

Parent Handbook

AD2019 - 2020 School Year

Starkville Christian School
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Dear Parents:

We praise and thank God for calling us to serve Him by assisting you nurture and train your child in Christ. And we salute you for accepting the personal sacrifices you and your family must make to provide this opportunity for your child.

The quality education your child receives here at Starkville Christian School has been entrusted to us and will be exercised through our ministries in the classroom, on the playing fields, on field trips, in the parking lot, in the community and in our homes. We accept this awesome responsibility, recognizing our total dependence upon and confidence in God's providential guidance, empowering and superintendence.

By entrusting your child to our care, you affirm your confidence in all of us at SCS. We realize our lives are to be models of Christian character and godliness. We pledge to serve you, your child and our Lord Jesus to the best of our Holy Spirit-enabled abilities. Please pray for us daily!

Robert G. Sweet, Founding School Board Chairman

FOREWARD

This Handbook is designed to supply information helpful to you as a Starkville Christian School parent. It will not answer all questions concerning the School's program. It will, however, provide a basis for intelligent discussion and the systematic development of more adequate guides and policies, to the end SCS will truly honor God and enable each student to be effectively prepared for His service.

We ask that you please read carefully the following information which addresses School policies affecting you and your child. Please keep this Handbook in a handy place for future reference. Speak to Principal Witbeck about any questions you have or concerns regarding anything contained here. We earnestly solicit and expect your full support and assistance to make our School's ministries God-honoring and its environment pleasant and conducive to godly maturation.

The standard of performance at Starkville Christian School for faculty and students is nothing less than what the Lord Jesus Christ wills, as revealed in the Scriptures. Nothing but the best should be offered to Him, "And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."¹

STARKVILLE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL HISTORY

During Fall and Winter '95/96, the Lord put the need for fully Christian education upon the hearts of several Starkville area parents. Initially, it appeared that home-schooling was the preferred method since God assigns responsibility for children's primary care-giving to parents. But parents are not to be God's only caregivers. The Holy Spirit gifts others who share the parents' worldviews, and skilled in developing children's characters and teaching them language skills, factoring, and in developing exploring and inquiring minds. Parents should seek out these gifted and skilled communicators to assist in the nurture and training of the parents' children. The extent of government in children's lives should be minimal. But how could parents obtain these resources? After much prayer and seeking God's guidance, and in response to God's clear call to Randall S. "Randy" Witbeck and his wife Lynn, it was concluded God was indeed leading them to establish a thoroughly biblical Christian school. Accordingly, Randy and Lynn, and her pastor father Robert G. "Bob" Sweet incorporated Starkville Christian School as a not-for-profit Mississippi corporation. The first school year commenced in August 1996 with nine boys in grades 1-6 and a two-teacher faculty in facilities provided rent free by the Wesley Community Church of the Nazarene. In January 1997, a K-4/5 class was added. The 1996/97 school year ended with an enrollment of 17 and three teachers.

In August 1998, the School dedicated its new 10,000 sq. ft. building at 303 Lynn Lane. In November 2004, a second building that includes a gym, cafeteria, and 10 classrooms was added. In May 2016, an additional five acres were purchased for future growth. God's very visible provision of the School's facilities, equipment and furnishings is most impressive. Less visible, but far more impressive is His provision of godly and well-qualified teachers, a Principal/Administrator, a Business Manager, Board members, and parents, who in response to their sense of God's guidance, entrust their precious children to our care. Surely, Starkville Christian School's future will bring God even greater glory than its glorious past.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Starkville Christian School affirms:

1. that all things have been created so the Triune God may be glorified in and through them.
2. that God by His wise covenant arrangement has appointed parents to be responsible for training their children to know and love God, for His glory and their blessing.
3. that this training may be continued under the parents' responsible supervision in a school which extends the biblical God-honoring, Christ-centered programs begun at home.
4. that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are inerrant, man's only infallible rule of faith and practice.
5. that man was created by the direct act of God and in God's own image.
6. that Adam and Eve, in yielding to Satan's temptation, fell and in their fall, all mankind came under God's wrath and curse.
7. that all men are born in sin.
8. that God created unique roles for men and women. Biblical marriage is limited to a covenant relationship between a man and a woman.
9. that salvation and eternal life are only through Jesus' substitutionary atonement for sin by the shedding of His blood in death upon Calvary's Cross.

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

MISSION STATEMENT

“The purpose of Starkville Christian School is to assist parents fulfill their responsibility to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

The role of the school is that of a delegated authority, extending parental instruction through small group instruction and training in spiritual, academic, social and physical disciplines. For this reason, open and continuous communication between parents and the school staff is of utmost priority.

