

**ABBOTSFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
EDUCATION POLICIES &
PROCEDURES MANUAL**

ACS

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with a purpose

Education Policies and Procedures

Introduction

This document is the culmination of the work of many people: campus administrators, teacher and parent representatives on the Education Advisory Team and ACS staff members. Each group has contributed to the updating and revising of existing policies, writing new policies, and fine tuning everything. This process has been overseen by the ACS Leadership Team.

A policy book is important for a variety of reasons. It clarifies the direction of the school in the specific area it represents, it helps all staff members to stay on the same page, it can be a source of important information for all stake holders, and it gives guidance should there be controversy. This document gives some specifics of how we educate at Abbotsford Christian School in a way that is true to our mission, vision and core beliefs.

This policy book is a living document. It contains all education policies that have been completed to date. Some are still in process. Others will be developed over time in accordance with the current strategic plan.

All the detail about our educational program is also not contained in this document. Instead, there are links to the campus handbooks. This is a convenient way of keeping course selection and requirements up to date on a year by year basis.

This Education Policy Book is for the use of all members of the Abbotsford Christian School community. Parents and prospective parents can find out about our education policies and programs and how they seek to “nurture students in the discovery and development of their abilities and unique gifts so that they are enabled to be faithful, discerning, obedient and creative servants of God and of neighbour; and stewards of His creation.” Students can research what to expect. Staff members can refer to the policies for guidance. Everyone will have a clearer understanding of the direction of the school.

If, at any time, you have questions or concerns about any of these policies, you are invited to contact a campus administrator.

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SECTION 02 - GENERAL

ABBOTSFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Abbotsford Christian School, operated by Abbotsford Christian School Society Members, seeks to serve Christian families by providing a secure learning environment in which God's students can continue to explore, evaluate, and experience all of life under God.

We aim to nurture students in the discovery and development of their abilities and unique gifts so that they are enabled to be faithful, discerning, obedient and creative servants of God and of neighbour, and stewards of His creation.

ABBOTSFORD CHRISTIAN CORE BELIEFS

- **TRUTH**
-Learning, living and teaching in obedience to God's truth; discerning, engaging and influencing culture with the hope of Christ's redemption.
- **RESPECT**
-Regarding each person as an image bearer of Christ, in love, integrity and openness.
- **EXCELLENCE**
-Encouraging creativity and a pursuit of excellence in every aspect of life.
- **SERVICE**
-Fostering servant-hood and leadership development, modeling the compassion of Christ in all we do.
- **STEWARDSHIP**
-Actively pursuing and teaching stewardship of time, resources and abilities.
- **CELEBRATION**
-Celebrating creation, the life we have in Jesus Christ, and the life we share in our community.

ABBOTSFORD CHRISTIAN VISION STATEMENTS

- **Education** – *All ACS students will achieve maximum potential through a learning process that is appropriate to the students' abilities. Each student will feel valued, secure and challenged to explore God, His creation and their place in it.*
- **Staff** - *ACS will attract, retain and develop staff members who are dedicated, creative, passionate, and who model Christ in their actions. Individually and collectively, staff will feel engaged, value and respected. ACS will be an employer of choice.*
- **Finances** – *ACS will have an innovative, multi-faceted funding structure that provides financial strength and stability to support our annual and long-term objectives, in a stewardly manner that honors God.*
- **Community** – *ACS will be known as a school that fosters a culture of Christian service and character in our community. Our supporting community will be ambassadors for the*

school and be able to articulate our Mission so that we will be a sought after educational environment for Christian families.

- **Christian Worldview** – *All of life and learning at ACS will celebrate and explore the truth that ‘The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.’ Students will learn to discern the culture in which they live and how they can positively influence it for God’s kingdom.*
- **Infrastructure** – *ACS will invest in attractive, effective and stewardly facilities that support optimal enrollment, contribute towards our sense of identity and support our vision for Christian education.*

CURRICULUM PERSPECTIVES

(The following brief perspective statements have been adapted from the SCSBC website)

A Christian school designs its curriculum to equip students to live responsively and responsibly for their Creator, Redeemer, and Lord. The school cannot do the work of the Holy Spirit, who convicts sinners and calls them to repentance and faith. However, the school tries to structure its curriculum in a way that proclaims the need for a commitment to Christ, the Lord of all creation, and to reveal the enormous claim God has on each of our lives. Curriculum in a Christian school should proclaim God’s dynamic design for the universe, revealing life’s inherent interrelatedness.

The curriculum also shows how sin wreaks havoc and brings life-damaging effects. At the same time, the curriculum demonstrates the redemptive powers of Jesus Christ and our human ministry of reconciliation and restoration. Christian schools strive to develop a biblically-based curriculum. Teachers and students wrestle together to understand better how to live a life that is rooted in Christ and dedicated to teaching and learning in His power and strength.

Biblical Studies

Biblical Studies introduce students to the most significant insights and ideas of the Bible and our Christian heritage. Students explore the drama of covenant history as it moves from Genesis through Revelation. They study the promises of the Old Testament and the fulfillment in Christ of the New Testament. They learn a Biblical view of man, woman and child created as images of God, both as sinners and as saints. Biblical themes of salvation, grace, faith, covenant, kingdom, church, world, salvation, judgment, law, and gospel are developed. Students see that the Bible’s message applies to knowledge, love, human relationships, government, war and peace, and justice. For Biblical Studies, the Bible is the main source for giving students an encounter with God, studying it as God’s Word for their lives, practicing service, and finding their place in the story.

Language Arts

Language Arts acknowledges that human language is a gift from God to be used to communicate with Him and with other people. Christian schools foster the development and effective use of language so that students learn to express themselves clearly and honestly in serving God and others. Listening and reading develop understanding; speaking and writing develop the ability to express and communicate ideas and beliefs. Literature allows students to experience delight in the varied nature of human beings; students see with other eyes and feel with other hearts, thereby combating a certain amount of self-centeredness. In Christian schools, students ask some basic questions such as: Is the writer faithful to their craft, and obedient to the Lord in using language as a gift of the Lord? What view of life does the author convey? Does the writer’s work acknowledge or suppress the sovereignty of God?

Modern Language Studies

Modern Language Studies help us to celebrate another language because language is a gift from God. God created humankind with the ability to communicate. God, who is our Creator and who has created all things, created us to live in community and fellowship with one another. We have been given the gift of languages to open up avenues of communication. Language, in spoken and written form, allows us to broaden our experience and knowledge of the world God has created. Diversity is an integral and intended part of God's creation. The celebration of creation's riches must also extend to an embracing of linguistic diversity and the many opportunities this presents to us as active participants within the global community. The study of other languages is a God-given calling and privilege to be pursued with pleasure and diligence.

Social Studies

Social Studies teach students about human relationships and actions—today and in the past—so that they live as citizens of God's kingdom in their own community. They learn about their own culture, as well as cultures in other parts of the world and in different time periods. Social studies in Christian schools recognize that God created people to develop and take care of the creation. In response, people have developed many different cultures that have religious frameworks that accept God as Creator and Lord, or worship other gods and/or aspects of the creation. Sin distorts human cultural development. Yet, through the renewal that Christ's redemption brings, students can understand and learn to be culture formers themselves. Students learn that all people are called to live justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God as they live in their families and communities. They develop a sense of place and sense of time that is guided by principles of service, justice and stewardship.

Information Technology

Information Technology is part of God's good creation and working with it is part of being human. On the one hand, technology is a blessing that has great potential for enriching lives and education. On the other hand, it is part of the fallen creation and can enslave us into thinking that it is all-powerful and holds the key to all learning. Christian schools help students understand the place of technology and to develop skills for using technology appropriately. Technological activity enables teachers and students to extend learning beyond the classroom into increasingly diverse and global settings. Christian schools do not shun the use of computer technology but, instead, learn to use computer technology critically, in ways that provide service to God's world and to each other.

Media Education

Media Education in a Christian school teaches that God created communication so that people could live in harmony with Him and with each other. Human communication can promote honesty and understanding, or the opposite. Christian schools help students to develop their oral, print, visual, and digital communication skills for service and not for domination. Christian schools foster an appreciation of various media and involve students in a celebrative use of media to enrich human life. Furthermore, Christian schools assist students in critically analyzing media forms and content, teaching discernment in terms of a Biblical worldview.

Mathematics

Mathematics —the study of numbers and space—is an integral part of learning to understand the creation. Christian schools teach students about numbers and help them to develop their ability to use numbers honestly and accurately to describe aspects of life and make sense of human experiences. Mathematics is based on the reality of a created order and involves students in discovering the wonder and place of numbers and patterns in God's creativity and design. Students learn mathematics not merely to find correct answers to problems but to explore possible solutions to new problems. Students learn that mathematical principles are derived from people's experiences and explorations in God's world throughout history. They learn to assess the incomplete nature of human understanding of creation and to base their own interpretations on God's faithfulness in upholding the world.

Science

Science encourages students to take joy and delight in exploring and coming to understand God's world. They learn that physical and living things are created by God and not merely nature, environment or natural resources. Science is a human cultural activity through which God can be glorified and human life enhanced or used in life distorting ways. Students study science in the context of human history and develop a Biblical perspective in personal and communal decision-making. Through the study of science, students gain a deepened understanding of how they are the care-takers of creation and responsible to God for maintaining, developing and restoring it. Students are involved in designing experiments, making observations and contributing to existing knowledge in science.

