expulsion will be administered by the Principal with the advice and approval of the Superintendent.

Appeal of an expulsion may be made in writing to the Superintendent within three days of the expulsion. Such appeals will be considered by the Executive Committee of the School Board. A student may not attend classes during request for an appeal. The decision of the Executive Committee of the School Board is final.

A student who has lost the privilege to attend BCS may not be permitted to attend school-related events.

Expulsion may occur when any one of the following (but not limited to) takes place:

- Possessing, using, selling, or supplying prescribed or illegal drugs
- Possessing, consuming, supplying, or selling of tobacco or alcohol on school property or at school-related events

- Possession, transfer, sale, or discharge of any gun (including a starter gun or pellet gun), firearm, or any other explosive device, of any type, whether loaded or unloaded, on school property or at any school-related activity
- Inappropriate contact of a sexual nature
- Habitual dishonesty
- Repeated violations of discipline that have resulted in suspensions
- Failure of parents to cooperate with the school in the discipline of their children
- Threats related to the school environment or to people; assault or battery of a teacher
- Serious harassment/bullying on school property or at school-sponsored events (see policy below)
- Any other moral misconduct inconsistent with biblical teaching and the standards and policies of BCS or Briarwood Presbyterian Church. *See Appendix A for the BPC Pastoral Position and Guideline Paper*

The school reserves the right to report serious offenses (those offenses that may constitute violation of criminal laws established by the State of Alabama) to the proper authorities and to press charges against the student if the situation should so warrant. This action would require the approval of the Superintendent and the Executive Committee of the School Board.

Harassment/Bullying Policy

Harassment or bullying is defined as:

- Any sustained gesture, act, or communication (written, verbal, graphic or physical–including electronically transmitted acts and/or communications) that are reasonably perceived to be directed at one or more students or staff members
- Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more students
- Adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities because the conduct is perceived by the student and school staff to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to be in clear violation of the school's standards of conduct

The school prohibits both active and passive roles for acts of harassment or bullying. Students are expected to support their peers and report acts of harassment and bullying to school staff. The school prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who in good faith reports an act of harassment or bullying and appropriate consequences for these acts will be determined by the administration based on the facts of the case.

The school prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment or bullying and appropriate consequences for these actions shall be determined by the administration based on the facts of the case.

Biting Policy

After a first incident of biting, a note will be sent to the parents. After a second incident, the child will be sent home for the remainder of the day. After a third incident, the child may be suspended. If the problem continues, the principal may recommend permanent dismissal from the school.

Student Pranks Policy

Student pranks that disrupt any aspect of school, cause any property damage, or have an adverse effect on students or faculty, may subject the student to serious disciplinary action. The student will also be responsible for any financial liabilities resulting from the prank.

Admissions & Enrollment

BCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, or national and ethnic origin. Students must score at grade level on a standardized test administered by BCS and successfully complete the application process to be eligible for enrollment. The school does not provide enrollment to students whose special educational or physical needs cannot be met by our existing programs, services, or staff. The school reserves the right to deny admission or continued enrollment to any student whose actions demonstrate that it is not in the school's best interest to allow admission or continued enrollment.

To enroll, a child must meet the August 1st birthday requirement. Students entering Junior Kindergarten should be 4 years of age by August 1st of the coming school year; students entering kindergarten should be 5 by August 1st.

Readmission or Continued Enrollment

Any student expelled from School, or allowed to withdraw, will not be allowed to apply for readmission for at least one calendar year. Readmission would not be available until the fall following the one calendar year out of school. Any student allowed to reapply must meet all entrance requirements. Requests for readmission should be made in writing to the Superintendent. The Executive Committee of the School Board will consider requests for readmission.

Any student given the option to withdraw without a point deduction may not re-enter without the inclusion of penalty points upon re-enrollment. If readmission is granted, the points will be deducted during the first grading period of the student's return. The school reserves the right to deny re- admission, admission, or continued enrollment to any student whose actions demonstrate that it is not in the school's best interest to allow admission, readmission or continued enrollment.

Attendance

All classes begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. All students should be in their classrooms by 7:55 a.m. in order for classes to begin on time. On Thursday late start days, classes begin at 8:45 a.m. All students should be in their classrooms by 8:40 a.m. for classes to begin on time. We believe that regular attendance in classes is essential to the success of a student's school experience. Students will be required to make up all missed work including homework and tests. One can never really make up or compensate for the absence from class.

It is generally assumed that each student and family will do everything possible to fulfill commitments to the school, including attendance.

Loss of Credit for the Year Due to Absences (JK-6th)

For a student to receive grade level credit, yearly absences may not exceed eight (8) per semester or a total of sixteen (16) per year. Whether the absences are excused or unexcused does not change the credit ruling. Exceptions may be granted under unusual circumstances after parental consultation with the Principal.

Pre-Planned Excused Absences

- A parent/guardian should send an email message to **lsattendance@bcsk12.org** for approval of such requests. This email should contain the dates and reason for the absence and must be sent at least 48 hours in advance of the requested absence.
- Upon receipt of this request, a member of the school administration will grant or deny approval and email the parent notifying the parent of the decision.
- If pre-approval is not obtained, approval may not be granted, and the absence may be considered unexcused.
- Examples of pre-planned absences include business trips, competitions, medical appointments, weddings, funerals, etc.
- Students are not given additional time to make up work for pre-planned absences. All work is due the day of return. Please contact your child's teacher for the assignments and plan to complete the work during your absence. At the teacher's discretion, tests missed during pre-planned absences may be taken before the absence or upon return.
- Students are allotted a maximum of three (3) non-medical excused absences per semester. This allotment does not guarantee approval of non-medical excused absence requests.

Unplanned Excused Absences

Children get sick from time to time and every family experiences the occasional "family emergency." For these instances, please email **lsattendance@bcsk12.org** at your earliest convenience. Please notify the School or the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

- All work missed during excused absences relating to illness, injury, and death in the family, must be made up within two times the number of days the student was absent. If the homework or tests were assigned prior to the absence, the student is responsible for the test or homework upon returning to school. Please contact the teacher to develop an appropriate timeline to turn in work.
- Once a student has reached five (5) absences in a semester, proper documentation from a physician will be required for the absence to be considered excused.

Unexcused Absences, Check-ins/Checkouts

- Examples of unexcused absences, check-ins, or checkouts include cosmetic appointments, shopping excursions, travel, vacations, extended tardiness, and suspensions, as well as any of the aforementioned reasons.
- For students in grades 3-6, each unexcused absence results in a deduction of three percentage points per subject missed per day

Checking Students Out of School

Students may be checked out under the following conditions for the absence to be defined as excused in the Student Handbook.

If the reason is illness, the student must:

- Be running a fever as determined by the school staff
- If not running a fever, obviously ill, as determined by the school nurse

For protection, students may not leave campus during the school day without the personal appearance of the parents or legal guardian. Students will not be released to anyone other than the student's parent(s) or legal guardian without proper contact with the parents or legal guardian. Carpool numbers or personal ID will be required for dismissal from the building.

For checkouts other than illness, students will be dismissed from the classroom only when the parent arrives in the school office. Students will not be called from the classroom for dismissal during the 15-minute period prior to the final dismissal bell, except under serious special conditions.

Upon checking in either later than day or the following day, a written note or email must accompany the student.

Tardies

All classes begin promptly at 8:00 am. All students should be in their classrooms by 7:55 am for classes to begin on time. On Thursday late start days, classes begin at 8:45 am. All students should be in their classrooms by 8:40 am for classes to begin on time.

Tardy students must be checked in by a parent or legal guardian.

- Excused:
  - Bus delays or breakdowns
  - Automobile delays or breakdowns enroute to school
  - Detainment by the School Office or another teacher
  - Temporary illness
  - Unavoidable, reasonable circumstances as determined by the Principals
- Unexcused:
  - Oversleeping or arriving late for any reason not in keeping with reasonable prudence

Students who accumulate 10 unexcused tardies will receive an unexcused absence of 1 day, resulting in the penalty for unexcused absences described in this Handbook. This penalty will follow each accumulation of 10 unexcused tardies.

Dismissal Times

- Half-day Kindergarten dismisses at 12:45 p.m.
- Full-day Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade dismiss at 2:20 p.m., except as noted on special days
- All other classes dismiss at 3:00 p.m.

Advance notice will be given when there is a change from the regular time.

Make Up Work Policy for Absences, Early Checkouts, Tardiness

Students will be required to make up all missed work including classwork, homework, quizzes, and tests as follows:

- For unplanned absences due to illness, injury, or family emergency, all work missed must be made up and turned in within two times the number of days a student is absent.
- For pre-planned, excused absences, students do not receive additional days for makeup work. Students are expected to have their work completed and be prepared to take any missed quizzes or tests upon return to school.
- For early checkouts or late arrivals, missed work will be sent home for the student to complete.
- Due to the nature of the classroom schedule, a teacher is not able to re-teach missed lessons. Accommodations may be made for medical or emergency absences.

Student Mobile Phone/Electronic Device Use

We discourage students from bringing any type of mobile phone or device to school. However, we understand that there may be a situation that makes it necessary for your child to have a phone or electronic device with him or her for use when off campus.

Mobile phones and other electronic communication devices (including smart watches) must be powered off and stored in the student's book bag during school hours. The use of these devices is prohibited during school hours, which include times of dismissal and carpool, after-school care, study hall, and while on BCS shuttle transport.

Examples (but are not limited to) of personal electronic devices that are not allowed to be used or "powered on" during school hours are gaming devices, iPods, iPads, tablets, smart watches (i.e. Apple Watch, Moto 360, Samsung Gear 2, Gizmos, and all other smart watch brands with internet access), MP3 players, Game Boys, Nooks, Kindles, cameras, recorders or other electronic devices. This also includes any device that allows for email, messaging, photography, videoing, or texting. This does not include devices such as mobile phones that are used to monitor severe health issues. Medical devices of this nature must be approved by school administrators on a case-by-case basis.

Please note that students may not wear any type of "smart watch," even if the mobile phone or other device that "powers" the watch is turned off.

Any student who does not follow these guidelines will have the device taken up and sent to the office. School administration will determine a plan of action for the violation of school policy. A parent must pick up the device from an administrator. Devices will not be returned to the student.

Any misuse of mobile phones or electronic devices such as texting, cheating, unauthorized use of photographs, etc., may result in suspension and/or other consequences to be determined at the discretion of the school administration.