SCS PHILOSOPHY

Starkville Christian School is:

GOD GLORIFYING, recognizing all of life must be seen from God's eternal purpose of creating a people for Himself . . . a people who will love Him freely without reservation and who will worship Him, giving honor and glory fitting to Him alone.

CHRIST-CENTERED, recognizing and celebrating that, “There is no area of life over which Christ has not said, ‘Mine!’² So whether it is spelling, or reading, or science, or music or computer . . . whatever area of study . . . it is, by God's design, under the authority of Jesus. $2+2 = 4$ because God made it so. And objects fall toward the center of the earth because of God's law, the Law of Gravity.

PARENTAL, recognizing God, in His wisdom, entrusts His children to parents. And He holds parents accountable to bring their children up “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”³ Parents teach their children to walk, to talk, to feed and dress themselves, to ride a bicycle, to skate, to behave. Parents thrill as their children explore God's world even as the parents control their children's environments and the scope of their explorations. And parents teach their children about God, explicitly as they read the Bible and Bible stories with them, as they study and worship with them in Sunday School and Church, as they teach them to praise God and sing about Jesus, as they kneel in prayer with them beside their beds. Parents also teach implicitly as their children watch them live each day in “good times,” and when times are difficult as well.

Starkville Christian School extends the parents' personal parental nurturing into a small group environment. SCS teachers and staff are keenly aware of our high privilege of assisting parents educate their children to God's glory.

COMMITTED TO CHRISTIAN VALUES declaring:

- ◆ God is!
- ◆ God is near. He will draw near to all who draw near to Him.⁴
- ◆ God's Word is inerrant, our only infallible rule of faith and practice.

- ◆ Salvation is only by grace through faith in Jesus' atoning death on Calvary's Cross. There is no other way to be rightly related to God except through a personal relationship with Jesus, as Lord.⁵
- ◆ God has created us to do good works which He ordained for us before the foundation of the world.⁶ God expects and requires us to be industrious.
- ◆ God will provide for His children's every need.⁷ God's provisions are always adequate.
- ◆ God expects and demands personal integrity.⁸
- ◆ God expects and demands personal holiness.⁹
- ◆ God expects and demands that we be charitable.¹⁰
- ◆ God expects and demands us to persevere.¹¹

FAITH BASED, with fully committed Christian teachers, staff and directors who trust in Jesus Christ alone, look to Him for their salvation and His provision for all their needs, spiritual and temporal and for all of the School's needs, including His teachers and staff, His students (just the right number and "chemistry" in each class), adequate facilities and indeed, everything. To keep tuition affordable for our families, and as an expression of faith, Starkville Christian School tuition is set at approximately 75% of per student cost. Further, the School does not solicit funds from any source to make up this shortfall, but instead, through fervent prayer, relies upon God alone to provide all resources necessary to accomplish the School's ministries. God is faithful!

NON-DISCRIMINATORY, Starkville Christian School does not discriminate in enrollment or in the provision of its programs or services on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin. All parents who desire their child to receive a God-glorifying, Christ-focused, and faith-based education, and who consent to Starkville Christian School's Statement of Faith, Mission Statement, and Educational Philosophy are invited to apply.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Starkville Christian School is a Not-for-Profit Corporation, organized under the laws of Mississippi and recognized as a tax-exempt organization under the provisions of Article 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

SCHOOL BOARD

The Starkville Christian School Board meets quarterly and is self-perpetuating. Members are elected by the Board. The Board exercises ultimate authority and responsibility for all School policies, administering these policies through its annual employment of and supervision of the Administrator/Principal. Communication between the Board and faculty/staff/parents will ordinarily be through Principal Witbeck.

ADVISORS

The School Board recognizes its need for godly counsel regarding parental, student, community and other issues. Accordingly the Board seeks out individuals to pray with and for the Board, and provide Directors their individual and collective wisdom and judgment regarding matters referred to them and/or issues they believe the Board should address.

REGISTRATION

A completed Application, Compliance forms (financial and disciplinary), Certificate of Compliance (shot record), Birth Certificate, and non-refundable deposit are required in order for registration to be complete. All students must have a Mississippi Certificate of Immunization Compliance form on file in the school office before the first day of school. Immunization certificates may be obtained from the Oktibbeha County Health Department or your physician.