Fine Arts

Fine Arts are designed to explore our God-given abilities to express experiences through art, music, drama and dance. Christian schools assist students in developing their aesthetic awareness and creative expression. Students learn to appreciate people's artistic gifts, grow in their understanding of the fine arts and learn to interpret the varied forms of expression in the fine arts. The Christian school fine arts program gives students opportunity to concretely express their joy and delight, as well as their struggles. It seeks to open up to students the world of the arts, to teach techniques, and to help them see how these are affected by the spirit of the age in which the art was produced. When students respond in the fine arts to their perceptions of God's Word and world, the results are valid expressions of faith.

Business Education

Business Education in Christian schools helps students learn about, and be involved in, business activities as an important part of being servants and stewards in God's creation. Educating students about business means demonstrating the ways in which business creates places for people to work, provides goods and services that meet people's needs, provides owners with income, and contributes resources for community life. Christian schools teach that God is the owner and ruler of everything and that people are given responsibility for managing the earth and its resources in God-honouring ways that provide all people with meaningful and productive lives. Christian schools help students learn to make wise choices in buying and selling products that enhance life and promote stewardship of creation.

Health and Career Education

Health and Career Education in Christian schools enables students to develop their gifts as they explore and study all areas of life. Education includes guiding students in exploring ways in which they can exercise their gifts in service and work. Students are called to be Christians in all of life and are gifted to serve in particular areas of life. Health and Career Education allows students to explore interests and abilities, and consider educational, career, and occupational choices. Learning activities such as self-assessment, goal setting, seeking advice from parents, teachers and mentors, career exploration projects, community service and work experience can increase student awareness and assist them in making decisions about their future education and/or work.

Health education teaches about human relationships and family, and is a key area where parent and teacher roles complement one other. Parents provide students with foundational nurture about life's relationships. Teachers educate students in ways that contribute to their understanding of themselves, their relationships with others, their bodies, human sexuality, healthy living, and personal and social growth. Christian schools promote balanced attention to students as unique individuals and as members of families, churches and communities. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for good health, learn decision-making skills and develop a healthy way of living that honours God and builds community with others.

Home Economics

Home Economics expands student's experiences with food and clothing, initially shaped in their home and their cultural background. In the elementary grades, Christian schools increase students' awareness about food and clothing most often as part of social studies, science and

literature. In middle and higher grades, students study food and clothing more directly in exploratory modules or a home economics course. Christian schools teach students that God created the world with sufficient resources for our basic needs and, through a combination of natural circumstances and human decisions, people have sufficient, excess, or insufficient food and clothing for their needs.

Physical Education

Physical Education in Christian schools teaches students that to value and take care of their bodies is an integral part of serving God and others as a member of the Christian community. "You are not your own; you are bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body." (I Cor. 6:20). Physical education involves learning about and doing physical activities: movement, fitness, play, a variety of individual and team sports, and responsible actions. Physical education in Christian schools assists students in increasing their understanding through muscular and fitness activities, using physical activity in service to God, relating this activity to other parts of God's creation, and learning how physical activity helps form the human being.

Technical Education

Technical Education aims to prepare young Christians to think, create, manipulate tools, and work with others in a safe shop environment. Safety, solid work habits, respecting tools and their use, in conjunction with understanding how to work with others, is stressed. There is a lot of opportunity for students to use their God-given talents and abilities to design, create and build (or repair) things. Christian service is naturally woven into the curriculum.

CLASS SIZE

In determining class size maximums and averages, a number of issues based on sound educational practice must be considered. The importance of meaningful contact time between teachers and students and the amount of time needed for marking, report cards, and parent teacher interviews must be considered. Teachers also need time to integrate students with special needs and English language learning needs into regular classrooms. We expect teachers to implement the preferred types of teaching/learning activities for a course or grade level. Teachers must also have time available for their own growth. Research indicates that small class sizes at the primary level have significant positive implications for academic achievement even in later school years. Some classes are limited by the physical space in the classrooms and the number of stations available for students. In launching a new course or program, numbers may be small at the beginning.

The following table outlines class size expectations:

Grade Level	Maximum Class Size	Average # of ELL students per class or course	Maximum # of Funded Special Needs Students per grade (for admissions purposes, others may show up throughout the years)
Kindergarten	20	2	3
Grade 1	22	2	3
Grades 2 – 5	24	2	3
Grades 6 – 8	26	2	3
Grade 9 – 12	30	2	3

When numbers must be exceeded, teachers will be given extra support as deemed appropriate by the campus administration. When a combination class is formed, it should have fewer students than a single grade class.

ATTENDANCE

We expect that all families will make school attendance a high priority.

If a student will be absent, the school office must be informed so that all students can be accounted for. Each campus has a safe arrival policy which includes phoning home if a student is absent and the school has not been notified. In that way, the school can make sure that nothing has happened to students along the way.

Government funding is contingent on attendance for a minimum number of hours. Parents will be required to make up the shortfall in government grant should one occur because of unexcused absences by the student (this does not include absences for medical reasons).

Classroom attendance is also very important for the growth and learning that takes place. More and more education is interactive, resource based and dependent on group work. Students are immersed in active learning throughout the day. Students who miss school and need to make up work are always short changed.

Extended vacations outside of regular school breaks, short-term mission trips, and other events that conflict with the school calendar, should be kept to a minimum. This is not to undermine the value and importance of trips which can be rich with learning experiences but to emphasize the importance of classroom learning.

It is not the responsibility of teachers to do a lot of extra work to provide alternate learning activities for students on planned extended absences. Teachers will, however, provide missed work when students return. Parents and students should expect that learning may suffer when students are away for extended periods.

When students are away because of illness, students and their families are responsible for finding out what the student has missed. Teachers will provide students with opportunities to make up work.

Check individual campus handbooks for more specific guidelines at each level.

ACS POSITION STATEMENTS

Partnership with Families

In the ACS Mission Statement, we articulate how we, “seek to serve Christian families...” The word “*serve*” could easily be substituted for “*partner*”. We acknowledge that the biblical authority for raising and educating children lives with parents. Consequently, a Christian school in its most basic form is a collective of Christian parents partnering *with* one another, *for one* another in order to remain faithful to the commands of Scripture. Occasionally, the partnership is with grandparents or other caregivers.

Furthermore, since the charge to parents to raise their children comes from God and parents have invited the school to share in that responsibility, it stands to reason that responsibilities and authorities accorded to the school for a child’s education also come from the Lord.

This is a critical distinction in Christian education, specifically relating to the teaching of required curriculum. In the first place, God charges the school with the requirement to embed curriculum in a biblical worldview that clearly demonstrates Christ’s claim over all aspects of human existence. In the second place, as the parable of the talents demonstrates, in carrying out our God-given duties, our responsibility is to do our very best in everything—academics, fine arts, sports etc.—in order that we might bring honor and thanksgiving to Him for what He has already done for us.

Additionally, our responsibility as a school is to show utmost respect in all cases specific to the partnership we have with parents, recognizing that we serve parents and are required to honor God in all our relationships. Apart from respecting the control the parent community exercises through our governance model, we commit to listening carefully to parents and to be responsive to their concerns through intentional and frequent communication. We also accept the responsibility to ensure “mission appropriate” choices are made within the school, from the classroom to the social calendar.

We strongly encourage all parents to remain actively informed and involved in the life of the school. This occurs through regular interaction with teachers, attending all parent/ teacher events, participation at school events, classroom visits, volunteering and attendance at Society meetings.

It is also imperative that parents have a clear understanding that the biblical worldview that permeates all of our subject matter carries with it a requirement to living a Godly lifestyle and setting positive examples for children at home. Students are also invited into the partnership at age appropriate levels. It is important that students learn from home and school how to make appropriate lifestyle choices concerning issues such as church attendance, dress, movies, music, speech, dating, alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

Holiday Celebrations

To reflect our commitment to uphold the Mission Statement of Abbotsford Christian School, especially as it pertains to enabling our students to be discerning, these policies and procedures regarding holiday celebrations will be followed:

Central to the Christian faith is the birth, death, resurrection, ascension and eventual return of our Lord Jesus Christ. As a Christian school, in partnership with Christian families, we will promote school activities that help remind us of the ultimate significance of Jesus’ advent, sacrifice on the cross, gift of Easter, return to His Father and Second Coming. Specifically, it will mean the intentional learning and celebratory focus on His story during the seasons of Christmas, Easter and Ascension Day: classroom activities and school celebrations during those seasons will be carefully selected to avoid any misunderstanding of our school’s position of this matter.

We are aware and respect that our parent community will make a variety of individual family choices during these seasons, especially Christmas and Easter. Some choices will include Santa Claus, Christmas presents, and Easter bunnies; other choices will not. We believe that our focus at school should remain with the core tenet of the Christian faith – Jesus Christ.

We will not promote the celebration of Halloween or provide activities during that time that may create the perception of our unspoken promotion. Specifically, it will mean that dressing up in Halloween costumes during the school day, or during a school event in the evening, will not be permitted. Also, classroom activities during that celebration time will be carefully selected to avoid any misunderstanding of our school’s position on this matter. Given Halloween’s historical and pagan background, we believe that it is imperative to provide a position on this matter that strongly reflects our desire for Biblical discernment.