Social Media Policy

At Briarwood Christian School, we believe in promoting a safe and respectful environment that aligns with our Christian values both within and beyond the classroom.

This Social Media Policy outlines guidelines and expectations for students when using social media platforms.

Respect our Mission & Vision: Students are expected to conduct themselves online in a manner consistent with the Christ-centered mission and vision upheld by Briarwood Christian School.

Privacy: Protect your privacy and respect the privacy of others. Do not share personal information, such as home addresses, phone numbers, or sensitive family details, without permission.

Respect for Others: Treat all individuals, regardless of their beliefs, with kindness and respect. Avoid engaging in online behavior that is discriminatory, disrespectful, or harmful.

Honesty and Integrity: Be truthful and accurate in all online interactions. Do not engage in plagiarism, spreading false information, or cheating in any form.

Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. This includes any form of online harassment, intimidation, or derogatory comments. Report any instances of cyberbullying to a teacher or school authority.

Representing Briarwood Christian School: When identifying as a student of Briarwood Christian School online, students are expected to represent the school positively and responsibly. Any actions that tarnish the school's reputation or disrupt the peaceful and orderly learning environment of the school may result in disciplinary action. Students do not have permission from the school under any circumstances to create social media accounts that represent Briarwood Christian School.

Respect for Teachers & Staff: Maintain a respectful and appropriate tone when discussing teachers, staff, and school-related matters on personal social media platforms.

Consequences for Violations: Violations of this Social Media Policy may result in disciplinary action, including warnings, suspension, or expulsion, depending on the severity of the violation and the impact on the school community.

Reporting Violations: If a student encounters a violation of this policy, they are encouraged to report it to a teacher, school counselor, or administrator.

By following this Social Media Policy, students of Briarwood Christian School help create a positive online environment that reflects our mission and vision. Responsible digital citizenship is a commitment to the school community and an essential life skill for the future. It is mandated that threats that involve school safety are reported to the Head of School.

Student Lead Accounts: Briarwood Christian School does not allow or endorse student-led accounts that represent Briarwood.

This policy is subject to change, and all students are responsible for staying updated on the latest version.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

Briarwood Christian School acknowledges that technology is ever-changing and has a tremendous impact on our global society, local community, and classrooms. Artificial intelligence (AI), including generative forms of AI, is becoming more a part of our everyday lives. It is the responsibility of the Briarwood community (school and family) to educate and train students to utilize AI in an ethical and educational way. Briarwood Christian School is not banning the student or teacher use of AI, but each student will need to be aware of the limitations and guidelines of its usage:

- Briarwood Christian School student email accounts and technology access to specific open AI software, such as ChatGPT, are blocked due to data and security concerns. Any misuse of AI tools and applications, such as hacking or altering data, is strictly prohibited.
- Teachers may allow the use of AI for curriculum purposes. Access to specific websites will be granted on an as-needed basis, adhering to specific data and privacy guidelines regarding age restrictions and usage.
- College Board and Dual Enrollment college and university classes may have additional restrictions and limitations regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence.
- Students who use AI software with a personal device and/or personal credentials should do so at their own risk, acknowledging that each platform is collecting various forms of data.
- Students must acknowledge the use of AI in any capacity related to their schoolwork: text, image, multimedia, etc.
- The use of AI could be subject to the Academic Integrity Policy.
- Students should acknowledge that AI is not always factually accurate, or seen as a credible source, and should be able to provide evidence to support its claims. All users must also be aware of the potential for bias and discrimination in AI tools and applications.
- Faculty and students should not upload or input any Personally Identifiable Information (PII) for themselves or anyone else into any AI tool. Examples of PII would be information such as personal photos, phone numbers, street addresses, legal names, social security numbers, or any other data that could be used to identify an individual.

It is our hope to partner well with the Briarwood community, through the ever-changing landscape of technology and AI.

Dress Code

BCS believes that all followers of Christ are part of the Body of Christ, with good works prepared in advance for each of us to do (Ephesians 2:10). Everyone is both essential and equal, and the uniform reminds us that we are all equal and unified in the Body of Christ.

The Lower School (JK-6th grades) has a required uniform. There are options within the "Required Uniform." Every family should purchase the components of the "Required Uniform." You may want to purchase two options for the bottom as the Administration may designate pants or shorts depending on the time of year. Clothing labeled "Adaptive" is designed with alternate closures to meet a variety of motor and sensory needs and concerns. See the school website for more information.

Guidelines for All Students

- All clothing must be of appropriate size, modest, gender appropriate, and in good repair.
- All uniform items must be purchased from the approved vendor, Lands' End. See the school website for specific details.
- Belts are required in grades 2-6.
- Skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be no shorter than two inches from the top of the knee.
- Shorts must be no shorter than four inches from the top of the knee.
- Uniform-approved BCS monogrammed sweatshirts (with and without hoods), jackets, and sweaters may be worn inside the building.
- Outerwear that is not uniform-approved may only be worn outside of the building.
- No personal monograms may be added to any uniform pieces. We do encourage the use of iron-on or sew-in labels to label all uniform garments.
- Hats, caps, hoodies and kerchiefs should not be worn in the building.

Guidelines for Boys

- Boys must tuck in all shirts.
- T-shirts worn under collared shirts must be the same color as the approved uniform shirts. The undergarments may have no visible lettering.
- Short-sleeved shirts may not be worn with a long-sleeved shirt underneath.
- Socks must be worn with shoes. Lace-up shoes must be tied. No sandals.
- Watches may be worn. Jewelry, such as necklaces, bracelets, and earrings are not allowed. (We will allow students to wear one appropriate motivational/inspirational type band that reflects the mission and philosophy of BCS.)
- Hair should be neatly cut and worn in a masculine style, not obscuring the eyebrows or hanging below the collar. It should be worn above the middle of the ear.
- Extremes in hairstyles that call undue attention to the haircut are not appropriate including mohawk, shaving above the ears, or dyeing of hair.
- Extremes in styles that call undue attention are not appropriate. Examples, which will not be allowed, are the piercing of visible body parts.
- Hats, caps, hoodies, and kerchiefs should not be worn in the building.

Guidelines for Girls

- Camisoles worn under collared shirts must not be visible nor have any visible lettering.
- Shoes that are appropriate for school activities should be worn; consider heel height, practicality, and safety.
- Rubber/plastic flip-flops and beach or pool shoes are not allowed.
- No sandals.
- Socks or tights must be worn with shoes.
- Girls should not wear makeup.
- Jewelry should be in good taste and should not be distracting.
- Extremes in styles that call undue attention are not appropriate. Examples which will not be allowed are visible tattoos and piercing of visible body parts other than the ears.

Guidelines for Casual Dress Days

Students may observe more casual dress for Spirit Days, Casual Dress Days, and on other occasions as announced by the Administration. In such instances, students may dress as follows:

- Jeans or pants with a traditional waist that are in good condition with no holes, frayed edges, or patches.
- No yoga pants or similar athletic pants.
- Shirts must be a modest cut and fit; no tank tops. Any logos, print, or writing must be appropriate and in keeping with our school mission.
- On spirit days, students are encouraged to wear clothing representing our BCS team colors of blue and gold while following the Casual Dress guidelines.

Student Progress

Your child will frequently bring home papers that indicate some of their progress and activities. The grades for elementary students will be posted in FACTS. Please devote careful attention to and positive support of your child's work. Parents are encouraged to review returned work with their children and then to discuss teacher feedback and ways to improve. Teachers will communicate student progress through conversation by phone or in-person, via email, and by sending home quarterly report cards.

Students who demonstrate, through progress reports and poor attitude, a lack of interest in being at BCS will be interviewed by the Principal or Superintendent. A poor attitude may be reflected through a lack of compliance with the dress code, response to discipline, respect for authority, etc. After this interview, a conference with parents will be scheduled. Students may be placed on probation with enrollment for the following year withheld until a review of the student's progress has been evaluated.

Promotion Policy

BCS students will be evaluated on multiple criteria including work, academic progress, core values, teacher/administrator observations, and diagnostic testing. BCS students will be promoted to the next grade level when they have demonstrated sufficient academic and social proficiency. A conference with parents will

be scheduled for students who have demonstrated a lack of academic or social proficiency. Students may be placed on probation with enrollment for the following year withheld until a review of the student's progress has been evaluated. The final determination for promotion will be made by school administration.

Field Trips

Field trips are designed to be integral parts of the units of study and will be conducted in relation to classroom learning activities.

Most field trips will occur during the school day. Off-campus trips will use school-provided transportation or transportation approved by the Principal.

On some occasions, a field trip will be approved for after-hours or on a Saturday. Overnight trips will only rarely be approved, and then only under very strict supervision and with parental consent for each student.

The teacher or room parent will invite parents to assist in providing adequate supervision for the field trips, as needed. Parents are asked to work from the established guidelines concerning these trips:

- The teacher will inform parents of confirmed field trips when that information is available.
- The field trip will be noted on the monthly calendar except in cases of unusual or unforeseen circumstances.
- The parents assisting with the trips will work closely with the teacher to ensure that the experience provides the best opportunity for reaching the objectives set for each trip.

Medical needs during field trips

- Students with severe allergies that require an EpiPen or inhaler may ride the bus for a field trip if a parent/guardian signs a release form that authorizes the nurse or a teacher to administer medication, if needed. The release form will need to be signed at the beginning of the school year and will be used for each field trip.
- When field trips are within a 30-mile radius of the school, a school nurse will ***not*** attend the trip. Trained school personnel will carry EpiPens, inhalers, or other medications along with the child's healthcare plan. Trained personnel will administer medication if needed. A release form must be signed.
- When field trips are outside a 30-mile radius from the school, a school nurse will attend the trip and carry medications for students who may need them. Please note a nurse ***will not*** go on the 5th Grade Washington, DC trip (a parent/chaperone will be designated as responsible for administering medication).
- Parents of students with severe allergies may still choose to accompany their child on a field trip. This option will remain in place to allow parents to make the best decision for their child's safety and well-being. If the parent is selected as a chaperone (for those trips where parent chaperones are limited), the parent may ride the bus with his or her child. When the parent of a student with severe allergies is not a designated chaperone, the student is required to travel by car with the parent. Depending on the nature of the trip, the parent may not be able to enter the field trip destination with the student (if

parent chaperones are limited by the venue) and may be required to wait in a designated area in case of an emergency.