ADMISSIONS

Parents desiring to enroll their child in Starkville Christian School must understand that students are educated by Christian teachers under a worldview that declares Jesus Christ is Lord of every aspect of life. Acceptance of each student is at the Principal's sole prerogative and that after prayerful consideration he may dismiss any student who does not respect Starkville Christian School's spiritual standards or fails to properly cooperate in the educational process.

Students must be the proper age for enrollment (in grades K4-1st) by **September 1st**. After parents have completed the necessary documents for registration, the Principal will review the applications. Students are not admitted strictly on a first come, first serve basis; therefore, some applications may be rejected at this point and the parents will be notified. When a student's application is complete, an interview with the Principal will be scheduled. Payment of the registration fee will be required at the time of the interview.

SCS FINANCIAL POLICY

Starkville Christian School is a Christ-centered, faith-based ministry. As such, it meets its financial responsibilities solely through the financial faithfulness of its students' families and financial contributions from concerned individuals and prayer partners. Starkville Christian School receives no subsidies or grants from other sources. Therefore, the School's ministries are dependent upon the timely fulfillment of each family's monthly financial commitment. *(We reserve the right to adjust fees for tuition/registration either upward or downward due to any unforeseen, drastic economic changes.)*

1. If you elect a monthly financial commitment, payments are due on the FIRST of each month beginning in August and ending with the last payment due on May 1st. Any payment not received by the 15th day of the month will receive a \$20.00 late fee. If payment is not received by last day of the month, the student(s) will not be permitted to attend school until past due tuition and late fees are paid. If the monthly payment becomes 30 days or more past due on three separate occasions, the child(ren) covered under this policy will not be allowed to attend school until the entire yearly balance due for tuition and fees has been paid in full. **Any account not paid in full by May 10th will require cash payment. Students whose accounts have not been paid in full will not be allowed to participate in Field Day, school sponsored year-end trips, or in graduation ceremonies (kindergarten or high school). Report cards and diplomas will not be released to any student whose account is not paid in full.**
2. **If you are unable to meet the full-scheduled payment, you are required to notify the office in writing before the 15th of the month and make satisfactory arrangements.**
3. A \$20.00 charge will be assessed for returned checks. ***Any check returned as insufficient will require payment be made in cash or money order.***
4. Monthly statements are not sent; however a statement will be provided if requested.
5. All past due accounts must be made current to maintain priority registration for the following school year.
 6. If your child(ren) transfer to another school, all accounts must be paid in full before transcripts will be released.
 7. You are financially responsible for tuition and fees for the entire school year. Tuition and fees are due and payable on August 1st. However, you may elect to pay the entire tuition over 10 months, each month by the 1st of the month. Should you remove your child(ren) from Starkville Christian School, for reasons other than job transfer out of the local area or catastrophic illness of parent/student/sibling, you are still obligated to pay the remaining balance of tuition and fees, plus any costs of arbitration and/or collection.

Delinquent Accounts: On the date an account becomes 30 days past due, the student or students will be withheld from class. Any tests or quizzes missed will receive grades of zero.

TEXTBOOKS AND WORKBOOKS

Textbooks, after being paid for by the parents, will be issued to the student at the beginning of the school year. Although the books become the property of the student, we ask that all textbooks be well cared for and not abused in any way.

Rental textbooks: Some subjects require books rented by the school to the student. Parents are responsible for lost or damaged books.

STANDARDIZED DRESS CODE

Dress code requirements begin upon the student’s arrival at school and remain in effect until his/her departure. Students coming to school without the proper uniform may be sent to the office where parents will be notified. If a parent cannot be reached, the student will remain in in-school suspension the remainder of the day. Please make sure that uniform items are replaced when they become worn out or too small.

SHIRTS

Polo	
Colors	Navy blue, Forest green, White
Specifications	Solid long sleeve or short sleeve. At least one green shirt is required for all students. SCS logo is required. Shirts must remain tucked in during school hours.
Oxford	
Specifications	Oxford blue or white with button down collar (girls may wear Peter Pan collar). May be short or long sleeve. SCS logo required.
Clarifications for all shirts and blouses.	Shirts may not be tight, undersized or oversized. <u>Tails must be long enough to remain tucked during normal school activities.</u>
SCS t-shirt	SCS t-shirts may be worn on Fridays only . They may be purchased through the school office.
SCS sweatshirts	SCS designed sweatshirts with SCS approved logo

PANTS AND SHORTS (BOYS AND GIRLS)

Colors	Navy, Khaki
Specifications	Classic or traditional styles. Must come high enough for shirt to remain tucked in at all times. Must have belt loops, and regulation <u>belt is required</u> (exception: grades K-4 through 2 nd grade may wear elastic waist pant with no belt). Shorts may be no longer than the knee cap and no shorter than 5 inches from the floor when kneeling. Not permitted: Tight fitting pants/shorts, denim, corduroy, decorations, cargo pants, zip pockets

ACCESSORIES

Regulation belt	Black or brown leather with classic buckle (no cowboy or logo buckles)
Backpacks, Lunchboxes	Stretch belts with classic buckles may be worn in the following colors: black, brown, navy or khaki. Must be solid colors with no cartoons or large graphics. Backpacks must be able to fit in lockers (grades 5-12). No backpacks with wheels will be permitted for any grade level.