Science and Creation

“All knowledge can be used either wisely or foolishly. As you study the laws that uphold creation, consider how you can use your knowledge to glorify God and show respect for everything that He created.” (Physical Science, Christian Schools International)

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the Earth.” At Abbotsford Christian School, we firmly believe in the fundamental truth of God’s word, including this scripture from Genesis. Our creator reveals Himself to us in scripture, by the work of His spirit, and, compellingly, in His creation. Just as a work of art allows us to see glimpses of the nature of the artist, so too, does God’s creation declare His creative majesty.

Since we believe that the scriptures are the holy, infallible and inspired word of God, they can contain only Truth. As such, there can be no conflict between God's revelation in the scriptures and in creation. In the context of the study of evolution, we must assume that the evidence for the theory found in creation must be evaluated in the light of scripture. We must also evaluate the creation story in light of the revelations God has put in creation. In addition, we must bear in mind that although we hold the Word as Truth, we must interpret its meaning. We acknowledge that within the Christian faith, there are multiple interpretations of the creation events. Multiple interpretations mirrored against one truth is the context we find ourselves in as a school and serves as evidence of the limitations of sinful human kind.

The activity we call "science" is one way to gather information about the creation. As Christians, we seek to find God's truth from the book of nature or "general revelation". Done well, the reward is a clearer view of God, an appreciation for His handiwork and some understanding of the formative processes He has placed in creation. It must be remembered that science is a human activity and thus prone to all types of limitations. Those who see scientific evidences as a type of ultimate truth, place far too much faith in this limited, but often revealing pursuit. At its best, science, through the formulation of questions about the nature of creation, gathers careful observations and then seeks evidences that either support or reject the hypotheses developed to answer the questions. This work has done much to reveal God to us. We see evidence that He is a God of order, of extreme detail, able to create both amazing complexity and wondrous simplicity. He is a God of grace who created a universe complete with all the things needed for us to flourish and who created us to care for this creation and thereby honor Him.

At Abbotsford Christian School, this revealing of God is the premise upon which science is taught. We seek to show science as an inquiry-based pursuit in which we try to discover some aspects of creation. We stress that science gives us but one way of knowing. Science cannot reveal the same things about creation that literature or music can. A scientific description of an eagle reveals much but poetry can allow us to experience different facets of what an eagle is. For a clear understanding, we need both. Both are truth and all truth comes from God. Hence our study of science is an attempt to know God's truth.

Because of the various interpretations of the creation event, in the teaching of science it is inevitable that discussions regarding the origins of the universe, the earth, life and organisms are encountered.

At Abbotsford Christian School, we will teach students that God reveals Himself to us in several ways, one of which is His creation, the book of nature. We will teach students that science is only one way to study creation and that combining it with other ways produces a more accurate and complex picture. We will teach students to question science processes, evidences, theories and applications. We will not diminish the scholarship of others and will recognize that on questions of origins, both scripture and scientific evidence is open to interpretation. Within the context of various interpretations of the Genesis account of creation, we will regard the evidences for an ancient creation, change through time, the evolution of organisms through natural selection as well as a literal view of the account of creation as compelling, though not beyond criticism.

Our ultimate goal is to help students understand and believe that God is the creator and upholder of all things and that science and its limitations should only be used as a tool to help us come to a better understanding of the awe and majesty of our maker.

Educational Resources

When acquiring resources, every effort is made to find materials that are developmentally appropriate and of good educational value. At ACS, not all materials will be overtly Christian, but will be deemed to be mission appropriate. Students will be equipped to discern and evaluate. We want students to be able to read and learn from good resources while at the same time understanding the cultural context in which they were produced.

Occasionally, material that is used can be interpreted as inappropriate for Christians. We firmly believe that God created this whole world. As humans, we have tainted the world and there is sin that is prevalent in our lives; but as a Christian educational institution, we desire to tackle tough issues with challenging questions/topics that require appropriate discernment in order to understand them. We expect our staff to lead our students through these tough issues. We want our students to ask challenging questions.

At times, some families may have questions about a resource (print or media) that is being used. Please refer to the Library Policy in Section 03 for procedures for dealing with challenged materials.

Communal Worship at School

As a Christian school, we believe that all of life is worship. Everything we do must bring glory and honor to our creator. We also spend time in communal worship where we give praise and thanksgiving to God as a group. This is the time to celebrate the life we have in Jesus Christ. It is not about us, but about the God we serve.

Most of this communal worship happens in classroom or group devotions and chapels in age appropriate ways. We are aware that our students come from a variety of traditions, styles and backgrounds in worship. We want to be sensitive and make space for variety. If there are concerns about any of the worship activities at ACS, you are invited to bring them to the campus administration.

Sundays

ACS staff and students participate in a host of school sponsored activities outside of school hours and on weekends. While we wish to avoid a legalistic perspective specific to Sunday activities, we believe strongly in Sabbath rest. We also believe it is important to avoid becoming a stumbling block for families who desire separation from the busyness of weekly activities on Sundays. Consequently, ACS will limit participation in school sponsored activities to Monday through Saturday. Exceptions to this may be granted in Fine Arts activities such as Band, Choir, or Joyful Sounds where students may be asked to participate in a worship service. In all cases, however, student participation will be optional.

School Dances

Building student community and providing spaces for this to happen is important at ACS. In the secondary school, school dances are woven into this desire for community building among students. The dances are not a part of the regular curriculum, but rather function as a social gathering for students. It is incumbent upon the school to be sensitive to the varying interpretations of scripture that the school's families have. It is entirely appropriate that school dances might not fit into some families' interpretation of appropriate Christian living. In light of this, the school will be sure to schedule dances at appropriate times that allow students to choose to participate. This choice will in no way affect the students' status at the school.

Usually, school dances are sponsored by students and as such are primarily organized by students. The school's role is supervisory. There is an expectation that school dances will be supervised and chaperoned properly, that school rules are followed (including student dress), and that music choice is approved by an administrator or appropriate supervisor. School dances are open only to our current secondary students. Decisions made by students at dances that are contrary to the expectations laid out for them will be dealt with appropriately.

Same Gender Attraction (SGA)

At ACS, we seek to reflect an atmosphere of humble understanding and respect for each other's human frailty, and are committed to love one another as Christ loved us. Everything we do regarding students with SGA issues will be framed with these principles. We will seek to avoid principles and/or attitudes that lead to hatred or contempt for others, but instead, reflect the part of our mission statement which refers to a secure learning environment.

SGA is something that some of our students (especially older ones) are, or might be dealing with. We believe that having SGA is not a sin, however, sexual activity outside of a heterosexual monogamous marriage is considered to be sinful.

The Society of Christian Schools (SCSBC) has published a document entitled *Same Gender Attraction: A discussion among our Christian School Communities*. This document has informed our statements and policy and is an effective tool to guide our community in the SGA discussion. Copies of these are available at each of the campuses.

SECTION 03- INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

CURRICULUM UNITS AND COURSE OUTLINES

Abbotsford Christian School's curriculum is taught to equip students for life. What is taught at each grade level is driven mainly by British Columbia's Ministry of Education Prescribed Learning Outcomes. How it is taught is motivated by our desire to prepare students to live both responsively and responsibly for their Creator, Redeemer, and Lord. This means that our entire curriculum is taught from the perspective of creation, fall and redemption. In every curricular study, God's inherent design for that particular unit of study is examined, areas in which sin has affected it are identified, and the need and challenge for redemption are uncovered and defined.

To engage students in such "unpacking" of their curricular subject areas in a meaningful way and so students are inspired to dig deeper into subject matter, courses are designed along the framework of Understanding by Design (UBD) that includes Enduring Understandings (Thematic Statements), Essential Questions and Guiding Questions.

Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions

In order to ensure that our students will retain what has been taught long after the lesson and that they have converted what they have learned into something of value, our curriculum is framed around **Enduring Understandings** and **Essential Questions**. This involves thinking about a curricular subject area or unit with the end in mind; what kinds of questions students will respond to; and what student response as followers of Christ should be before teaching the unit. It also involves careful thought as to what concepts and processes should be understood or mastered in order to reach or achieve this goal before the unit is taught.

Enduring Understandings are Thematic Statements that express the main idea that we want students to understand about the unit, long after they have studied it. It outlines what we want students to know and understand about their role in relation to the subject matter taught and examines what in the curricular study is integral to the kind of life God calls us to live. It outlines misunderstandings that students may bring into this study and also identifies what may be potentially engaging to our students.

Example: Self Unit (Grade 8)

God creates each person with unique abilities and places them within community. As a result of sin, individuals and communities experience brokenness. Renewal and restoration are possible through Christ's death on the cross and because God continues to uphold what He has made. As people continue to seek to honour the Lord, He blesses their efforts and lifestyle. In this unit on self, you will become more aware of your own identity, place in this world and explore the call to use your gifts and abilities to honour and serve the Lord.

Essential Questions are presented by teachers and unpacked by students as they learn factual content about the curriculum or unit study. As teachers guide students through the "essentials" of the unit study, they involve students in inquiry through complex, open-ended and understandable **Essential Questions** that challenge students according to what they believe to be true understanding. They also directly correlate to our Christian worldview and link to meaningful activities through which students are engaged in purposeful learning. **Essential Questions** are meant to be debatable and should require a personal and meaningful response from students. They should also be questions that will recur within a student's life.