- The school may require parents of students with severe allergies or medical needs to attend the trip if the allergy or medical need is of major concern or if the nature of the trip could directly impact the health of a student. We will notify you in advance of the field trip so arrangements can be made. Our primary goal is the safety and well-being of each student. The school reserves the right to modify this policy as needed depending on each individual student's medical needs at the time of the field trip.

After-School Care

During the school year, BCS offers The Lion's Den after-school care service for children enrolled in kindergarten (full-time only) through the 6th Grade. Information on enrolling in the Lion's Den and the program cost will be sent in the summer information packet. Students must be enrolled in the program and a monthly fee is charged for this service.

Early Morning Care is also available for children from 7:00 am until 7:20 am. There is a fee for this service. Please call the business office for the cost of the early-care program.

The Lion's Den charges are subject to change with thirty days' advance notice. The Lion's Den after-school care service ends each day at 5:30 p.m. We assess you $10.00 for each 15-minute period of time you are late picking up your child.

Homework

Each individual teacher may require a unique homework format. Spelling, grammar, and proper penmanship or formatting must meet required standards. Homework poorly or carelessly done will be returned for redoing. Students are expected to turn in assignments completed and on time. No teacher will allow an assignment required of all students to remain undone by a single student. If an assignment is not done, the following procedures may be used:

- The student may be sent from class, and will make up the assignment during class time, receiving a failing grade for that class period.
- Failure to complete an assignment on time will result in a penalty of points off the grade.
- Chronic failure to complete homework will be brought to the attention of the parent or legal guardian and the Principal.
- Standardized forms may be used to report poorly done or late assignments to the parents.

Report Card and Grading Procedures

Report Cards

Please see the school calendar for the schedule of each nine-week grading period. Reports on grades will be issued as expeditiously as possible.

All entries made by the teacher on a student's report card are made after careful evaluation of classroom learning, attitudes, and effort. Please discuss each report with your child carefully. Remember that grades should be guides in learning rather than goals for learning. Often, far too much emphasis is placed on grades. Parents should be reminded that grades are merely indications of present achievement and not indications of one's overall ability to learn.

For students in grades 3–6, letter grades are determined by the following criteria:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below (Failure)

In addition to the standard grades, marks indicating conduct and character will be given. The scale for character is as follows:

S	Satisfactory
N	Needs improvement
U	Unsatisfactory

If a pupil has failed to make up daily work or tests by the end of the grading period, the student will receive an Incomplete (I) on the report card. Any student who does not make up their work because of negligence or because the work is not completed is given an F (59) or the failing grade average for the grading period.

For students in JK-2nd Grade, a standards-based report card is given. A letter is provided at the beginning of the school year explaining the scale used for each grade level.

Papers

Your child will frequently bring home papers that reveal some of their progress and activities. Please devote careful attention and positive support of your child's work. Your child will also bring home a Bible verse, and we encourage you to devote patient, consistent help in assisting your child to learn the verse.

School Events & Co-curricular Activities

A vital part of school life is its co-curricular activity program. In today's world, the opportunity that the school provides for social activities outside the normal school day plays an important role in the growth and development of the students. In Christian education, we are concerned with not only the intellectual dimension of our students, but also with the students' spiritual, social, and physical growth and development.

Concerts

In the Music Department, some after-school choir or band concerts may be planned. As these performances are an integral part of the music curriculum, attendance will be required. The times, dates, and places of these special events will be announced in advance to enable parents and students to plan accordingly. Students who

are unable to attend a required performance must present an excuse from their parents or guardian to the Principal for their consideration.

Special Programs and Assemblies
From time to time, special speakers, films, or programs of significant spiritual, academic, or cultural value will be presented. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend these programs.

Chapel
At the very heart of Christian education is the constant concern of the entire staff for the spiritual growth and vitality of the student body. As a part of this concern, weekly chapel programs are planned to challenge students to commit or rededicate their lives to Christ, to encourage them to lead a Christian life, to grow in love for Christ, and to provide opportunity to praise God for His great gift of salvation. Weekly chapel topics are planned by the Principal. Parents and guardians are invited to attend. The scheduled time for chapel will be announced early in the school year.

Library
Briarwood maintains a library on both campuses. Students will be provided ample opportunity to make use of the library for both research and reading for pleasure. Maintaining a library is costly. Books are expensive, and the system of carding and inventory control requires much time and effort. Parents and guardians are urged to help the school by seeing that books borrowed from the school library are properly cared for and returned on time, and that all penalties and fines are paid.

Daily Breaks
Students are encouraged to bring a nutritious snack and water each day. The school does not provide this snack. Fruit is highly recommended. Please do not send juice, soda, or powdered additives.

Birthdays
Classroom teachers will celebrate each student's birthday. The school will provide a "birthday coupon" for your child to select a special birthday treat in the lunchroom. Please note that we are not able to accept or distribute birthday class treats or favors. Please do not send invitations to private parties to the class unless everyone is invited. Names, addresses and phone numbers can be found in the school's FACTS directory.

Class Parties
Seasonal parties are meant to provide students with enjoyment and enrichment experiences. These parties are designed to complement our instructional program and should be very simple. The teacher or room parent will invite parents to assist in providing approved parties for the children at Christmas, Easter, and at the end of the school year.

Parents are asked to work from the established guidelines concerning these parties:

- The teacher is responsible for approving all plans for the party.
- The room parent will work closely with the teacher and other parents.

- The parties should be neither expensive nor lengthy.
- In an effort to safely conduct the party, we will limit the number of parents to assist with each party.

Student Records & Student Affairs

Student Records

The school maintains a permanent cumulative file on all BCS students. The files include records of health, grades, standardized test scores, and reports on parent conferences, and disciplinary action, etc.

Transcripts

An unofficial copy of a student's grades will be provided to the student's parent or guardian free upon request. This may include the full record of grades and any achievement type standardized testing.

Release of Records

- Briarwood will release student grades, standardized test scores, and medical information upon the written request of another school system, when such requests contain both the signature of an authorized school official, and the signature of at least one legally authorized parent or legal guardian on the request form to be supplied by the receiving school.
- No school records, other than the transcript and standardized testing records defined above, will be released to a student's parents or a legal guardian, or any agency other than another school.
- The confidentiality of cumulative records will be maintained. The professional staff or other approved persons may have access to the records under conditions specified by the Principal.
- Records and transcripts will not be released when a student's tuition or fees are not paid in full at the end of a school year, or if an account is delinquent during the school year.
- The School reserves the right to verify the identity and custodial privileges of a person requesting records.

Student Records Administrative Fee Policy

When a copy of student records and communications are demanded by subpoena, the school experiences a significant administrative burden. Consequently, the gathering of subpoenaed records commences only on the receipt of $500 for current BCS student and $1000 for a past student.

Student Services

- The school does provide academic support services for students who qualify as determined by the guidelines set forth by the school. Accommodations and modifications are only provided with proper documentation and as directed by the Director of Student Services.
- The School offers access to Biblical counseling services. Division principals can assist with arrangements for those desiring to use this service.

Philosophy of Boy-Girl Relationships for Grades 3–6

Because we want our students to be allowed to be children and not be pressured to grow up too fast, the following guidelines reflect our philosophy concerning boy-girl relationships:

- We encourage girls to wear clothes appropriate to their age, have hairstyles that are not elaborate or "adult-looking," wear jewelry that is simple and not "high fashion," and not wear make-up.
- Girls and boys are encouraged to avoid calling each other on the telephone or communicating via texts or other forms of social media for the purpose of furthering a boy-girl dating relationship. We solicit the help of our parents in enforcing telephone and electronic device boundaries.
- Elementary boys and girls are discouraged from "going with" each other, actually going somewhere as a couple outside of school, or having boy-girl date parties. Because these kinds of activities are encouraged in our society at a younger and younger age, we are committed to do all we can to delay them until an appropriate age.

This policy provides an appropriate foundation for and consistency with our existing policy of not allowing Junior High students to date. It is also in keeping with our philosophy of keeping the boy-girl relationships in Junior High at a friendship level. Accordingly, it is very important to discourage dating relationships in the elementary grades.

It is our desire that our students develop and maintain wholesome, biblical attitudes toward the opposite sex. Starting boy-girl relationships on the Elementary level is a hindrance to this goal, and we do not want children to face the stress and pressures that accompany premature boy-girl relationships.

Office Policies & Procedures

School Telephone

Students are permitted to use the school office phone with permission of a staff member. Calls to students during school hours are to be limited to emergency situations.

Student Pictures

Each fall the school will have individual pictures taken by an approved photographer. There will be no charge for this service.

Lost & Found

Lost and found items will be collected by the school staff and placed in a central depository. Students and their parents or guardians are asked to check and reclaim articles. The school assumes no responsibility for articles left lying about the building or improperly stored. School uniforms that are not claimed in our lost and found room will become part of our school uniform resale event.

Lost and found items will be open to general display. Items that are not reclaimed after a reasonable time, will be forfeited by the owner and the items will be donated to an appropriate charitable organization. Staff in the school office can advise students and parents about the location of these items.

Students are encouraged not to bring large amounts of cash to school. The school cannot repay money that has been lost, stolen, left lying about the building, or improperly stored.

Textbooks and Supplies

Textbooks and supplementary books will be provided for each student. These books are the property of BCS and must be taken care of properly, which includes appropriate protective covering. Deliberate defacing or loss of any of these materials will result in the full replacement price being assessed to the parents or legal guardian. Students may retain possession of "consumable" books.

Supplies are not furnished by the school. Students are required to provide their own pencils, pens, paper, notebooks, and other such supplies and materials that may be required from time to time by individual teachers.

Health & Safety

Immunizations (updated 10/3/23)

In accordance with Alabama State Law, each student must have up-to-date required immunizations or an exemption on the appropriate government-issued form.

Any student seeking to enroll will be required to produce certified proof that they have been administered all requisite immunizations or produce an exemption form before admission into BCS.

To claim a Medical Exemption, a certification from a qualified medical professional must be presented on the approved Alabama Department of Public Health Medical Exemption form on application for admission to, and approved by, the BCS administration. BCS administration has the right to obtain a verifying opinion from a qualified medical professional of its choosing as a prerequisite for the student's admission.