SHOES AND SOCKS

Shoes	Prefer tennis/athletic shoes. All shoes must be closed toe. Only tennis shoe type soles will be allowed on the gym floor. Not permitted: clogs, crocs, sandals, backless shoes, heels more than one inch.
Socks	Socks (solid navy, forest green, white, gray, or black) must be worn. In addition, girls may wear tights in solid navy, forest green, or white.

GIRLS CLOTHING (SPECIFICS)

Not permitted: Tight-fitting pants, denim, decorations, corduroy, extra pockets

Capri Pants/pants	Navy or Khaki classic or traditional capri pants/pants may be worn. The waist must be high enough to keep shirts tucked in and not be tight fitting. Regulation belt must be worn if belt loops are present.
Skirts/Skorts/Shorts	Navy, Khaki, Land's End plaid (hunter/classic navy), or J. C. Penney plaid. Shorts and skorts must come to the waist. The minimum length is 5 inches from the floor when kneeling. Regulation belt must be worn if belt loops are present.
Jumpers	Navy, Khaki, Dennis-LaRose plaid, Land's End plaid, or J.C. Penny plaid. Classic style (May have hip pockets and one chest. Zipper must be in back after 3 rd grade). Length rule applies.

THURSDAY UNIFORM FOR GRADES 7-12

Girls	Girls will wear SCS logo Oxford button down blouse (white or light blue) and khaki, navy, or plaid skirts or skorts (no shorts or capris).
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Boys	Boys will wear SCS logo Oxford button down shirt (white or light blue) with khaki or navy pants (no shorts). <u>Tails must be long enough to remain tucked during normal school activities.</u>
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OUTERWEAR PERMITTED *IN CLASS*

SWEATERS

Colors	Solid navy, forest green, or white. SCS logo required.
Specifications	The style may be crew, v-neck, vest, or cardigan. All sweaters require a shirt underneath that meets dress code.

COATS

Types	SCS team (basketball/baseball/softball) jackets, and SCS letter jackets. Windbreaker, fleece jacket, or vest in solid school colors (navy, forest green, white) with SCS logo.
Specifications	No hooded sweatshirts, no sweaters, nor jackets other than those listed above may be worn in class.

GENERAL: Parents and students should remember that our bodies are to be temples of the Holy Spirit. Further, we are not to call attention to ourselves. Whatever would distract students from their tasks here at School is inappropriate. Below are several examples:

- No hats are to be worn during class hours
- No sunglasses may be worn during class hours
- No excessive or inappropriate jewelry
- All necklaces must be worn inside the school uniform
- Boys may not wear earrings
- Girls may not wear extreme or excessive make-up
- No body piercing
- No black or extremely dark (gothic) nail polish
- No peace symbols or ying-yangs on items brought or worn to school

Tattoos:

Tattoos (temporary or permanent) are prohibited. This includes drawing and/or writing on the skin with ink or marker.

Boys hair:

All hair styles should be conservative in nature. Hair should be off the collar in back, neatly trimmed at the ears (earlobes must be visible), and off the eyebrows in the front. Boys should be clean-shaven.

Girls hair:

Hair must be neatly groomed in traditional styles. No unnatural colors are permitted. Public primping is not permitted.

The Administration reserves the right to deem certain hairstyles inappropriate.

FOOD SERVICE

SCS has contracted with Brian Lindner to provide food service for families who desire this service. The agreement between SCS and the food service provider prohibits all commercial foods from being brought into the cafeteria during lunch periods, regardless of its packaging. Payment for lunches must be made weekly no later than the Friday before. *Please make all checks payable to: Starkville Christian School and write lunch in the memo.* (There will be a \$20.00 charge on all returned checks.) **Please keep lunch and tuition checks separate.**

If you prefer, your child(ren) may bring lunches from home. Please do not send carbonated drinks. Students in grades K4-6 will not be able to purchase carbonated drinks during school hours. K4-6th grade students do not have access to a microwave or refrigerator. Please send soup or other hot items in a thermos and place an ice pack in lunches that need to be kept cold. Drinks and snacks are available for a minimal fee.