Essential Questions should:

- Pose dilemmas and raise other important questions...Is law unjust? Why am I who I am?
- Not have one obvious right answer... What is beauty? Imagination? Creativity? Who does God want me to be? Are hero's found in unlikely people?

- Be understandable by our students...Is life always fair? How can I be a team player?
- Reflect conceptual priorities by covering the basic skills you need to get across...How can we use math as a language? Does history repeat itself?
- Be realistic in regards to the amount of time allocated to the unit.
- Be posted in the classroom and regularly on worksheets or learning activity outlines.

Example: Self Unit

- *Who Am I?*
- *Why Am I Who I Am?*
- *Who Does God Want Me To Be?*

Essential Questions are answered through what we call **Guiding or Unit Questions** that unpack the unit. These are content driven questions that cover the key concepts and facts that students will need to know before being able to answer an **Essential Question**. They drive the unit and entice students on a journey to uncover the key understanding and meaning, all the while building understanding as they search and discover the answers through authentic and engaging assessment activities. They not only link specifically to learning activities, they are usually “what” questions and can be linked directly to British Columbia Ministry of Education Prescribed Learning Outcomes.

Example: Self Unit

- *What are your hopes and dreams for this year? For the future?*
- *What do I believe?*
- *What events in my life have made me who I am today?*

Framing curriculum along the Backwards by Design pattern, easily enables teachers to link Guiding and Unit Questions to BC Curriculum Learning Outcomes. It also allows teachers to engage students in authentic learning that corresponds to assessment that shows true understanding (see Standards Based Assessment) and lifelong learning that promotes Christian discipleship and service.

Campus-specific course outline templates incorporate the above mentioned design. Curriculum Unit Plans and / or course outlines must be completed in order to comply with British Columbia Ministry of Education directives.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE OF CURRICULUM

In order to be compliant with British Columbia Ministry of Education, the scope and sequence of what we teach in each grade is somewhat dictated. At each campus, a curriculum specialist evaluates Ministry IRP packages and mandates to ensure the meeting of required curriculum. Campus curriculum specialists also meet regularly as part of the Education Team to discuss the educational program and to ensure that a consistent program in each discipline is being delivered.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND REPORTING

Our mandate to educate students in a way that allows them to fully develop their God-given abilities, requires that all of our educational practices, including the measuring and reporting of student learning, lead to more effective learning. Increasingly, research is showing that the way that we measure and report student learning plays a major role in the student's academic progress.

Accordingly, we follow guidelines which reflect "standards-based" assessment and “assessment for learning” practices. This method of assessment requires the teacher to reliably evaluate the student's mastery of clearly-stated learning outcomes or "standards". The standards are clearly described to students and they are reviewed so that students have a thorough understanding of

what they are to learn. In addition, they are shown examples of what learning standards look like. The learning standards are identified by the teacher and are generally described in Ministry of Education IRP's.

In all cases, the focus of our assessment and reporting practices is to facilitate learning.

In general terms, **standards-based assessment** works as follows:

1. First the teacher presents a set of standards or learning outcomes for which the students will be responsible. Students know exactly what they will have to learn and there are no surprises.
2. Grading criteria are set in advance. For example, if a rubric is to be used, it is explained to the class so they know what excellence looks like in this particular area of study.
3. No scaling of tests occurs since students are being assessed on clearly explained learning outcomes using well-designed assessment tools.
4. Students are not measured against each other, but against clearly-stated performance objectives. Because of this, it is possible for **all** students to perform well. In an ideal sense, all students would get A's because everyone learned what they were supposed to learn. If the average mark a teacher gives his students seems too high, it can be justified by referring to the assessments showing that standards have been met.
5. **Standards-based assessment** is reliable and holds up well to scrutiny.
6. Teachers use a variety of well-designed summative and formative assessments.

Integral to effective assessment is **authenticity**. It is imperative that all assessment and evaluation provides a measure of student mastery of teacher-identified learning standards. In its most basic form, this means that a mark of 70% means that the teacher feels that the student has mastered 70% of the required learning standards. Any practices that detract from the authenticity of the assessment will not be permitted.

In keeping with the need for the highest possible standard of assessment authenticity, the following guidelines are followed:

1. **Grading should include only student achievement in mastering the stated learning standards.** Behaviour should not be reflected in a student's grade. Late work will be treated as a behavioural (or discipline) issue. Marks will not be deducted for late work. Missing or unfinished work will not be given a "zero" since it implies that no learning has occurred. Instead, a teacher will award an incomplete (I) until work is completed. Academic dishonesty will be treated as a discipline issue and will not result in lowered marks.
2. **High achievement will be evaluated authentically.** Extra marks will not be given for extra work or "bonus" work.
3. **Use only individual evidence when grading students.** Don't include group scores when evaluating a student's individual performance.
4. **Distinguish between formative (typically homework) and summative assessment.** Although formative assessment is important and should continue, use only summative assessment for grading.
5. **In most cases, recent achievement will be emphasized in final grading for each unit.**

REPORTING

Each school has established a regular schedule of reporting student evaluation to parents. The focus of these reports will be to **communicate**:

1. Student mastery of learning standards
2. Student preparedness for learning (brings required materials, follows instructions etc.)
3. Student effort and classroom conduct

4. Attendance
5. Relevant observations of student learning and behaviour.

Parents will be contacted (through phone calls, emails, etc.) to keep them informed about specific issues pertaining to their child's progress.

At some grade levels, these reports will determine student advancement and graduation.

PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM REVIEW

In keeping with our School's stated Mission and Core Beliefs ("Encouraging creativity and a pursuit of excellence in every aspect of life."), it is important that our curriculum and programs be reviewed on a regular basis to identify areas in which we must work to improve.

Curricular review programs will be carried out when, in the opinion of the Education Team or Leadership Team, there is sufficient evidence that a review would be beneficial. Reasons for initiating a program review might include the following:

- Significant changes in the Ministry IRP
- A call for review from the parent community
- A significant time span since the last review
- New trends in education e.g. the use of technology in the classroom
- Strategic Plan initiatives

In the spring, the Education Team will assess the need for a formal curriculum or program review and if it is decided that a review is appropriate, will assign review team members and a schedule for the completion of tasks. During the review, the team will focus on the following questions:

- Does the curriculum area or program exemplify the mission, vision and core beliefs of the school?
- Does the school continually challenge itself to reflect on the needs of the students, the culture in which it exists, and the current educational research in this area?
- Are sufficient and appropriate strategies and education resources available to create an environment for optimal learning?
- Does the curriculum area or program have an appropriate and cohesive scope and sequence from grades K-12, with natural connections to other areas?
- Does the curriculum area or program have sufficient and appropriate staff to serve students?
- Is the curriculum area or program designed to meet the expectations of the BC Ministry of Education?

The review will take place in a timely manner and a report will be submitted to the Education Team in the spring of the review year. Upon receipt of the report, the Education Team will respond to improve the curriculum or program by:

- Establishing short and long-term goals
- Prioritizing goals
- Developing an implementation plan
- Taking steps to begin the implementation process

HOMEWORK

At Abbotsford Christian School, we believe homework is a valuable tool when assigned appropriately. It:

- strengthens students' skills
- helps students understand that learning happens in places other than school
- gives parents the opportunity to be involved in their child's learning

- may strengthen the students' habit of taking personal responsibility for their own learning

Research shows that in K-5, most homework does not increase test scores. However, practice of various skills (i.e. math facts and reading practice) can improve student learning.

Homework for All Grades

Homework should:

- place a strong emphasis on practicing basic skills
- apply previously taught concepts
- prepare students for new content or have them elaborate on new content that has been introduced
- be formative, rather than summative
- be independent work that a student can successfully complete on his or her own
- consider individual student needs, learning styles, and abilities
- relate to the learning objectives as a direct extension of classroom instruction
- include clear instructions and performance expectations so students can complete homework independently
- be assigned in reasonable amounts (more information below)
- be validated in a timely manner, e.g. through discussion or peer evaluation
- generally not be graded

Homework for Elementary Grades

- All students in K-5 are expected to participate in our school-wide home reading program.
- In grades 3-5, other homework may include: review of math facts, memory work and meaningful activities that connect to the curriculum.
- Time spent on homework should not exceed 30 minutes per night.
- Long-term assignments or major projects should not exceed 1 per term, and students should be able to complete them in class and within the 30 minutes per night time limit. If the project is to be graded, it must be graded on the evidence of student learning, not on what the project looks like.
- Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher if their child is unable to independently complete their homework within 30 minutes.
- Homework may not be due on the first day of the week. Tests that require studying may not occur on a Monday or immediately after a holiday.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to take their family holidays during school breaks. If holidays must happen during school, teachers are not expected to prepare homework for children before they leave. The students will be expected to complete missed assignments once they've returned. This may mean that their homework may exceed 30 minutes and may include weekend work.

Homework for Middle Grades

- All students in grades 6-8 are expected to participate in our school-wide home reading program.
- In grades 6-8, other homework may include: review of concepts learned, practice of skills and preparations for upcoming learning. All homework must consist of meaningful activities that connect to the curriculum.
- Long term assignments or major projects should not exceed 2 per term, and students should be able to complete them in class and within the 60 minutes per night time limit. If the projects are to be graded, they must be graded on the evidence of student learning, not on what the project looks like.
- Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher if their child is unable to independently complete their homework within 60 minutes.
- Homework that is assigned on Friday may not usually be due on the first day of the week. Tests that are assigned on Friday and that require studying may not occur on a Monday or immediately after a holiday.