We accept a medical basis for non-immunization and respect the parental choice to delay or not have their children immunized for a genuine and deeply held religious basis. BCS reserves the right to limit the number of unvaccinated students in each cohort and the school.

Admission may be considered for a student where the parents are requesting a Religious Exemption for immunizations. In such cases, the Alabama Department of Public Health Religious Exemption form is to be provided upon application for admission. This form is obtained from a county health department. It is likely that the Superintendent will require a written basis for the request for admission with the Religious Exemption for immunization; requests for a religious exemption would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.

The Alabama Department of Public Health immunization schedule requires the following for those without an exemption:

- Children entering Kindergarten need boosters of DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis), Polio, MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella), and Varicella.
- Children aged 11 and entering the 6th grade need a Tdap (Tetanus, diphtheria, and Pertussis) vaccination.

Students admitted where there is an agreed and medically verified delay in immunization, are to meet the agreed upon timelines (or seek an exemption) to continue enrollment. The school nurse is designated with the role of oversight in situations involving "catch-up" immunizations according to published ADPH catch-up standards.

NOTICE: It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to read and to adhere to school policies and to submit to the school requested information, forms, and other documents.

A parent/guardian's failure to notify the school of a medical condition for which a student is or may be carrying medications may result in the revocation of the student's enrollment privileges at Briarwood Christian School.

Infectious Diseases

If an enrolled student or applicant in the process of enrollment is discovered to have an infectious disease or to be a carrier of an infectious disease, the school administration will determine whether to admit or continue to enroll the student based on the student's physical condition and the probability of contagion. This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of the school.

The parents or legal guardians of an infected student (who has been permitted to enroll or remain enrolled) are responsible for securing regular medical evaluations, as determined by the school administration, to permit a reliable assessment of any change in the student's condition which may affect the school's decision permitting enrollment or continued attendance.

Pediculosis Capitis (Head Lice)

It is not an unusual occurrence for schools to have problems with instances of pediculosis capitis. Though this problem can be challenging, parents who are thorough in following recommended procedures can aid in preventing a widespread or continuing problem. Out of consideration for others, parents should notify their child's teacher and should not send their child to school whenever this condition is present. If a student at school exhibits symptoms of head lice, the teacher will send the student to the school office to be checked. If lice are present, siblings who are at school will also be checked. When there is evidence of head lice, parents will be called, and the student will be excused for an early dismissal. A letter is sent to the parents of the student's classmates to inform them that a case of head lice has occurred. Parents of the affected child should consult their physician regarding a treatment procedure for the child and should thoroughly follow procedures to eliminate lice infestation from the home and automobile environments. A student should not return to school until lice and eggs (nits) are no longer present.

When the affected student returns to school, he/she must report to the school nurse before returning to the classroom. The student will be checked to ensure that lice and nits are not present.

Illness of Students

In an effort to keep illnesses from spreading, please do not send your child to school if he or she has had fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the past 24 hours. We ask that each child be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Policies for Students with Health Conditions Requiring Medications at School

Because the health and safety of students is of utmost importance, BCS has procedures designed to serve students with medical conditions to the best of our ability. Some students have health conditions that require medications to be readily available. Examples of these include life-threatening allergies, diabetes, and asthma. Other students have short-term medical conditions that require a course of medication. The following procedures have been adopted to meet these needs while safeguarding the general safety of the student body.

Except in limited circumstances discussed below, students are not allowed to keep medications of any type in their possession at school. Parents must bring medications to the school office. For students who have chronic significant health conditions, medications included in the health-care plan described below will be stored at school on a continuous basis.

For students with short-term medical conditions, medicines (prescribed or OTC) can be stored in the school office for one week as described in the section "Short-term Medical Conditions."

Procedures for Chronic Significant Health Conditions (such as life-threatening allergy, diabetes, asthma)

When a chronic serious health condition is indicated by the parents on the **Student Information Form** or otherwise communicated to school staff, the following information will be obtained from the parents:

- General information about the condition, diagnosis, and related information.
- Specific information as to the cause(s) of the reaction that requires treatment and the symptoms presented by the reaction.
- A report from the student's physician (**School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form**) that provides diagnosis, description of treatment, reaction time, and other pertinent information. Parents are responsible for obtaining this report and giving it to the school.

BCS has a school nurse on staff. During the summer and the first month of each school year, the school nurse will review the information obtained from the parents and the student's physician and develop a school health care plan for the student. Parents must review and sign the health care plan.

The school nurse will give a list of a student's medical needs to each person at the school who may be responsible for the care of the student. These may include (but not necessarily be limited to) office personnel, classroom teachers, special area teachers, cafeteria personnel, bus drivers, coaches, etc. A copy will be included in the notebook the classroom teacher keeps for use by a substitute teacher. A copy will be placed in the student's medical box. Should the student be transported to a hospital, a copy will be sent with the student.

The school nurse will be the primary person responsible for administering all medications. Because of unforeseen schedules and other events, at least one backup person, and preferably two, would also be trained to administer medication. Each year, the nurse will check with the trained laypersons to be sure they are still comfortable with administering medication and train any new staff as needed. Alabama Administrative Code, Rule 610-X-6-.06(4)(b) permits nurses to delegate to laypersons the administration of injectable medications that are pre-measured for allergic reactions. BCS cannot serve students who may require immediate injections of medications that are not pre-measured.

Storage and Use of Medications

Medications required by students with chronic serious health conditions are kept in a secure location in the nurse's office. This storage area is used only for these medications. Each child's medications and supplies are stored in a rigid plastic closed box with the child's name printed on all sides. All locations in the school—classroom, art and music rooms, playgrounds, cafeteria, etc.—can contact the office via intercom or radio in case the medications are needed. Knowing where they are located at all times avoids having to locate medications that may have been left in a classroom or some other location.

Depending on the circumstances, students may be allowed to keep treatment items that pose no threat to others or themselves in their possession or in the classroom. Examples include juice boxes and tubes of cake icing for diabetic students.

In the event a student's physician and parent provide a **School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form** indicating the student should keep an inhaler for asthma, a blood glucose monitor for diabetes, or an Epinephrine Auto-Injector Syringe (AIS) for severe allergic reactions on his or her person, the student will be allowed to do so. Any student carrying an AIS must also have one kept in the school office. If a student demonstrates that he or she is not capable of properly handling an AIS (losing it, playing with it with other students, etc.) the school reserves the right to take appropriate action up to and including revoking that student's enrollment in order to protect the safety of other students.

If there is an event requiring emergency treatment, the school office will be notified, and the student's medical box will be taken to the student by a person trained to administer the medication. School Office personnel will call 911, notify the Principal, and call the parent(s). The responding emergency personnel will determine what further medical attention is necessary and whether transport to an emergency facility is advisable.

Notification Regarding Allergies

We post signs on classroom doors noting the presence of a child with severe allergies to particular food products. In a communication intended for all parents, the teacher requests that these products not be brought to the classroom. The book each teacher maintains for a substitute will have information on the child's allergy in the front of the book.

Parents of students with peanut allergies should be aware that BCS is ***not*** a peanut- free environment. Peanut products are used in our lunchroom and other students bring peanut products from home. The teacher will work with the student to avoid having peanut products at the same lunch table. There are two concerns regarding facilities: (1) Our classrooms are used by other ministries of the church many evenings and on weekends. We cannot control what is brought into the room on these occasions. (2) Our buses are used to transport high school sports teams many afternoons and evenings. It is important that parents understand they are assuming potential risks in these areas. Students riding the shuttle bus or riding a bus for a field trip will need to follow guidelines for the shuttle and field trip regarding allergies.

Short-Term Medical Conditions

If a student has a temporary medical condition requiring a school stocked over the counter (OTC) medication for treatment, parents must grant authorization for the administration of each OTC medicine through FACTS. The school stocked OTC medications include acetaminophen (ex. Tylenol), ibuprofen (ex. Motrin), antacid (ex. Tums), triple antibiotic cream (ex. Neosporin), and hydrocortisone/anti itch cream. Verbal authorization cannot be accepted.

OTC medications will be administered per package directions, in limited instances, to make your student more comfortable and able to remain in school. For example, medication may be used to treat dental pain from braces, mild headaches, menstrual pain or orthopedic pain related to a recent injury. You may be contacted for further care or to confirm when the last dose may have been administered at home.

In the event your student requires the medication on a more regular basis, the parent may be asked to supply the medication.

Any other OTC medications will need to be supplied by the parent in their original, unopened container. The parent needs to bring the medication to the nurse, and they will have a written permission form for you to complete.

Disclosure of Health Information

Parents provide medical information to the school on the **Student Information Form** completed annually, on any **Authorization to Dispense Medication forms** completed during the year, and on student health care plans, if a plan is required. BCS will disclose this information to all parties who need it to provide medical care to the student, including, but not limited to teachers, the school nurse, staff, EMT personnel, and attending doctors or nurses.

First Aid

Designated faculty with proper training will render first aid treatment. A rest area is provided for first aid treatment. Students who become ill at school will be temporarily housed there until transportation home can be arranged. Please make every effort to quickly pick up your child within one hour of being notified of their illness or injury. Under no condition will a student be released without the specific authorization of a parent or legal guardian.

Emergency Phone Numbers of Parents Required
We require that at least one emergency phone number be on file in the school office. In addition to home phone numbers, the school requires a work phone number or the number of a close friend, neighbor, or relative who could be contacted in the event of a serious problem when the school is unable to reach the primary contact.

Medical Release Form Required
The school must have a signed **Consent for Participation** and **Medical Treatment and Release of Liability** (on the Student Information Form) for each student. This form allows physicians to perform emergency treatment in the event it is impossible to reach a parent or legal guardian. Few hospitals or doctors will treat a patient under eighteen without parental consent, and in a serious emergency it could save a life. This form will be used only by a school official when a parent or guardian cannot be reached.

In any event, effort will be made to reach the parents or legal guardians, and their instructions will be followed by school officials.

Student Accident Insurance Protection
School time student accident insurance coverage is provided for all students for loss resulting from bodily injury caused directly by a covered accident, independent of all other causes, with payments as provided and in accordance with the terms, provisions, and conditions of the master policy issued to the school by the carrier. Generally, a bodily injury included under the term “covered accident” would be an accidental bodily injury occurring at a school-sponsored, scheduled, and supervised activity, or while being transported to/from such activity by school-sponsored transportation. Included would be summer activities such as cheerleading, drill team, or band practice.