If a student does not have lunch ordered or brought from home when lunches are checked first period, they will be given an alternative lunch from the lunchroom and the parent will be billed by the food service provider.

Parents are encouraged to come eat with their child(ren) often. Your presence is very much appreciated by your children and their friends.

We expect the students to help maintain neatness and cleanliness. Each class is responsible for its area. All trash must be disposed of and the tables cleaned. Students in grades 7-12 will also sweep the floor and take out the trash.

TELEPHONE

Parents are encouraged to make sure their children are aware of transportation and social arrangements, and have all necessary materials before being brought to school each morning. It is unsettling to a child and to the class when he does not have school materials or is not sure of after-school arrangements. If it is necessary to get an important or urgent message to a student at school, please contact the school office at 662-323-7453. **Do not use text messaging to communicate with your child during school hours since they are not allowed to have their phones on while at school.** (Refer to the cell phone policy on page 17 for additional information regarding phones.)

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

Starkville Christian School uses video surveillance on the premises for student/staff safety and security.

SCHOOL HOURS

School begins at 8:00 a.m. For the convenience of parents who work, the gym doors will open at 7:30AM. Students are to come inside the gym/cafeteria area and be seated until the school day begins. Because teachers are preparing for class during this time, classroom doors as well as the

elementary building will be locked from 7:30 until 8:00. We ask that you call the school office to set up an appointment if you would like to meet with your child's teacher.

Kindergarten and elementary students will be escorted from the gym to their classrooms after pledges and prayer shortly after 8:00. Parents, it is your responsibility to see that your child arrives on time. Teachers and students have the right to not have instruction interrupted by late arrivals. In order not to interrupt pledges and morning prayer, K4-6th grade students who arrive after 8:00 will remain in the office until their class comes to the classroom. The exception to this rule will be on Tuesdays or other assigned "chapel" days when the class will be later in coming to the classroom.

When the school day is over, students will sit quietly in the hall in classroom order until their rides arrive. **Pick-up time for K4-6th grade is from 2:45-3:00. Pick-up time for grades 7-12 is from 3:00-3:15. Seventh period (for students in grades 7-12) does not end until 3:00. Please do not attempt to pick up these students until 3:00.**

AFTERCARE PROGRAM

At 3:15 your child will be taken to the gym and placed in the Aftercare Program. ***Aftercare is for grades K4-8th grade only.*** High School students will not be admitted to the Aftercare program. Aftercare fees begin at 3:15. At 3:15 you will see a cone (or some other obstruction) in the driveway. This is your notification to park your car in the parking lot (not on the driveway) and come to the gym to sign your child out. **Your child must be picked up from Aftercare by 5:30. There will be a late fee of \$5.00 for any part of each ½ hour that a student remains in Aftercare after 5:30.**

Aftercare fees should be paid weekly or monthly. **Fees for Aftercare will not be allowed to accrue past the last day of the month.** Failure to pay Aftercare fees will result in your child being removed from the Aftercare Program until fees are paid in full. **Monthly statements are not sent. Please contact the office if you are unsure of your balance.**

LOCKERS AND SCHOOL OWNED PROPERTY

Lockers are provided for upper grade students. Lockers, desks, and computers are the property of the school and are provided as a service for students. All school owned equipment—lockers, desks, computers—are subject to random or individualized searches. The contents may be examined by school authorities without the permission of the student at any time when, at the sole discretion of the school authorities, they deem it necessary to do so.

Lockers are to be kept neat and clean. Stickers are not allowed on any part of a locker. Students may not place anything on a locker that cannot be easily removed without affecting the surface of the locker. Students may not switch lockers with another student nor should they open or enter anyone else's locker. Students and/or parents are responsible to pay for any locker damage committed.

PARTIES

Socialization is an important aspect of every child's development. Accordingly, SCS may schedule school-wide parties such as: Harvest, Christmas, Valentines, Easter, and end-of-the year. These are

planned by the teachers in cooperation with the Principal and parents. Parties shall be held at the end of the school day.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING PARTIES: Please refrain from using the word “Halloween.” Students are not permitted to bring ghost, goblin, devil, witch or other inappropriate toys, pictures, etc. Christmas should teach the children of Jesus’ birth; therefore, Santa, reindeer, and other secular material will not be accepted.