- Parents are strongly encouraged to take their family holidays during school breaks. If holidays must happen during school, teachers are not expected to prepare homework for children before they leave. The students will be expected to complete missed assignments once they've returned. This may mean that their homework may exceed 60 minutes and may include weekend work.

Homework for Secondary Grades

- When assigning homework, try to ascertain the amount of homework students have in their other courses.
- When possible, be somewhat flexible with due dates.
- When assigning homework, take into account that students are spending time reviewing material, preparing for tests and reading over notes, in addition to doing specified assignments.
- Most homework should involve the completion of assignments started during class time.
- Students should not usually have more than 2 hours of assigned homework per evening. This includes assignments from all courses.
- Teachers should be considerate of student's extra-curricular commitments.

LIBRARY

The ACS library functions as an integral part of the educational program and as an extension of the classroom. It provides resources for an inquiry-centered education, meeting the goals of the curriculum and thus enriching the student's understanding of God's creation and all of life. The library collection fosters the appreciation and understanding of literature. It provides the means and methods, which enable students to be life-long discerning learners.

Selections will be made to provide a balance between the various subject areas and to provide a wide diversity of appeal. In adding new materials, choices will be made to meet the needs of the various grade levels within the school. Special emphasis will be given to updating and building the collection so that it will be useful for developing research skills (using books and electronic media) and literature appreciation at all grade levels.

Selection

Material selected must be high quality and must support ACS's curriculum and mission.

The librarian is primarily responsible for the selection of resource material. He/she will continually evaluate the library's current holdings and curriculum needs. Selections will be made by the librarian, who receives recommendations from teachers and students, as well as from workshops and book reviews.

The librarian will remove materials, which are no longer useful.

Procedure for Dealing with Challenged Materials

The collection is under constant review. If there is an objection to a resource in the library collection, the following procedure shall be followed:

- a) The complainant must read the book, view the DVD, etc.
- b) If there is still a concern, the complainant should discuss the concern with the classroom teacher or the librarian and attempt to resolve it informally.
- c) If the issue isn't resolved, the complainant may fill out the form "Request for Reconsideration of a Resource" (available from the librarian or *Appendix I*). The form must be returned to the principal.
- d) The principal will create a reconsideration committee (made up of staff and the complainant) to review the challenged material.
- e) The reconsideration committee will re-evaluate the material to make sure that it supports ACS's curriculum and mission.
- f) While the book is being reconsidered, it will remain on the shelf.

- g) Material will not be reconsidered within five years of a previous challenge and procedure.

CLASS TRIPS / FIELD TRIPS

Student trips help fulfill the Abbotsford Christian School Mission Statement and enrich education by:

- Supplementing classroom instruction
- Making real world connections with learning
- Building community, relationships and friendships
- Integrating faith and life
- Providing opportunity for service
- Providing opportunity for various types of enrichment, including cultural (broadening our perspectives)
- Developing leadership
- Providing skill development

Procedure

(May be handled at the beginning of the season or year)

Planning

When appropriate plan with grade level team and/or department:

- How does this field trip fit into the ACS Mission Statement?
- How does this field trip fit into the curriculum?
- How will student safety be ensured on this field trip? (head count, adequate supervision, cell phone, medical information)
- Risk management—avoid private pools, trampolines and other potentially dangerous situations. Check your campus *YouthSafe Outdoors* binder for risk management for your particular activity

Daytrips

Daytrips are those that take place during the regular school day.

1. The teacher must submit the Field Trip Approval Form before announcing the trip to students and parents. The form must include:
 - Purpose of trip (education, missions, sports, etc.)
 - Location
 - Date, time and duration
 - Emergency cell phone number
 - Students who will be going
 - Expenses that will be incurred
 - Transportation arrangements
 - Staff/Chaperone involvement
 - Arrangements for special needs students
 - Other campus specific information
2. Work out the details:
 - Send a letter and permission form to the parents. Include:
 - purpose
 - date and time
 - transportation and supervision arrangements
 - any special instructions (what to bring, etc.)
 - expected student behaviour
 - Collect signed permission forms (and medical forms if necessary).

3. Take along:
 - List of students
 - Medical forms
 - Cheque (if necessary)
 - Cell phone
 - Camera
 - First aid kit

Extended Trips

Extended trips are those that extend beyond regular school hours. This may mean an extra long day, or an overnight trip.

1. Teachers must submit the Extended Trip Form, which includes the daytrip information, plus any of the following that may pertain to the trip:
 - Maximum and minimum number of students who can participate
 - Cost to students (trip cost, meals, etc.)
 - Fundraising plans
2. Work out the details:
 - Send a letter and permission form to the parents. Include:
 - purpose
 - date and time
 - transportation and supervision arrangements
 - any special instructions (what to bring, etc.)
 - student behaviour expectations
 - fundraising plans
 - Collect signed permission forms
 - Plan a meeting with parents and/or supervisors if necessary
 - Submit a list of students to the office for attendance purposes
3. Take along:
 - List of students
 - Medical forms
 - Cheque (if necessary)
 - Cell phone
 - Camera
 - First aid kit

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM (Preschool Handbook)

ELEMENTARY PROGRAM (Elementary Handbook) (not available)

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM (Middle School Handbook)

SECONDARY PROGRAM (Secondary Handbooks) (not available)

SECTION 04 - SPECIAL PROGRAMS

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Abbotsford Christian School believes that all students, regardless of their physical, academic, social and emotional needs, have an essential role to play in the school community. They are all to be valued as members of the Body of Christ. On the basis of this belief, an inclusive model of education has been set up whereby all students are educated with their same-aged peers in regular classrooms as much as possible. Educational Support Services have been established to assist teachers in providing appropriate inclusive education for students with differing needs.

Special Education

The Special Education Program serves those students eligible for funding under the provincial independent schools program. These students have specific needs such as hearing loss, developmental delay, serious illnesses, cerebral palsy, autism, behavioural needs, medically diagnosed social and emotional needs, etc.

As applications for admission to the school come in, any applications that indicate a need for special education will be discussed (by the principal) with the Special Education Coordinator. All special education applications and supporting documentation will normally be in place by February 28. The number of students at each campus and in each grade must be taken into account. The processing of student applications and providing appropriate services and accommodations for new students with special education needs will be financed through the special education budget. Parents will be part of this intake process, and will be made aware as early as possible in the process, if the school is unable to supply the required services. The principal will direct the admission process and be the main contact with the parents.

Classroom teachers who notice students who have specific learning needs will discuss this with the appropriate coordinator. If testing seems to be required, this will be organized by the coordinator. If an application for special education funding is indicated, the coordinators will collaborate on the application process, the initial IEP and putting support in place.

Students in this program are served by the classroom teacher, an assistant (if needed), and a Special Education Coordinator. Staffing levels will be as follows:

1 FTE Special Education Coordinator for 15 funded students (mixed needs) and students being processed for funding, If there is a large proportion of high needs students, this caseload should be reduced. The coordinator will be supported by secretarial help. This caseload will be re-evaluated twice a year (Sept. and Jan.) to accommodate newly funded students and the withdrawal of students. If there is a significant increase in students being applied for, extra secretarial help (one extra hour per week per student) can be assigned.

Assistants are assigned to students based on need. An assistant who works one-on-one with a high needs student will normally work with the same student for a maximum of three years. It is sometimes advisable to have two assistants share responsibility for a student with high needs.

As much as possible, assistants should work full time.

Learning Assistance

The Learning Assistance Program provides support for students with learning needs who do not qualify for special education funding.

Students in this program are serviced by classroom teachers, a learning assistant (if needed) and a Learning Assistance Coordinator. At the elementary level, approximately 18% of the student population will be served through learning assistance; at the middle school level, 15% of the student population will be served. At the elementary and middle school level, one full time learning assistant can normally work with approximately 20 students. At the secondary level, learning assistance is provided by assistants working in classrooms, through general and transition courses, and through appropriate course selection. Staffing levels will be as follows:

Elementary

1 FTE Learning Assistance Coordinator / 400 student population (head count)
of Assistants = $.18 \times \text{total \# of students (head count)} / 20$

Middle

1 FTE Learning Assistance Coordinator / 400 student population
of Assistants = $.15 \times \text{total \# of students} / 20$

Secondary

1 FTE Learning Assistance Coordinator / 400 student population
of Assistants = $\text{total student population} / 200$

As much as possible, assistants should work full time.

Enrichment

The Enrichment Program addresses the learning needs of students who have the potential to excel in various areas such as academics, music, physical education, etc.

Students in this program are serviced by classroom teachers, a learning assistant (if needed) and the vice principal for educational services. The vice principal for educational services or someone assigned to this task will have designated time for enrichment coordination.

An inclusive school seeks to enrich the learning of highly academic students in their age-peer classes to the greatest extent possible. This goal is primarily achieved through the implementation of differentiated instruction. Acceleration in some subjects at specific grade levels may also be available. Specific extra curricular opportunities serve to complement the inclusive model (academic contests, Odyssey of the Mind, Red Cedar Book Club, Science Fair, etc.). Decisions on steps taken beyond the regular classroom are based on the needs (in very exceptional cases) of the individual student (development of an individual education plan).