This insurance is designed to supplement the family’s individual or group insurance coverage and does not eliminate the need for such coverage. The student accident insurance is limited in the benefits provided and, in most cases, will not cover all of the loss of expense related to a covered accidental bodily injury.

A copy of a descriptive brochure is available from the School Business Office. The master policy is available for inspection during business hours.

Doctor and Dental Appointments
Whenever possible, all medical and dental appointments must be made outside of regular school hours. If this is not possible, parents or legal guardians should notify, in advance, teachers to be affected by the student’s absence, and a note should then be presented at the office for verification and sign-out before a student may leave school. Generally, appointments during school hours will be considered excused absences.

Physical Education Excuses

Every student enrolled in Physical Education (PE) is expected to participate. Excused absences may Include (but are not limited to):

- Medical Excuses
    - Sickness which prevents attendance in any other class.
    - Doctor's written excuse: these notes must state the cause and reason for excusing the student as well as the time the student will be able to return to normal activity.
    - With permission of a doctor and special supervision of PE teachers, special exercise programs for students temporarily or permanently handicapped may be offered.
- Other Excuses
    - Parent's written excuse: these notes should ask the instructor to take into consideration a student's condition. Generally, there are activities that can be done without aggravating a problem. Therefore, in most situations a student will not be excused from PE.
    - Instructor's prerogative: the instructor may excuse any student he or she considers unable to participate in the class or activity.

Transportation

Shuttle Bus Service

As a service to students and parents, BCS operates a shuttle bus program between the Lower School and Upper School campuses. There is a monthly charge for this service. The school offers the program at the lowest possible charge. The school does not make a profit from the shuttle bus service.

The bus schedules and the service fees are included on the **Shuttle Bus Schedule and Request** form, which is available in the school office and mailed in the summer information packet.

The monthly charge cannot be adjusted because a student fails to ride the bus on any occasion. Charges for the bus service are added to the monthly statement. It is the student's or parent's responsibility to notify the School's Business Office in advance of the service being canceled. Failure to report your cancellation will result in your continuing payment for the service.

The school cannot provide transportation other than that stated in the established bus schedule.

Improper behavior on school buses is not permitted. Bus drivers need to concentrate on driving and should not be distracted by the misbehavior of students on the bus. Those students who, in the opinion of the bus driver, misbehave will be referred to their respective Principal for appropriate action. Should misbehavior continue, the student will not be permitted to ride the shuttle bus.

Vehicle Liability

The school assumes no liability for damage to or losses from any vehicle parked on campus during the school day or during any school sponsored co-curricular activity.

Carpool

General Carpool Guidelines

- Each family will be assigned a carpool number. This number will follow the student through their Lower School years. Parents will be given their carpool number cards (large and small) printed on a special colored paper which will be picked up in person at the New Student Orientation/Returning Student Open House event at the start of school. For safety reasons a new color is used each year. If for some reason you do not receive a carpool number, please contact the School Office.
- The large-sized carpool card should be kept in your car and should be displayed on the rear view mirror when you are in the carpool line. Please leave it on your mirror until you exit the carpool line. The smaller pocket-sized card is for entrance into the building and student checkouts and may not be used for carpool display in the carpool line.
- If you do not have your large card for the carpool line, you will need to park and come into the Lion Lobby to check-out your child(ren).
- Those picking up students from more than one family will need to display carpool numbers for all the families they are picking up.
- Students must be picked up in front of the school. Parents are encouraged to enter the campus from Acton Road. If parents choose to enter the campus from Altadena Road, they may not blend into the carpool line for pick-up. They must join the carpool line at the end by driving past the gym and down the hill to the Acton Road entrance.
- There will be no drop off or pickup at the Chapel entrance or any other entrance other than the zones designated for each carpool.
- Students must be dropped off in the carpool lines only.
- Cars going through the line should pull all the way forward in order for several cars to stop and unload at the same time. This allows for a more efficient carpool procedure and for many students to be dropped off at the same time.
- Students should exit the car on the school side only. Please have students ready to exit the car when you enter the carpool line.
- Do not park and leave a car in the carpool line at any time. This is against fire regulations and is unsafe.
- There should never be a car parked in the yellow zone. This is to comply with fire regulations.
- Students who may have unusual riding arrangements must bring a written note stating the specific arrangement and the responsible adult. We must have this information in writing and signed by a parent.
- If an unexpected change in carpool arrangements arises during the school day, parents may call the school office by 12:30 p.m. for a 12:45 p.m. dismissal, 2:00 p.m. for a 2:20 p.m. dismissal, and by 2:40 p.m. for the 3:00 p.m. dismissal. Classes will not be interrupted for announcements to specific students except in emergency situations. Please plan so that students know before arriving at school what arrangements have been made for pickup.
- Half-day Kindergarten students who are not picked up by 12:45 p.m. will be taken to the school office. Parents will need to pick up their children at the office.
- When carpool ends for students in full time K–6th grade, the students who have not been picked up will be escorted to The Lion's Den. After 3:30 p.m., students will be charged for this service. Generally,

the carpool lines will finish about 15 minutes after they begin. Parents who miss the 2:20 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. carpool may check out their child from the receptionist in the Lion Lobby. Parents who miss the 12:45 p.m. carpool lines should park their cars and walk into the building to pick up their student. If parents of Early Childhood students arrive after carpool lines are finished at 3:00 p.m., they should check out their child in the School Office.

- Students in first and second grades should be picked up at 2:20 p.m. unless they have a sibling or carpool member in the 3:00 p.m. dismissal. If parents need to pick up later than 2:20 p.m. and the student is not in a carpool with an older student, the student must go to the **Delayed Carpool Service program**. A form to sign up for this program will be sent in the summer information packet or can be obtained from the school office.
- High School and Junior High School students must be picked up immediately upon arrival at the Lower School Campus. In the event a student must wait for a ride, the student will be escorted into the school lobby. Students may not roam the campus or go into the Church buildings.

Our primary goal is to maintain safety and security for all children and families. Your cooperation in following these procedures will help in achieving this goal. Our carpool system is designed to provide safety, order, and supervision for each student's arrival and dismissal. The traffic pattern at the school, which unfortunately cannot be free of some inconvenience, is designed for maximum safety for our students.

Parents are asked to observe all traffic flow patterns. **Parents are asked to refrain from mobile phone usage when approaching the carpool drop-off and pick-up areas**. Since the safety of hundreds of students is involved, please give wholehearted cooperation in observing these regulations.

Please review the full carpool information and procedures on the school website.

Safety Patrol

Students in the 5th and 6th Grades have the opportunity to be considered for Safety Patrol. The Safety Patrol students assist in directing traffic and maintaining order during morning and afternoon carpools. These students, selected by the administration and faculty, are well trained and committed to do an excellent job.

At all times, parents and students are required to follow the instructions of the Safety Patrol. Total cooperation is expected and appreciated.

Parent/School Relations

School/Family Cooperation

The school believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the School and family is essential to the fulfillment of the school's educational purpose and responsibilities to its students. If the Parent's/Guardian's or other family member's behavior, communications, or interactions on or off campus (including during school-sponsored events) is disruptive, intimidating, or overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence or serious disagreement with the school's policies, methods of instruction, or discipline, or

otherwise seriously interferes with the school's safety procedures, responsibilities, or accomplishment of its educational purpose or program, the School reserves the right to dismiss the family from the community. In addition, the school reserves the right to place restrictions on parents' or other family members' involvement or activity at school, on school property, or at school-related events if the parent or other family member engages in behavior or has a status (such as a criminal conviction) that would reasonably suggest that such restrictions may be appropriate for the community. There will be no refund of tuition where such enforced withdrawal occurs and any unpaid balance is payable in full according to the terms of this Agreement. If, for any reason, it is in the best interest of the school, the school also reserves the right to withdraw an offer of enrollment or re-enrollment at any time, and to nullify an executed enrollment contract.

Parent & Community Standards

As a ministry of Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Briarwood Christian School exists to glorify God by partnering with Christian families to provide a Christ-centered, biblically based education that nurtures students in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. In support of this mission, the behavior of parents and guardians in our school community must align with biblical values, reflect Christ, and promote unity and grace.

1. Parent Social Media Policy – Christlike Communication (Ephesians 4:29; Philippians 2:14; Matthew 18:15-17)

Parents and guardians are expected to honor Christ in all forms of communication, including social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, GroupMe, or others. Posts and comments should reflect grace, encouragement, and unity. Parents must not use social media to share negative, critical, or divisive content related to:

- The school, its leadership, operations, curriculum, events, or assignments
- Faculty, staff or administration
- Students or other school families

Concerns should be directed privately to appropriate school personnel following the biblical model of reconciliation outlined in Matthew 18. Public or private online behavior that is defamatory, divisive, or harmful to individuals or the reputation of the school is inconsistent with Christian witness and may result in disciplinary actions, including dismissal of the family from the school community.

2. Parent Expectations (Philippians 2:14-16)

We strive to cultivate a positive, Christ-honoring school culture built on mutual trust and clear expectations. When a parent's conduct undermines this culture, it may jeopardize their child's continued enrollment. Examples of unacceptable behavior include and are not limited to:

- Hosting student gatherings where alcohol, drugs, or inappropriate behavior is present
- Possessing alcohol or drugs at school events and functions
- Speaking disrespectfully to or about school personnel
- Demanding the dismissal of employees
- Undermining disciplinary measures taken by the school
- Spreading criticism or negativity within the school community

- Becoming unduly involved in classroom operations or staff responsibilities
- Refusing to follow the Matthew 18 conflict resolution process
- Treating other parents, students, or staff members with disrespect

Concerns will be addressed individually with the Superintendent and/or Division Principal. Group meetings, protests, or town halls intended to air grievances or resolve problems are not permitted. If a parent of a current student files a lawsuit—or threatens to do so—against the school, the student will be dismissed until the matter is resolved. A critical spirit, ingratitude, and failure to pursue biblical reconciliation threaten the spiritual health of our school community.

3. Parent Communication

To support a healthy work-life balance and maintain professionalism, faculty and staff are not expected to respond to communications before 7:00 a.m., after 7:00 p.m., or on weekends. All communications with school personnel should be respectful, constructive, and timely.

Email is the primary mode of communication for school-related matters. Parents are asked not to call or text teachers or staff directly, especially during instructional hours, as teachers are focused on teaching and may not see these messages promptly.