Individual birthday parties shall be limited to the serving of refreshments during late afternoon after all class work has been completed. If you are planning a birthday party off-site, we request that if you are sending invitations through the school you send invitations to all the students in the class or all the girls or all the boys. Invitations will not be handed out on the school premises if you are not inviting all students in one of these categories.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is vital to each student's development, and for orderly school operations. Regular daily attendance at school is the responsibility of each student and his/her parents or guardians.

Even though the school will make an effort to notify parents of excessive absences, it is the responsibility of the parents and students to monitor absences and tardies. (Parents of students in grades 6-12 may monitor attendance through Teacherease.)

Perfect attendance will only be given to students with less than three tardies, no absences, no partial days, or less than three early departures (before 2:45 for elementary and 3:00 for high school).

TARDINESS:

1. At 8:00 an orange cone will be placed in the main drive. If you arrive after the cone is in place, you must park your car and **sign-in your student** at the main office. All students who arrive after 8:00 will be marked tardy. Unexcused tardies receive a zero for all work missed. The Administration will determine what is excused and unexcused.
2. Students not signed in by parents will receive an unexcused tardy.
3. **Penalties for tardies per semester (grades 8-12):**
Missing more than 15 minutes in a subject area class will be considered an absence.
1st offense: recorded
2nd offense: recorded
3rd offense: warning (pink slip)
4th offense: loss of break time—clean-up
5th offense: loss of break time—clean-up
6th offense: meeting with principal

ABSENCES:

Any elementary student arriving between 8:00 and 9:00 will be recorded as tardy. Elementary students being checked in after 9:00 and before 11:00 will be marked as a partial absence. Arrival

after 11:00 will be recorded as a full day absence. Students in grades 8-12 will be marked tardy or absent for each class period. If an 8th-12th grade student misses ten minutes in a subject area class, they will be marked absent for that subject.

Elementary students with twenty or more absences for the year, whether excused or unexcused, may be required to complete additional work in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

High school students with ten (10) absences in a one-semester class or twenty (20) absences in a two-semester class will not receive credit for those classes. Whether the absences are excused or unexcused does not change the credit ruling. The Administration may waive this requirement if it is determined that the absences are due to **long term illness**.

Any student who is absent will be unable to participate in extracurricular activities on the day(s) they are absent.

WRITTEN EXCUSES ARE REQUIRED WHEN A STUDENT IS ABSENT.

1. **EXCUSED** ABSENCES:

- a. Personal illness-At the School's discretion, a doctor's certificate may be required. **After ten absences in the same year, an excused absence will be given only with a note from a doctor. An excuse must be received in the office within 48 hours of the absence in order to be excused.**
- b. Death of a relative-Absences are limited to three (3) days unless reasonable cause may be shown by parent or guardian for a longer absence.
- c. Pre-scheduled appointments-Doctors' and other appointments should be scheduled for non-school time whenever possible. **An excuse must be received in the office within 48 hours of the absence in order to be excused.**
- d. Trips-Absence for trips will not be excused unless: permission is requested through the office **in advance**, the student is maintaining a passing grade in all subjects, and the student has not already had excessive absences. **Tests and exams will not be given before the absence.**
- e. Reasons for any other absence must be approved **in advance** by the Principal.

Assignments/tests/quizzes due the day you are absent are **due the day you return**. If they are assigned on the day you are absent, you will be allowed an extra day to complete them (**excused absences only**). (Special allowances may be made for extended illness.)

2. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:

Any absence not listed above will be considered an unexcused absence **and will result in zeroes for all work (tests, assignments, etc.) which would have been done during the time absent.**

3. WITHDRAWALS

If it becomes necessary for any reason for parents to withdraw their child during the school year, written notification must be received in advance of the withdrawal date. The notification should be received as early as possible and include a reason for withdrawal.

Parents/guardians are obligated for the full cost of tuition and fees for the entire school year regardless of whether or not they withdraw their child during this period, except in cases of the student's catastrophic illness or the parent's job transfer out the area. (See Financial Policy)

CHILD CUSTODY

At the time of enrollment, parents shall provide all relevant documents concerning custody or visitation of each student enrolled at Starkville Christian School. Parents of enrolled students shall have an ongoing duty to provide any documents and information relevant to a change in current custody or visitation rights to Starkville Christian School within seven days of change or at the time of reenrollment if the school has dismissed for summer break.

If a dispute arises, it may be grounds for non-admission or dismissal at the Principal's sole discretion.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Starkville Christian School reserves the right to have any student leave school, temporarily or permanently, if the student has any condition which the administration considers to be medically unsafe for that individual student and/or the entire school family.