In the Secondary School setting, courses may be offered to enrich learning (Advanced Placement courses, Accelerated Credit Enrollment Industry Training (ACEIT), independent directed studies, learning labs, etc.) See the Secondary Course Planning Book [Abbotsford Christian Secondary Course Descriptions and Requirements](#)

English Language Learning (ELL)

The ELL program supports students who are learning English as a new language.

Students in this program are serviced by classroom teachers, an ELL teacher, an ELL coordinator and the multicultural coordinator. Occasionally, educational assistants may be involved. Staffing levels are determined by need. Students who require ELL services and are not international students are usually expected to pay for ELL services.

An inclusive school seeks to support the learning of students who are learning the English language in their age-peer classes to the greatest extent possible. This goal is achieved through support in the classroom, a pull-out program during the school day to support the classroom curriculum learning, and an after-school program to develop and strengthen English language competencies. Levels of support are based on the needs of the students.

Enrolment Guidelines	
Elementary and Middle	2 students per class
Secondary	10% per grade level

ELL is mandatory for all ELL students; the amount of time is based on the school's assessment. Students may be exempted from this program based on assessment results and the classroom and ELL teachers' recommendations. This exemption is revisited each year during the first month of school to make sure that the student will be able to work at the appropriate standard in the next grade.

Staffing levels

General

6 hours a week for an ELL Coordinator

Elementary

Up to 4 hours a week for after-school support

Total number of hours of in-class support per campus - 1 hour for every enrolled International Student and every other student who needs ELL support

Middle

Up to 6 hours a week for after-school support

Total number of hours of in-class support per campus - 1 hour for every enrolled International Student and every other student who needs ELL support

Secondary

Up to 6 hours a week for after-school support

Total Number of hours of in-class support per campus -1 hour for every enrolled International Student and every other student who needs ELL support

If ELL needs are much greater at one campus than another, in-class support hours may be reallocated.

COUNSELLING

Introduction

Abbotsford Christian School is designed to be a place that supports students in all areas of their schooling. At the **elementary and middle** schools most support for students is provided by the homeroom teacher. Students who require extra emotional, social or behavioural support are supported through the Special Education Program or may be referred, through the principal, to the contracted counselor who comes to the school once a week. Since this counselor has limited hours, students are seen on the basis of need. Parents can also request counseling services on a fee basis. At the **secondary** school level, students often require support for their academic needs, their emotional/spiritual needs, and/or their choices when deciding on a college or career.

Secondary Academic Support

Students have many important choices to make in regarding course selection and the particular programs they can choose. Both ACSS and the Ministry of Education in British Columbia have guidelines that must be met in order to graduate. Academic support is provided in the following ways:

- Keeping students informed of the current requirements of the Ministry of Education Graduation Program
- Ensuring that all Grade 12 students have all their courses in place for graduation in September of their graduating year
- Reviewing the graduation list after 3rd term reports cards go out and determining a communication strategy, in conjunction with administration, for those who might not

graduate

- Communicating with grade 12 students, parents and appropriate coordinators, about students who possibly won't graduate in May/June
- Monitoring and assisting all student course selections
- Coordinating Course Planning meetings with students and parents, in communication with appropriate coordinators
- Coordinating course description information for all students, in conjunction with administration
- Academic Probations: Working in conjunction with administration in the follow up process for students
- Reviewing report cards with failing students
- Open door counseling for teachers and students

Secondary College and Career Support

College and Career support is provided in the following ways:

- Providing students with corporate and individual support for college and career planning
- Ensuring that students are aware of entrance requirements, application forms, information sessions and due dates regarding their post-secondary plans
- Coordinating and/or informing students of college and career fairs and appropriate related activities.
- Ensuring that students are aware of bursary and scholarship information, application forms and due dates
- Confirming each Grade 12 student's post-secondary plans, and providing a summary of those plans to the Bursary/Scholarship Committee

Secondary Personal and Emotional Support

- A school counselor is available for students who seek or may need personal support. This counselor provides interim counseling for such students, and promptly prepares out-of-school support, if needed.
- The counselor works with the administrator in charge of student discipline regarding issues of harassment, potential societal/social challenges and other disciplinary behaviour.
- The counselor monitors the status of those students who were seen previously.
- An open door is available to students who need personal support for issues in their lives.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

Definition

Extra curricular activities are those that the school offers in addition to what is required by Abbotsford Christian School or the Ministry of Education. They are the activities that extend beyond the regular classroom and beyond the core curriculum. They are usually "not for credit". They involve choice on the part of students and are usually offered outside of the regular timetable. Sometimes the school may designate an "activity" time in the timetable that is dedicated to these kinds of activities.

Purpose

The purpose of these activities can be varied. They often have an exploratory side to them. They offer an opportunity for students to discover their talents and interests. They can also offer an opportunity to excel in a particular area. These activities are meant to help students learn how they can best use their gifts and abilities to serve God.

Kinds of Activities (and some examples)

- Athletics (cross country, volleyball, basketball, track and field)
- Arts (visual, dramatic, dance, literary)
- Integrated performances (coffee house, musicals, drama productions)
- Academic challenges (math contests, spelling bees, geography challenge, model UN)

- Service (in school or in community)

Deciding what to offer

Decisions about which extra-curricular activities to offer should be made at each campus. If issues arise, or there is concern about consistency from one campus to the other, this should be discussed by the Leadership Team.

The following factors will be considered when making decisions about which activities will be offered:

- How this activity fits with the school's mission
- Balance and variety of offerings so that the interests of most students are served
- Consistency from one campus to the other
- Continuity from year to year
- Giftedness of staff and community resource people
- Work load of staff
- Time commitment required of students
- Availability of facilities
- Scheduling

Resourcing

Personnel

Personnel can include staff members, parents and community volunteers. Extra-curricular loads for staff members are distributed as fairly as possible. At all campuses a point system is used. Sometimes more hours are required and this can be balanced with an adjusted teaching load and/or a stipend.

Finances

ACS is committed to providing as many opportunities as possible for students without extra cost. At the elementary school, all extracurricular activities are paid for by the school budget. At the middle school, extra curricular activities are paid through the budget and school fundraising. At the secondary school, all students are credited with a certain amount for their individual fund raising account and are given opportunities to raise the rest of the necessary funds for their extracurricular participation.

Facilities

ACS is blessed with wonderful facilities. Good cooperation between the campuses allows for maximizing their use.

ATHLETICS

Interscholastic athletics at ACS must fit with our Mission Statement and Christian worldview. Each human being is created by God to praise and serve Him. Body, mind and soul are interdependent and form a whole which cannot be separated. The whole person is called to be an instrument of service to God and others.

Physical activity can influence for good or evil. In and through physical activity one can choose to serve self or God. Christian school athletics should educate students to use expressive movement, create beauty and drama, enjoy activity, develop good health, make wise decisions, accept joy and disappointment, and go beyond self to develop Christian community. God's gift of sport-play, woven into the fabric of human nature, should, above all, show outward evidence of the inner desire to glorify Him.

Interscholastic athletics under responsible Christian leadership can serve God and others. Education for expressive play and responsible action promotes a program in which students learn:

Character development – integrity, respect, self-knowledge, acceptance of joy and disappointment, commitment, perseverance, etc
Leadership skills
Physical skills
Team work and cooperation

Guidelines for Athletic Directors

Athletic directors (AD) are designated to coordinate the athletic program at a school. They develop and maintain a comprehensive athletic program which seeks the highest development of all participants, and which respects the individual dignity of every athlete. They consider the well-being of the entire student body (eg. inclusiveness, other extra curricular programs, gender equity, etc.) as fundamental in all decisions and actions. They organize, direct, and promote an interscholastic athletic program that is an integral part of the total educational program. The athletic director reports directly to the school principal. The following guidelines should be kept in mind in coordinating the program.

Selecting and Supervising Coaches

Because we are a small school, we are dependent on community coaches. All coaches will fill out a BC School Sports http://www.bcschoolsports.ca/pdfs/CommCoach_appform.pdf application form, supply references (which must be checked) and a criminal record check. They must sign the BC School Sports coaches' code of conduct, as well as the ACS Coach's Contract (*Appendix II*). Each coach will be observed occasionally by the athletic director. At times, the athletic director may wish to conduct an evaluation of the coach. This is an opportunity for the coach to receive affirmation and some constructive feedback. Coaches should be given the opportunity to attend coaching workshops and/or begin by working alongside a more experienced coach.

Organizing and Managing Events

The AD usually organizes schedules, game schedules and tournaments. If a coach wishes to change the schedule, it must be approved by the AD so that the big picture can be taken into account. While the athletic director usually plans an event and is often present, the supervision of an event that we are hosting may be delegated. Athletic directors work together to use the school-wide gym space efficiently.

Budgeting and Fees

The school (through the campus budget and vending machine profits) covers many of the fees of the athletic program. Beginning at grade 9, students are also asked to pay a user fee for each sport. There may be a user fee for middle school students who participate on a secondary team.