For urgent or time-sensitive matters such as student dismissal changes, after-school plans, or transportation updates, parents should contact the school office directly. The office staff is best equipped to ensure this information reaches students and teachers quickly and efficiently.

Parents are also asked to carefully read all communications sent by the school to avoid unnecessary emails to teachers regarding information that has already been shared through official channels. This helps reduce the volume of emails teachers receive, allowing them to focus on their primary responsibility—teaching and caring for students.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping keep teacher email inboxes manageable and enabling our staff to serve your children effectively.

4. Conflict Resolution

Conflicts and concerns should be addressed according to the biblical process in Matthew 18—beginning with those directly involved. Email and text are discouraged for conflict resolution. Face-to-face conversations are the preferred and expected method.

The Superintendent, respective head of campus or divisional Principal manage conflicts involving parents.

The BCS Executive team manages conflicts among staff. Church and BCS Executive team work collaboratively with communications professionals during crises or public relations matters.

Our goal is to preserve a Gospel-centered environment marked by kindness, joy, and gratitude.
If there is a conflict between members of our family and anyone associated with Briarwood Christian School, a ministry of Briarwood Presbyterian Church, we commit to making a sincere effort to resolve it according to the peacemaking principles set forth in Scripture (see, for example, Prov. 19:11; Matt. 5:9, 5:23-24, 7:3-5, 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:29-32; Gal. 6:1; Phil. 2:1-4; www.rw360.org/peacemaking; www.rw360.org/gptc). If we are unable to resolve a conflict through personal conversations or informal mediation, or through the established disciplinary process of the school, we agree to resolving the matter through formal Christian conciliation, which is described in the *Handbook for Christian Conciliation* (www.rw360.org/ccshandbook). If formal Christian conciliation is not successful, we agree to participate in legally binding arbitration in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the Christian Conciliation Service®, a division of Relational Wisdom 360 (complete text of the Rules is available at www.rw360.org/ccshandbook). Judgment upon an arbitration decision may be entered in any court otherwise having jurisdiction. The parties understand that these methods of dispute resolution shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of this agreement or the parties' disputes arising out of or related to any family member's enrollment and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit in any civil court against one another for such disputes, except to enforce an arbitration decision.

5. Church & School Communications

We are thankful for our strong relationship with Briarwood Presbyterian Church. The church empowers the Superintendent to lead Briarwood Christian School, supported by the School Board. The Board sets tuition, reviews financial reports, supports strategic planning, participates in fundraising, and approves policy but is otherwise not involved in the day-to-day operations of the school.

Parents who bring school-related concerns to the church will be redirected to the Superintendent to ensure proper and unified resolution.

6. Campus Unity & Expectations (Romans 13; Hebrews 13:7)

Adults in the school community—faculty, staff, and parents—model the values we seek to instill in our students. Unity on campus is preserved when we:

- Avoid divisive or negative conversations and social media posts
- Speak respectfully about fellow parents, staff, church leadership, and the school itself
- Support school and church leadership publicly and privately
- Follow Biblical teachings regarding lifestyle and relationships

We all answer to God-ordained authority and are called to support those He places in leadership over us.

7. Controversies & Campus Protests

We welcome civil, respectful dialogue led by Christian educators, but campus protests, political demonstrations, and divisive behavior are not permitted. Political apparel, accessories, or promotional materials are not allowed at school or school-sponsored events.

Classroom discussion of differing viewpoints is allowed at the discretion of the teacher and respective Head of Campus. However, behavior that stirs controversy or disrupts learning will not be tolerated. Our mission requires us to maintain focus on Gospel-centered teaching and student well-being.

8. Parent Conduct at School Events & Activities (Colossians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 10:31)
Parents represent Briarwood Christian School and Briarwood Presbyterian Church not only on campus, but also at school-sponsored events, athletic competitions, fine arts performances, field trips, and travel activities. Whether in the stands, on the sidelines, or at student gatherings, we expect parents to reflect Christ and model exemplary behavior at all times.

To honor Christ and support our school culture, parents are expected to:

- Demonstrate Christlike behavior in words, actions, and attitude at all events, both home and away
- Respect referees, officials, coaches, judges, and staff—never arguing, confronting, yelling at or displaying anger publicly
- Support all students and teams with encouraging words and attitudes
- Follow chaperone and supervision guidelines during school travel or trips, ensuring student safety and appropriateness
- Avoid engaging in negative conversations about coaches, staff, students, or other schools during or after events
- Set a positive example for students, opponents, and spectators by prioritizing sportsmanship, respect, and grace

Out of respect for students and the Christ-centered environment we uphold, parents are expected to refrain from smoking, vaping, consuming alcohol, or using any substances that are inappropriate in the presence of students at any school event, competition, or trip—whether on or off campus. This includes team celebrations, travel events, and informal gatherings where students are present. Such behavior compromises the safe, healthy, and morally responsible atmosphere we seek to maintain for all students.

Our behavior at events and in the community reflects directly on our school and, more importantly, on the name of Christ. Let us do all things in a manner worthy of the Gospel, seeking to glorify God and uplift one another.

9. Student Supervision and Safety at Athletic Events (Proverbs 4:6–7; 1 Corinthians 14:40)
Briarwood Christian School is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all who attend our athletic events. As our community gathers for Friday night football games and other evening competitions, we ask parents and guardians to partner with us in supervising student behavior and reinforcing expectations for safety and respect. We also ask that you review these guidelines with your child before attending an athletic event.

Student Supervision
To ensure the well-being of all children during athletic events, students in 6th grade and under must be accompanied by an adult. Lower School students should not be dropped off without appropriate supervision. Parents are responsible for knowing their child's whereabouts throughout the event.

Respect for Property and Space
Students should refrain from climbing on fences, tampering with equipment, or damaging landscaping or school buildings. The grassy hill leading to the shelf area is not a play zone and not to be accessed.

Off-Limits Areas
During evening events, all unlit areas on campus are off-limits. This includes:

- Tennis courts
- Cross-country trails
- The wooded area behind the shelf
- The grass banks beside the home stands
- School hallways and spaces not used for a specific event
- Baseball and softball dugouts or stands (unless the field is lit and students have parental permission)

Even when field lights are on, these areas are not officially supervised by school personnel. For their safety, students found in restricted or unsupervised locations will be referred to an administrator for follow-up.

Consideration for Others
We ask that students be mindful of their surroundings, especially when tossing balls, running, or playing games in crowded areas. It is essential to consider the safety of younger children, older adults, and fellow attendees.

Sportsmanship and Conduct
Students are expected to be respectful and encouraging fans who reflect Christ in both words and actions. Poor sportsmanship, disrespect toward players, coaches, officials, or spectators will not be tolerated and may result in the privilege of attending games being withdrawn.

These guidelines apply to all athletic events. Thank you for your ongoing partnership in helping us maintain a safe, respectful, and Christ-honoring atmosphere at Briarwood Christian School events.

10. Anonymous Complaints and Feedback
We welcome parents respectfully raising concerns and meeting to talk these over. Feedback is received without retaliation from faculty, staff and coaches. As a clear and safe pathway is available for sharing concerns, anonymous feedback is seen as divisive and cowardly and contrary to the principles outlined in Matthew 18. Accordingly, anonymous feedback is discarded without any consideration.

Appointments with Teachers

Parents or legal guardians are encouraged to see a member of the teaching staff when they have a question or concern about their child's progress. Parents should contact the teacher directly to schedule an appointment.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Regularly scheduled conferences will be held two times each school year. Parents will be given the opportunity to request scheduled conferences on these days. Conferences may be scheduled at other times at the discretion of either the parent or the teacher.

Weather Or Emergency School Closure

In the event of emergency school closures, Briarwood Christian School will announce specific information on the following radio and television stations: TV (Fox 6, NBC 13, ABC 33/40, CBS 42) and Radio (WLJR and WDJC). Information will also be distributed via our school website, social media, email, text message, and the school voice messaging system.

School Closed

- All areas of Briarwood Christian School are closed.
- All activities are canceled.
- Staff are not required to report to work.

Delayed Start

- Before school activities are canceled.
- Before School Care is canceled.
- K-12, AM and full-day Early Childhood classes begin at 10:00 a.m.; Cub House start at 10:15 a.m.
- After School Care and PM Early Childhood will operate on their regular schedules.
- The bus between campus will be delayed: LS to US at 9:00 a.m., US to LS at 9:10 a.m.
- On-site after-school activities will continue unless otherwise noted.
- AHSAA activities may be postponed or canceled.

Early Dismissal

- Before school activities and Before School Care will operate on their regular schedule.
- AM and full-day Early Childhood classes will end at 11:30 a.m. or as communicated.
- All K-12 classes will end at 11:30 a.m. JK - 6 classes end at 11:30a.m.; Cub House at 11:15 a.m.; JH at 11:45 a.m.; and HS at 12 noon.
- All after school activities and After School Care are canceled.
- AHSAA activities may be postponed or canceled.
- School lunch will not be served.
- Buses between campuses will run ONLY for faculty and staff (11:30 a.m. and 11:50 a.m.)

We request that parents use their discretion in determining the safety of the route that must be traveled to and from school on inclement weather days regarding student attendance. If a parent determines that safety

conditions warrant their student staying home, the parent must contact the school via email or phone to let the school know their child will be absent. Once a student is at BCS, he or she must remain on campus until regular dismissal time or parent pick-up. Upper School students unable to attend school on campus are expected to participate in their learning via the recorded lessons in google classroom.

To receive Parent Alerts you must have current contact information (valid home, work, and mobile phone numbers and email addresses entered into FACTS). Failure to maintain accurate and current information on FACTS will prevent you from receiving notifications. Parents are responsible for keeping this information accurate and current.

Classroom Visiting

Anyone visiting the campus must first check in at the receptionist's desk and be issued a visitor's pass. Parents may not go to a classroom without a pass. Items forgotten by a child should be left at the receptionist's desk or in the school office. The student will be notified that the item has been delivered.

Custody Arrangements

Custody divorced or separated parents must file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree with the principal's office. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known. A list of adults (with their phone numbers) authorized to pick up students involved in custody settlements must accompany the court-certified decree and will be strictly adhered to. A child will be released to the non-custodial parent only if written permission is provided to the school office by the primary custodial parent. It is the primary custodial parent's responsibility to submit a copy of the correct certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree to the school office and keep the school office notified of any changes. Please note, that upon review of paperwork and custodial arrangements, the school may request that a custodial pickup calendar be submitted to the office to assist the office staff with overseeing custodial arrangements and pickup.