When a child is absent from school, please contact the office to inform us of the absence. If your child is running a fever (100 degrees or higher before medication) they must be kept at home. If you are called by the office because your child is running a fever, vomiting, or has diarrhea, please come immediately to pick him/her up. Make sure your child is fever free for 24 hours (without medication) or has a doctor's excuse before they return to school. If your child has lice, you will be contacted and treatment will be required before they return to school.

Parents desiring SCS to administer medication during school hours should come to the office and complete a *Request for Medication Form* before medication (other than Tylenol or Advil) is administered.

Older students are to refrain from bringing medication to the school campus. ALL medicines should be turned in to the school office upon arrival.

INJURIES

The School will attempt to notify parents immediately in the event of any injury requiring medical attention. If the parent cannot be reached at the telephone number on the Student Information Form and immediate medical attention is necessary, SCS personnel will notify the physician listed and arrange for immediate attention. Accident reports will be filled out and kept on file in the office. Our SCS Safety and Security policy is set forth below.

NOTICE OF ASBESTOS COMPLIANCE

In December of 2018, Starkville Christian School contracted with Environmental Consultants, Inc. to bring our school into compliance with the AHERA regulations. On December 19, 2018, all building used by and under the control of Starkville Christian School were inspected by an EPA

certified inspector licensed by the state of Mississippi. The objective of the inspection was to identify, sample and analyze any suspect building materials. In addition to letters of exemption from our contractor, samples of the suspect materials were taken and analyzed by an EPA accredited laboratory.

We are pleased to announce that **no asbestos** was detected in any of the materials sampled. Based upon those findings, a Management Plan was written and has been submitted to the governor's office as required by law. Copies of the Inspection Report and Management Plan are on file for your review in the school's administrative office.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Concern for, and procedures for the safety and security of all persons, honors God who has created us in His own image. Therefore safety and security must be continually before all SCS personnel.

1. STUDENT PICKUP AND DROP-OFF:

- a. **Please do not park in the driveway** to drop off or pick up your child. If you would like to come inside the building, please park in the parking lot.
- b. If your child does not come when called in the afternoon for pick-up, you will be asked to pull around and get back in line (or park in the parking lot) in order for traffic to flow smoothly. Please encourage your child to respond quickly when called.

2. CAMPUS VISITORS:

- a. **All visitors must sign in and out through the front office** (in the elementary building) and must not significantly interfere with School activities.
- b. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education; however, they are not to loiter on school property nor disrupt class or other activities.
- c. Others, especially students' grandparents, pastors and youth workers are encouraged to visit the School. Every visitor is to be treated with honor.
- d. Students are not to bring friends to school without prior office approval.
- e. Should the actions or character of a visitor become suspicious, he will be approached by a teacher or the Principal and the office personnel alerted.

3. SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURES

- a. When the School is confronted with an emergency, such as dangerous or severe weather or mechanical failure *before the school day begins*, an announcement will be broadcast on the local television, the school answering machine, and the SCS Facebook site. **Generally**, SCS will be closed when the public schools are closed for inclement weather.
- b. When we experience severe weather *after the students have come to school*, you may rest assured that the SCS Administration is carefully monitoring the situation by means of the Noah Weather Alert System, WCBI, and the MSU Meteorology Department. Teachers and Staff are alerted through the school-wide PA system if it becomes necessary to have students exit their classrooms to move to a secure area. As a parent, feel free to pick-up your child anytime such an event occurs.

4. EARLY DEPARTURE

When a high school student (with driving privileges) becomes ill or must leave campus during the school day without prior knowledge of the parent, the student should come to the office to call his parents. An employee will request to talk to the parent prior to the student's departure. If

the student is able, he will take any tests or quizzes for the day and hand in homework before going home.

STUDENT DRIVING

Students in high school who have a driver's license and valid insurance are permitted to drive cars to school provided they follow proper safety procedures. Failure to follow good safety rules will result in the loss of this privilege. Many young children are on our campus; therefore, student drivers will be required to park in the church parking lot next door.

The administration reserves the right to search student vehicles during school hours or during school sponsored events.