Clothing and Uniforms

Beginning in grade 7, basic uniforms are supplied through the athletic budget. All school uniforms or clothing bought for athletes must use the approved school logo and colours; everything must be bought from the official school supplier. All purchases must be approved by the athletic director.

Beginning in Secondary School, if a team is interested in purchasing a team warm-up, team jacket, team bag, team T-shirt or any other team accessory, the money to pay for the accessory must come from a donation made to the team or from a team fundraiser. Team players are not to be asked to purchase these items with their own money. All fundraisers and sponsorships must be approved by the athletic director. Teams are required to wear the team uniform provided by the school. No team may change or add to the uniform. Team sponsorship (financial contributions for special privileges for a team) should be limited to the Secondary School.

Team eligibility

Recruitment policies as outlined by BC School Sports must be followed. Generally, students should play at their own grade level. Only in exceptional circumstances should students be asked to play up. The intent is to value all levels of play and to give as many players the opportunity to participate. Parent approval must be obtained if students are moved up.

Seasons of Play

Seasons of play follow the seasons as outlined by BC School Sports. Each sport needs equal time to prepare for its season of play. In some cases that may require some flexibility on the part of the coaches and players. In cases of conflict, the AD will set the schedule. Coaches should not put pressure on athletes to avoid participating in two sports simultaneously.

At times, coaches may run open gym for particular sports outside of the regular season of play. Care must be taken not to interfere with the seasons of play of other sports. All these activities must be approved by the athletic director.

Risk Management

Athletic directors must always be aware of potential risks to health and safety. AD's should make sure that coaches have medical numbers for their team members and are aware of any potential health issues that athletes may have.

Appeals Process

During the course of the year, misunderstandings or problems between athletic directors, coaches, staff members, students, and / or parents can arise. This is often the result of a lack of communication between those involved. ACS' policy for dealing with these situations and complaints is consistent with the teachings found in scripture (Matthew 18 and Ephesians 4):

- All questions, problems, or complaints should be discussed with the person directly involved before anyone else is drawn in.
- If these discussions do not lead to satisfactory resolution, it should then be brought to the athletic director or appropriate administrator.
- If the resolution cannot be achieved at the administration level, it should be presented to the Executive Director of the entire system.
- Finally, when all of the above steps have been taken without resolution, the problem will be submitted to the School Board through written appeal. It will then be placed on the agenda of the School Board at its regularly scheduled meeting.

Communication

Communication with staff members, administration, office staff, coaches, parents and athletes is critical to the effective running of the program. All communication should be in advance as much as possible and easily accessible to all stakeholders.

Care must be taken in communication must be copied to the AD. Scheduled interviews with the media must be approved by the athletic director. Coaches must be trained to answer media questions, as representatives of the school.

Guidelines for Coaches

Coaches are an invaluable part of the education process at ACS. They are expected to adhere to the Athletics Policy and uphold the mission of the school. The athletic director is there to assist and support the work of the coaches. Coaches report directly to the athletic director. Please refer to Guidelines for Athletic Directors for additional information.

All coaches will fill out a BC School Sports (add link) application form, supply references (which must be checked) and a criminal record check. They must sign the BC School Sports coaches' code of conduct. Each coach will be observed occasionally by the athletic director. At times the athletic director may wish to conduct an evaluation of the coach. This is an opportunity for the coach to receive affirmation and some constructive feedback. Coaches should be given the opportunity to attend coaching workshops and/or begin by working alongside a more experienced coach.

Assistant coaches must also be approved by the AD and report to the athletic director.

Coaches contracts

All coaches will sign a contract outlining their duties and expectations. (*Appendix II*).

Team Selection and Participation

Team selection and participation varies with different grades. From grade 4 to 7 we encourage maximum participation by all students who express interest and desire to participate in any sport. At higher levels, the selection process begins with the possibility of not all students being able to make a team.

Elementary School:

Athletics at the elementary school may consist of:

- cross country
- track and field
- noon hour intramurals
- running club.

All students in Grades 4 and 5 may sign up for cross country and intramurals. All students in Grades 4 and 5 are automatically involved in track and field. Most practices happen during P.E. time. Students who attend the Christian Schools Track and Field meet have extra noon hour practices. All students, K-5, may join the running club. If students sign up for cross country, they must also be part of the running club which meets two recesses a week. Coaching for these activities is part of teachers' extra curricular responsibilities.

Grade 6

- All students who meet the three criteria (behaviour, school work and attitude) for being on school teams are included on the team
- All team members are given equal playing time
- Most practices are held at break or lunch time
- Students participate in one tournament and games as arranged by the athletic director and/or coach

Grade 7

- All students who meet the three criteria (behaviour, school work and attitude) for being on school teams are included on the team. All team members are given equal playing time
- Practices are held after school
- Students participate in tournaments and games as arranged by the athletic director and/or the coach

Grade 8

- All students may try out for the team. If there are too many students, the coach may cut the team to an appropriate number to make coaching manageable and to allow students enough playing time to develop their skills. All students on the team must meet the three criteria (behaviour, school work and attitude) for being on the team.
- As much as possible, all team members are given equal playing time in league games
- Practices are held after school
- Students participate in two to four weekend tournaments
- Students participate in league play

Secondary

- Athletics at the Secondary School is an opportunity for selected students with greater interest, desire and higher levels of skill proficiency to develop their talents in competition with students from other schools. The head coach has ultimate responsibility for team selection.
- Every effort should be made to give substantial time to all team members. Equal participation in practice and a reasonable amount of playing time in actual game

situations during exhibition games and some league games is the goal. As the season progresses (eg. playoffs), players' roles and playing time may change. As many athletes as possible will be given playing time, but each player will not necessarily play in every game.

- Athletics is competitive and one goal of athletics at ACS is to be successful and win, but not at the expense of the athletes.

Home Schooled Students

- Students who are homeschooled and who embrace the mission of ACS may be eligible to participate in athletics at ACS.
- Students must agree to all guidelines for athletes. At the Secondary level they must sign a code of conduct.
- Students will be subject to the same team selection guidelines as students enrolled at ACS.
- Fees for the sport (eg. Participation, uniform, etc.) plus an additional sport specific course fee, to be determined yearly by the Leadership Team, must be paid.
- Students must meet all criteria under section D8 of the *BC School Sports Competitive Rules and Regulations*.

Practices

Successful practices are well planned so that all students have equal opportunity to learn and practice new skills. Times for practices are scheduled by the AD.

Administrative Duties

- Seasons of play follow the seasons as outlined by BC School Sports. Each sport needs equal time to prepare for its season of play. In some cases, that may require some flexibility on the part of the coaches and players. In cases of conflict, the AD will set the schedule. Coaches should not put pressure on athletes to avoid participating in two sports simultaneously.
- Coaches must be familiar with the school's athletic policy.
- Coaches are responsible for managing their teams so that school rules and dress codes are followed.
- Coaches must communicate expectations and schedules to athletes and their parents. It is encouraged to have a meeting with parents of the players at the beginning of the season.
- Transportation must follow school guidelines – all drivers must have \$2M worth of liability insurance and students must be picked up by a parent (not a peer student driver unless there is parent communication to the coach). As much as possible, team members should travel together. All students must be supervised until they are picked up from both home and away games.
- Coaches are responsible for documenting the signing out and return of all uniforms and the issue of any other equipment such as medical kits and water bottles. The AD should have a copy of all assignments.
- Copies of all notices given to team members and/or parents must be given to the AD and other staff members as required by the campus.
- Coaches or staff sponsors should notify other staff members via email if players will miss classes.
- Any mementos of the season that are given to players, must be mission appropriate and approved by the AD.

Guidelines for Teacher Sponsors

Teacher sponsors are responsible for making sure that safety protocols and ACS guidelines are followed during all team activities. They should also make sure that all communications from the team reach the appropriate staff members.

Guidelines for Athletes

Athletics are an important part of the educational program at Abbotsford Christian School. Our program emphasizes participation, teamwork and skill building.

Participation in athletic activities is a privilege for students in our school. Each student who participates on any school team is a representative of our school and a representative of Christ. As a result, the school requires athletes to meet a basic set of criteria for participation on school teams:

Behaviour

Any behaviour requiring a school suspension may result in withdrawal from a school team. A pattern of consistently negative behaviour observed by any staff member in the school may also result in withdrawal from a team. At the Secondary level, a code of conduct (*Appendix III*) is signed by students.

School Work

At the Elementary School, the completion of assignments is monitored by the homeroom teacher.

At Middle School, any student with incomplete assignments at the time of a game, tournament, or practice will be unable to participate. This does not mean that the student is off the team, but that he or she will be unable to participate until assignments are completed. The homeroom teacher and the coaches will be responsible for making this decision.

At the Secondary School, athletes will follow Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities Policy (see Secondary Handbook)

Effort and Attitude

Attendance at practices, willing participation in drills and activities (“coach-ability”), active encouragement of others, and commitment to functioning as a team player are expected.

Guidelines for Parents

Parents and guardians are expected to be supportive of the school’s philosophy and practice in athletics. Parents should attend the team meeting organized by the coach at the beginning of the season so they understand expectations and schedules. Parents should also read all handouts and check the website regularly so that they are up-to-date with information. When attending athletic events, parents are seen as ambassadors of ACS. As with students, we expect parents to cheer “for” not “against”.