FACTS Information and Student Pick up/Check out Information

It is parent's responsibility to keep all information in FACTS updated. This includes emergency contact information and student pick-up and check out information. The school may not release a student to an individual who is not listed on the student check-out/pickup list in FACTS. If your child will be riding home or checking out of school with a friend or an individual who is not listed in FACTS, an email will need to be sent to the teacher granting permission for this person to pick up your child.

Items from Home

Parents are asked not to allow their child to bring items from home unless specifically requested by the teacher. This policy helps to prevent lost or broken "treasures." Please do not allow your child to bring toys or trading cards to school.

Issues Resolutions Policy

Occasionally during the course of the year misunderstandings or problems can arise among individuals within the school. Complaints or problems will be considered in no other way than prescribed below (Matthew 18:15-17), unless they involve a specific disciplinary action taken by the Board itself:

- All questions, problems or complaints should be brought directly to the teacher first before anyone else is involved.
- If the situation is not cleared up at this level through direct contact, it should then be brought to the Principal.
- If unresolved at this point, a written request for review can be sent to the Executive Committee of the School Board.

Students and parents should know that concerns, complaints and problems will not be validated by the petition method. Any petition received by a teacher will be given to the Principal and dealt with accordingly.

Conflict & Conciliation

If there is a conflict between members of our family and anyone associated with Briarwood Christian School, a ministry of Briarwood Presbyterian Church, we commit to making a sincere effort to resolve it according to the peacemaking principles set forth in Scripture (see, for example, Prov. 19:11; Matt. 5:9, 5:23-24, 7:3-5, 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:29-32; Gal. 6:1; Phil. 2:1-4; www.rw360.org/peacemaking; www.rw360.org/gptc). If we are unable to resolve a conflict through personal conversations or informal mediation, or through the established disciplinary process of the school, we agree to resolving the matter through formal Christian conciliation, which is described in the *Handbook for Christian Conciliation* (www.rw360.org/ccshandbook). If formal Christian conciliation is not successful, we agree to participate in legally binding arbitration in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the Christian Conciliation Service®, a division of Relational Wisdom 360 (complete text of the Rules is available at www.rw360.org/ccshandbook). Judgment upon an arbitration decision may be entered in any court otherwise having jurisdiction. The parties understand that these methods of dispute resolution shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of this agreement or the parties' disputes arising out of or related to any family members enrollment and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit in any civil court against one another for such disputes, except to enforce an arbitration decision.

Legal Action Against BCS

A student's enrollment will be terminated on initiation of legal action against the school.

Parent Meetings

Efforts will be made each year to provide informative and profitable meetings for parents, and to keep parents informed about school activities. Suggestions for topics of interest will be sincerely appreciated. Parents will be notified of official parent meetings by a school official.

Financial Responsibilities

Payment of fees, tuition and other charges as set out in the Enrollment Application, Re-enrollment Form, Schedule of Charges, Student Handbook, and other communications must be made in accordance with the terms specified:

- A 2% discount is allowed on the advance payment of the annual tuition if received by the school on or before May 31. No discount is allowed on fees or any other charges.
- It is the parent's or legal guardian's obligation to pay the annual tuition when a student is enrolled regardless of whether the student actually attends school. Withdrawal of a student during the school year does not void the financial obligation to the school with the exception of families who move from the school area (50-mile radius of the school).
- Application fees are non-refundable. The initial registration fee, student commitment fee and advance tuition payments are refundable if (a) the family moves out of the area (50-mile radius of the school) before the opening of school, or (b) the school fails to provide enrollment to the student.
- A fee will be charged for each returned check.

Past Due

Current month's tuition and fee charges are past due if not received by the last day of the month. A finance charge of 1.5% (annual rate of 18%) is assessed on a balance due from the previous billing period. Any past due account is subject to the following provisions:

- A student whose account is more than 60 days past due is ineligible to enroll or to return for the second semester until satisfactory payment arrangements have been made.
- If a student account becomes 60 days past due during the school term, the student may be asked not to return to class until satisfactory payment arrangements have been made.
- Report cards, transcripts or other records will not be released for any student whose account is more than 60 days past due until satisfactory payment arrangements have been made.
- A student whose account is more than 60 days past due may not charge physical education uniforms, yearbooks, after school care, or any other item to the account.
- Access to the FACTS system may be blocked for any student whose account is more than 60 days past due.
- When an account becomes delinquent and has two returned checks applied, no further payment by check will be accepted. The account will be placed on a cash-only basis. Only cash or certified funds will be accepted.

Tuition is billed over a ten-month period from June to the following March as a service to families. However, the school reserves the right to revoke this privilege at any time for accounts which are habitually delinquent or for other situations as deemed necessary. When this happens, the school will provide written notice that all remaining tuition for the year must be paid in full within the time frame specified by the school if the student is to remain in school. This requirement may be changed by the Executive Committee of the School Board at its discretion.

It is not our intent to embarrass or place a student in an awkward situation. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for honoring their financial commitments to the school. It is their responsibility to contact the school if they are unable to make payments by the scheduled due date in accordance with specified terms.

Student Withdrawal

To withdraw a student during the school year, a parent must complete a withdrawal form and submit it to the Admissions Director. The entire year's tuition is due and payable in full unless the student is being asked to leave due to disciplinary action or the student's family is moving out of the area. Any request for special exemption to this policy must be submitted to the Superintendent in writing. The request should detail a plan for paying the account. No records or transcripts will be forwarded until this obligation is met in full.

A student who has withdrawn during the school year may not be readmitted for a period of one year except by recommendation of the school administration and approval by the School Board Executive Committee. To be eligible for the exception the entire year's tuition for the year of withdrawal must have been paid in full. Readmission after a year should not be considered automatic. We will not make a commitment to you about the readmission of your student to Briarwood.

A student may not re-enroll until any outstanding balance is paid in full.

Other Policies

Biblical Morality Statement

The school reserves the right to make decisions regarding any issue of morality in accordance with the standards and practices of church leadership. Those standards and practices begin with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (the inerrant Word of God), and include the following, which are subject to and subordinate to the Scriptures: The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, consisting of its doctrinal statements set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith, together with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and the Book of Church Order, comprising the form of government, the Rules of Discipline, and the Director for Worship, all adopted by Briarwood Presbyterian Church (BCO preface 89, 95, 97).

Receiving/Reporting Information - Confidentiality

School administration investigates all information received according to the credibility of the source.

When parents are willing, they are encouraged to communicate the information to the parent(s) of the student(s) involved. When the parents are unwilling to do this, the administration may investigate the credible information and possibly act upon the information given.

- No information is acted upon without an investigation. Date, place, time, action, witnesses and affected parties are usually known before any meeting with students/parents occurs.
- It is not necessary that the person who has given the information be present or identified during the investigation or meetings.

School policy is written to serve and help people. When disciplinary action is needed, it will be taken. Although discipline may be firm, it is intended to benefit the student and assist him or her in developing life skills that result in an understanding of the consequences for wrong actions.

Surveillance

Security cameras do not record sound and are unmonitored. Digital recordings are for internal use only. Students and others on campus are automatically recorded in various locations.

Designated Gifts Policy

BCS will accept tax deductible, designated gifts only for the following purposes and under the conditions set out in this policy statement:

- Gifts solicited by the school for specific purposes as set out in the appeal or solicitation. For example, a capital funds campaign that provides for designation to one or more of the funds or activities stated in the campaign description.
- Gifts received for one or more of the funds established by the school such as its General Scholarship Fund, Academic Enrichment Fund, etc.
- Gifts received for a separate scholarship fund to be named in memory or in honor of a person. In such a case, the donor must not have any control over the award of scholarships from the fund.
- Gifts for the general fund. All gifts not otherwise designated will be placed in the general fund unless otherwise allocated by the School Board or its Finance and Legal Committee.
- Gifts for any regular program or established activity such as band, choral, academic, athletic, etc.

Tax deductible gifts will not be received, designated for, or for the benefit of “individuals.” The term “individual,” in addition to a faculty or staff member, includes a student or student parent or guardian.

Non-deductible gifts designated for individual faculty or staff members, students, or student families will be received by BCS and the funds disbursed in the manner requested by the donor or donors. Any such gift will be acknowledged with an appropriate letter that clearly states that it is received as a non-deductible gift and a copy of the letter must be filed with the deposit document that includes the gift.

When a group of supporters, within a booster group, organizes an approved solicitation of gifts for a coach, group of coaches, other faculty or staff member, the Superintendent will work with the leaders of such group, to give guidance and counsel for the solicitation. The gifts will be accumulated in a designated fund and disbursed in a manner agreeable to the supporters and the Superintendent.

If a benefactor requests the privilege of paying the tuition or other student charges for a particular student or family, then such gifts will be received and applied directly to the account of the student or family. The donor will be informed in writing of this method of handling their gift or gifts. This communication will clearly state that such payments will not be recorded as gifts on the records of the school.

The Student Handbook is revised by the Superintendent as needed. Comments from parents on any segment of the Handbook are welcomed and should be submitted to the Superintendent.

Appendix A – Pastoral Position & Guideline Paper

THE PROLOGUE

While it is incumbent for Briarwood Presbyterian Church to develop and approve a Pastoral Position & Guideline Paper for the purpose of responding to the inevitable issues resulting from the Obergefell v. Hodges opinion from the Supreme Court of the United States, the reality is that the paper simply affirms, clarifies and amplifies the historical, Biblical, Constitutional, and Confessional position of the church on marriage, sexuality, and gender.

Briarwood Presbyterian Church, as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America, is firmly rooted in the inerrant and infallible Word of God as expressed in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, "All of which are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life." WCF I-2. The Scriptures clearly teach that sexual distinction and union are not human constructs but are created by God and are to be expressed in the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman, all according to His purpose and ordinance:

"And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. . . .' For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:24).

God's Word speaks unequivocally in declaring homosexuality and other sexual sins to be a perversion of His created order, His moral law, and the foundations of society (Leviticus 18:22, 24, 28, 30; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10), and warns that the prevalence and approval of sexual perversion in a culture is a sign of the judgment of God upon those who reject His standard for sexual purity within the confines of monogamous heterosexual marriage (Romans 1:26- 27). Moreover, the Scriptures plainly teach that moral darkness has descended over a people who, though perhaps not given to sexual perversions themselves, nevertheless "give approval to those who practice them" (Romans 1:32). Consequently, the doctrinal standards set forth almost 500 years ago in the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and the Book of Church Order, which were adopted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America upon its founding in 1789, and which have comprised the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America since its founding in 1973, explicitly teach that "marriage is to be between one man and one woman" (WCF XXIV-1) and that the sins forbidden by the Seventh Commandment's prohibition of adultery include "all unnatural lusts; . . . prohibiting of lawful, and dispensing with unlawful marriages; . . . having more wives or husbands than one at the same time; . . . and all other provocations to, or acts of uncleanness, either in ourselves or others" (Larger Catechism No 139).1 ...as also affirmed by the exposition and application of the Seventh Commandment found in Leviticus 18, Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 6, etc.

Because the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ ministers in a fallen and sin-corrupted world, she has a primary concern for the spiritual well-being of men and women created in the image of God. Responsibility to such a calling must occasionally but inevitably place the Church into irreconcilable conflict with any government policy or ruling ostensibly approving a way of life which is contrary to the eternal good of its citizens.2 Even so,

for much of her history in the United States, the Church could reasonably expect the protections of the civil government and it had no reason to fear interference by the government in the due exercise of God-ordained government and discipline “among the voluntary members of any denomination of Christians, according to their own profession and belief” (WCF XXIII-3). Moreover, through the blessings of God’s benevolent providence and common grace, there was a general societal consensus that questions of morality and ethics were rightly informed by Biblical principles about which the Church spoke clearly and with force. The Supreme Court of the United States could once thus state with absolute confidence that in view of “American life, as expressed by its laws, its business, its customs, and its society, we find everywhere a clear recognition of the same truth . . . . that this is a Christian nation” (Church of the Holy Trinity v. United States, 143 U.S. 457, 471 (1892).

That same Supreme Court now tells us that the Constitution of the United States protects sexual preferences and guarantees the right of homosexual couples to marry, and therefore of necessity redefining marriage and furthermore requires that every state recognize the validity of “same-sex marriages.” In the words of one of the dissenting Justices, the ruling is powerless to change marriage as a “religious institution” and will therefore inevitably lead to “conflict, particularly as individuals and churches are confronted with demands to participate in and endorse civil marriages between same-sex couples.” Anticipating that coming conflict, we now reiterate and declare that we firmly remain where we have always been, rooted and grounded in the Word of God , and so do publish this . . .

1 The Presbyterian Church in America was founded in response to “numerous non-Biblical positions” including “an unbiblical view of marriage and divorce.” A Message to All Churches of Jesus Christ, etc. First General Assembly, December 1973.

2 On many prior occasions of such conflict concerning marriage and sexual sin, the Presbyterian Church in America has not hesitated to publicly reaffirm its commitment to Biblical standards. See, e.g., Fifth General Assembly (1977)(affirming that both the homosexual act and desire is a sin); Seventh General Assembly (1979)(affirming that the integrity of marriage is founded on God’s Word, which declares that marriage is God’s institution, and reaffirming its commitment to WCF XXIV); Twentieth General Assembly (1992)(reaffirming the PCA’s commitment to the Bible’s teaching on sex and marriage, that “sex is a gift from God which should be expressed only in marriage between a man and a woman” and that “all sexual intercourse outside marriage, including homosexuality and lesbianism, is contrary to God’s Word (the Bible), and is sin”); Twenty-Fourth General Assembly (1996)(reaffirming the Bible's teaching that any action by the government “to sanction and legitimize homosexual relationships by the legalization of homosexual marriages, is an abominable sin calling for God’s Judgment upon any such society”).

BPC PASTORAL PAPER Obergefell v. Hodges
On June 26, 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court issued an opinion that same-sex marriage is a protected right under the U.S. Constitution applicable to all states. The case of Obergefell v. Hodges held same-sex persons have due process and equal protection constitutional rights to be married. The court also ruled every state must give full faith and credit to the same-sex marriages of other states.

The majority five-four opinion was written by Justice Anthony Kennedy who was joined by Justices Ginsburg, Breyer, Sotomayor and Kagan. The court's opinion relied on Griswold v. Connecticut and its progeny, which bases the so-called liberty/privacy rights on sexual preference.

Dissenting were Chief Justice Roberts, along with Justices Scalia, Thomas and Alito. The dissenters each filed separate opinions. The Chief Justice observed that "For all those millennia, across all those civilizations, 'marriage' referred to only one relationship: the union of a man and a woman . . . . The universal definition of marriage as the union of a man and a woman is no historical coincidence."

Roberts said the majority committed its greatest error by implementing the dangerous judicial doctrine of "substantive due process." Due process of law normally applies to the "procedures" taken to be sure a citizen is not deprived of life, liberty or property without proper legal processes. It does not create substantive rights, as done by the Obergefell opinion. Roberts noted the court made a similar mistake in Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857), holding a black person was not a person within the meaning of the Constitution which holding "was overruled on the battlefields of the Civil War and by constitutional amendment after Appomattox . . . ."

Justice Scalia dissented that, "When the Fourteenth Amendment was ratified in 1868, every State limited marriage to one man and one woman, and no one doubted the constitutionality of doing so . . . ."

Since Obergefell is based on sexual preference, the opinion opens the door for other forms of marriage, viz., polygamy, polyamory, and other more exotic relationships. It will also have an effect on what Justice Kennedy called the state's "constellation of benefits," meaning changes to inheritance, divorce, child support and custody, adoption, spousal rights and other laws.

The most significant impact of Obergefell will be the adverse effects on religious freedom. Justice Thomas observed in his dissent, "The majority's decision threatens the religious liberty our nation has long sought to protect . . . ." The power of the federal government, with the urging of the gay lobby, will seek to establish same-sex rights as civil rights. State and local governments will establish and enforce gay rights. These will ultimately affect the free-speech rights of pastors in the pulpit, tax exemption of churches and ministries, and the rights of individuals not to participate in same-sex marriage activities, such as, wedding planners, bakers, and florists.

The "supremacy clause" (Article VI, ¶2) of the U.S. Constitution provides, "The Constitution and Laws of the United States . . . .shall be the supreme Law of the Land." The U.S. Supreme Court has usurped that clause to say the supreme law of the land is what the court says it is. That usurpation has become an accepted legal process. The breathtaking impropriety of Obergefell has challenged the thinking of legal scholars. While Obergefell may be accepted by many as "The Law of the Land," its effects must not go unchallenged.

The constitutionality and consequences of Obergefell will not be fully appreciated or known until a passage of time allows us to feel the seismic impact on our culture and its laws and conventions. There will be more court

cases and legislative enactments as a result of this landmark, but aberrant, case. The final effects are not foreseeable.

STATEMENT OF FAITH AND MARRIAGE

It is against this backdrop that Briarwood Presbyterian Church reaffirms its long-standing and unwavering belief that the Holy Bible is the inerrant and infallible Word of God and is the final authority for all matters of faith and practice. The policies of this church have been and continue to be in submission to this stated Word of God. It is upon this foundation, and only this foundation, that Briarwood Presbyterian Church expresses and reaffirms its position on the God-ordained institution of marriage. This commitment is both affirmed and expounded by the Presbyterian Church in America Constitution, which consists of the Westminster Standards and the Book of Church Order, to which the Briarwood Presbyterian Church and all of its ministers have committed themselves to uphold with sacred vows.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27, ESV). These scriptures teach the origin of man and his relationship to creation through the sacred union of a man and a woman. "And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth'". (Genesis 1:28 ESV). Scripture further states that it is "For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh". (Genesis 2:24 ESV) Therefore, God has ordained marriage as a union of one man and one woman. God, in his divine wisdom, created marriage as the covenanted, conjugal union of one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:18-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Hebrews 13:4 ESV) Briarwood recognizes the biblical definition of marriage as the unity of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime, and that it is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and his church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards and the means of procreation of the human race. "The purpose of marriage is the enrichment of the lives of those who enter into this estate, the propagation of the race and the extension of Christ's church to the glory of the covenant God." (Appendix B, Book of Church Order). The Presbyterian Church in America is committed to the sanctity of human sexual relationships. We believe God's intent in creation was that male and female would be complementary, that the privilege of sexual expression would be between male and female only, and this expression would be only in the context of marriage (Summary of PCA Statements of Homosexuality).

Scripture condemns unnatural relationships between man and man and between woman and woman. (Romans 1:24-27; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13 ESV) Therefore, no ministry of this church shall recognize the validity of any position that condones any same-sex sexual relationship, whether marriage or a union replicating marriage or advocates the legalization or legitimization of any homosexual act or transgender activity. Finally, Briarwood Presbyterian Church reaffirms its longstanding and unwavering commitment through all of its ministries to love our neighbors and extend respect in Christ's name to all people, including those who may disagree with us about the definition of marriage and the public good. All ministries of Briarwood Presbyterian Church are designed in their entirety to reach Birmingham and to reach the world for Christ. The purpose of this policy is to clearly state this church's position pertaining to all of its ministries, whether through speech or

conduct emanating from this church body, which is designed and carried out in subjection to and integration with biblical truth. The teachings and ministries of this church recognize only the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman.

All ministers, officers, and ministries of Briarwood Presbyterian Church must remain faithful to our Covenantal Vows and Oaths to the supremacy and sufficiency of God's Word and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America as protected by the 1st Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. The members of Briarwood according to their membership vows will attempt to frame their lives, families, and vocations with a world and life view that also affirms the supremacy and sufficiency of God's Word as expounded by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America.

Briarwood's Pastoral Position and Guideline Paper reaffirming the church's historical definition of "the parties to a marriage" together with its "Statement of Faith and Marriage" and other related positional documents will be communicated to all ministers, staff, and employees of the church; Board Directed Ministries (including Briarwood Christian School, Birmingham Theological Seminary, and Mission Boards); and individuals in ministry who receive support from Briarwood.
Each Executive Director, President or Chairman of the respective groups will be requested by the Session to submit operational policies and procedures that conform to the above referenced Pastoral Position and Guideline Paper to a committee or commission of the Session for approval. Corollary issues raised by the Obergefell decision should be considered in the development and implementation of these ministry-specific policies.