SECTION 05 – LIVING IN COMMUNITY

DISCIPLING STUDENTS AT ABBOTSFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

At ACS, we commit to live faithfully with our Lord both personally and communally. Part of that commitment is to work side by side in a harmonious community. At ACS students are intentionally taught what it means to live in community. This education happens throughout the day but also in programs or events such as Second Step, class meetings, Anchor times, Health and Career Education and Bible Class.

A good learning situation exists best in an atmosphere of mutual cooperation and respect between staff and student body. Some behaviours, such as disruptive behaviour, lack of respect for others and dishonesty, do not enhance community. Staff members will continue to work with a discipline system that helps students mature, that is consistent, that shows love and concern for students, and is fair yet firm.

The following are some Guiding Principles behind student discipline:

1. Abbotsford Christian School's Mission Statement will be the starting point for all interactions with students. The context must be providing a safe and secure learning environment by teaching/discipling students in being faithful, obedient, discerning servants of God and their neighbour.
2. Every staff member at Abbotsford Christian School is responsible for every student. This means that every staff member is the first line of interaction and discipling.
3. Discipline begins within the context of the classroom. Therefore, the classroom teacher is the main point of contact, encouragement and discipling for students.
4. Restoration is the goal of discipline.
5. Students will be dealt with as individuals within the context of their own unique situations and experiences.

When a student's behaviour jeopardizes a safe and secure environment, interferes with learning, or is destructive of property, the typical model of dealing with discipline would involve the following:

1. Normally staff members are expected to monitor/record and engage students in the area of supervision.
2. In the event that a student is involved in repeat incidents, the staff member is expected to contact the student's parents or guardians, with the intent of preventing escalation. Sharing this with administration as appropriate is important.
3. If further incidents or significant infractions occur, the staff member will refer the student to the appropriate school administrator.
4. Further discipline and restoration will be governed by individual campus guidelines and at the discretion of the campus administration (see campus handbooks later in this section)

HARASSMENT PREVENTION

Purpose

In support of the ACS Mission Statement, the Harassment Prevention Policy seeks to create and nurture a harassment-free community.

Definition of Harassment/Bullying

The following conditions distinguish bullying from other forms of aggressive behaviour:

- **Power:** There is usually an imbalance of power between the child who bullies and the child being victimized. This can be a result of physical size and strength as well as other factors such as status within the peer group.
- **Frequency:** Bullying is generally not a random act. Rather, it is a frequent and repeated action targeted at a specific victim.
- **Intent to Harm:** A child who bullies generally does so with the intent to physically or emotionally harm the other child.
- **Unequal Levels of Affect:** In a bullying situation, there is often a strong emotional reaction from the victim and little or no emotional reaction from the bully.

Harassment

It is our goal at ACS to create and nurture a harassment-free environment. We expect the students and staff to treat everyone with respect and dignity. Harassment includes, but is not limited, to the following:

- Any unwanted conduct or comments; written or verbal, of a sexual, racial, or derogatory nature. This includes electronic communication (texting, blogging, emailing etc.)
- Visual drawings, posters, cartoons, or photos that are derogatory in nature
- Any unwanted physical advances, touching, blocking, or inappropriate bumping and grazing
- Any resolution that includes physical violence, provoked or otherwise
- Retaliation for having reported such incidents

Harassment can often make a school experience difficult. Reporting the incident allows the problem to be dealt with. Discipline action for harassment may include suspension or expulsion.

Students should report all incidents of harassment to the administration, a teacher, or the school counselor. Each campus must have an effective and appropriate reporting procedure.

Each campus will initiate and support the following responses to harassment incidents:

- Strategies to support the victims of bullying incidents:
 1. Ensuring that the victim feels safe in reporting the incident.
 2. Ensuring that the victim feels taken seriously and can trust that the situation will be addressed.
 3. When necessary, giving the victim guidance in avoiding further bullying situations and learning what to do in a harassment situation (assertiveness training, etc.)
- Strategies for working with a person who exhibits bullying behaviour:
 1. Encouraging the person to take responsibility for their actions,
 2. Ensuring that there are consequences for repeat offenders,
 3. Communicating with parents regarding the incidents involving a student,
 4. Providing necessary review of harassment prevention skills for the person involved,
 5. Empathizing with the person and providing necessary support and assistance.
- Motivate the silent majority to take responsibility for harassment issues.
- Ensure that reconciliation is the ultimate goal whenever we are dealing with a harassment situation.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

During the course of the year, misunderstandings or problems between teachers, students, and/or parents can arise. This is often the result of lack of communication between those involved. ACS' policy for dealing with these situations and complaints is consistent with the teachings found in scripture (Matthew 18 and Ephesians 4):

- All questions, problems, or complaints should be discussed with the teacher before anyone else is involved.
- If these discussions do not lead to satisfactory resolution, it should then be brought to the appropriate administrator.
- If the resolution cannot be achieved at the administration level, it should then be presented to the Executive Director of the entire system.
- Finally, when all of the above steps have been taken without resolution, the problem will be submitted to the School Board through written appeal. It will then be placed on the agenda of the School Board at its regularly scheduled meeting.
- Conflicts that are not resolved, may be referred to the Ombudsperson. See Board Policy



SECTION 06 – APPENDICES
**APPENDIX I–REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A
RESOURCE**

Request for Reconsideration of a Resource

Person making request:

Name: _____

Phone # or email: _____

Resource in question:

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

What is your concern? Be specific.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



APPENDIX III – PLAYERS CODE OF CONDUCT

Abbotsford Christian Athletic Code of Conduct and Discipline

Procedures

Abbotsford Christian students who participate in athletics are representatives of the school and representatives of Christ. Representing the school involves displaying the philosophy of the school in our actions and words. Consequently, athletes are expected to exhibit exemplary behavior both in and out of school. Athletes will face disciplinary action if their conduct does not uphold the philosophy of the school or set a positive model for Abbotsford Christian Athletics.

1. Academic Eligibility Requirements

- a. Academic performance must be maintained at acceptable levels. It is the responsibility of the athlete to manage his/her time wisely. He/she will complete all homework, class work, and exams. Athletes are responsible for obtaining all assignments and completing all missed work resulting from classes missed due to a scheduled contest. Failure to do so may result in probation, suspension or dismissal from the team.
- b. An athlete who has been excused from PE for medical reasons may not practice or participate in games that day unless exceptional circumstances are warranted.
- c. An athlete must maintain a minimum mark of three for effort and conduct. Failure to meet these requirements will result in a written warning. A second failure of the requirements carries a one week suspension from team practice and play. The third notice carries a two week suspension from team practice and play. If further infractions occur after the third notice, the athlete may become ineligible for participation in athletics for the remainder of the school year.

2. School Day Attendance

- a) Athletes must be in attendance at school no later than 11:00 am on practice and game days to participate in athletics.
- b) Athletes will not participate in practices or games if they have been suspended. This includes an in school suspension.

3. Care of Uniform and Equipment

- a) An athlete is responsible for the uniform and equipment that is signed out to him/her. The athlete is financially responsible for lost or damaged equipment.

4. Sportsmanship

A. An athlete will treat everyone with respect:

- I. treat teammates, coaches, opponents, event organizers, and spectators with respect
- II. respect and accept with dignity the decisions of officials
- III. be generous in winning and graceful in losing

B. An athlete will exercise self-control at all times:

- I. remember that there is no place in sport for drugs and alcohol
- II. refrain from the use of foul or profane language
- III. refrain from physical force outside the rules of the game

4. Sportsmanship continued

C. An athlete will play fair:

- I. play within the rules and the spirit of the rules of the game at all times.

D. Any athlete who is assigned a card in volleyball or a technical foul in basketball may not be allowed to participate in the remainder of the athletic contest. The athlete may be required to write a letter of apology to the referee and give a copy to the athletic director before he/she participates in future athletic contests.

5. Alcohol, Drugs and Illegal Activities

Athletes agree not to use tobacco, alcohol or any unprescribed substance. Also, any offence considered illegal in the eyes of the law (excluding minor traffic offences) may be considered to be in violation of the code. If an athlete is at a location where drugs or alcohol are being used by minors, the athlete is obligated to pursue all means possible to leave the premises immediately. If the school believes that the most expeditious means to leave were not taken, the student is presumed to have participated in the activity in fact, as well as spirit. Consequences for a first violation: the athlete may be removed from the team for a period of 4 weeks. This would include practice and game situations. If an athlete was in attendance but not participating, the suspension length could be changed. A second violation may result in the athlete being removed from all athletic activities for the remainder of the year.

I _____ have read the Athletic Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures agreement. I realize that with my choices are consequences. I will accept the consequences listed if I fail to adhere to the Athletic Code of Conduct.

Athlete's Name (Please Print) Athlete's Signature Date

I give permission for my son/daughter to participate in the Athletic Program at Abbotsford Christian Secondary School. I have read and understand the Athletic Code of Conduct.

Parent's Name (Please Print) Parent's Signature Date

Vince Van Dyk – Athletic Director

Julius Siebenga - Principal

APPENDIX IV - CURRENT OFFERINGS (YEARLY REVIEW)

Cross Country – Gr. 4 – 12	Fall
Volleyball – Gr. 6 – 12	Fall
Basketball – Gr. 6 - 12	Winter
Track and Field – Gr. 4 – 12	Spring
Golf – Gr. 8 - 12	Spring