STUDENT CONDUCT:

Starkville Christian School's first responsibility is the protection of all its students. The school and its entire staff take this responsibility very seriously. The school will respond immediately and appropriately to any threat to the safety of the school or any of its students or staff. Each case will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

1. **WEAPONS:** Students are prohibited from bringing weapons of any kind (knife, gun, explosives, etc.) onto the Starkville Christian School premises. Students are further prohibited from bringing weapons of any kind to any activity of Starkville Christian School, regardless of the location. Starkville Christian School reserves the right to determine the definition of a weapon on its premises or at its activities. Any violation will be grounds for suspension or expulsion.
2. **VIOLENCE OR THREATS:** Threats of violence or harm directed to another student, a staff member, or the school will be investigated by the school administration. Violations will be grounds for suspension or expulsion. The school may require students in these circumstances to obtain counseling, at family expense, from a Christian counselor or other professional agreeable to the school.
3. **BULLYING:** Bullying or harassment by students of other students or staff members is prohibited. This includes any form of electronic harassment or "cyber-bullying". If a student is found to be bullying or harassing another student or staff member, corrective steps will be taken as stated in the Discipline Policy.
4. **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT:** The biblical and philosophical goal of Starkville Christian School is to develop students into mature individuals who will be able to exhibit a Christ-like life. SCS retains the right to refuse enrollment to or to expel any student who engages in sexual immorality of any kind, as well as any student who condones, supports, or otherwise promotes such practices. It will be the sole determination of the school administration to determine if such misconduct has occurred. (I Thes. 4: 3-8, I Cor. 6:9-20, Eph. 5:3-5, Leviticus 20:13, Romans 1:26, 27)
5. **TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, AND OTHER DRUGS:** The possession, selling, or use of tobacco, or other illegal drugs at school or school functions will be considered sufficient grounds for

suspension or expulsion. If in the administrator's sole discretion there is evidence or strong suspicion of drug abuse, he will require that the student submit to drug testing at the parent's expense. If the student and/or parent refuse to have the student tested, the student will immediately be dismissed from the school. Notification of drug offenses will be made to the proper law enforcement officials.

There is usually a great deal of difficulty, emotional trauma, misunderstanding and hardship that comes when a student is accused of using or possessing alcoholic beverages, drugs or committing a sexually immoral act. SCS takes a strong stand against these things with the hope that students will learn that they do not need to experiment with such things for any reason. It is possible that students involved in such incidents will be suspended or expelled at the sole discretion of the Administration. Each case will be dealt with individually and the maturity level of the student, their past disciplinary record at the school, and the severity of the act in which they are involved will be taken into consideration for the decision.

6. CHEATING: Cheating shall be defined as giving or receiving information on a test or homework. Cheating will result in a zero in the subject involved, and other appropriate penalties will apply. Repeat offenders will be subject to dismissal.
7. GUM CHEWING: We are thankful for the fine facilities that the Lord has provided SCS. We expect the students to help maintain our building and grounds neatness and cleanliness. For this reason, chewing gum is not allowed on the School premises.
8. CONDUCT OFF SCHOOL PROPERTY: Students should always be mindful that their behavior off school property reflects either positively or negatively on their families, churches and Starkville Christian School. Inappropriate conduct off school property (including information found on "Facebook", other internet sites, and electronic devices) may be grounds for suspension or expulsion at the sole discretion of the administration.
9. CELL PHONES, SMART WATCHES, PERSONAL COMPUTERS, AND OTHER ELECTRIC DEVICES: SCS does not permit electronic devices such as personal computers, handheld games, etc. on school premises. Personal computers may be brought to school with special permission from the teacher or the administration for a limited time. They must remain in the teacher's room.

It is our policy that elementary students not bring cell phones to school. If a parent needs to drop one off in the office, it may be picked up by the student upon their departure. Students in grades 7-12 must turn their cell phones off while at school (including Aftercare). Smart watch alerts and notifications must be turned off as well. SCS permits use of cell phones (grades 7-12) only with specific permission from the teacher or administration.

First offense: The device will be immediately confiscated and returned to the parent when they have signed a letter stating that they will not allow their student to bring the device to school for a specified time period as determined by the administration.

Second offense: In addition to the consequence listed under the first offense the student will be in ISS (in-school suspension).

Third offense: If a device is taken up a third time, a behavioral issue will need to be addressed. The student may be dismissed from school for lack of cooperation.

Students who bring their own devices (computers/cell phones/smart watch etc.) to school are subject to a reasonable search if suspicion arises that the device contains evidence of a violation of school policy or the law.

10. FIELD TRIPS, SPORTING EVENTS, AND OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS: These events are opportunities for our students to observe what they have learned in the classroom, to enhance learning, and represent SCS. **Students who do not exhibit Christ-honoring behavior (example: failing to follow rules, blatantly defying authority, or having been on suspension) will not be allowed to participate. Students with incomplete assignments must have them turned in before being allowed to attend.** Any student who is absent due to illness will be unable to participate in extracurricular activities on days they are absent. **All school rules apply for field trips as well as school-sponsored events both on the school campus and away from it.**

IF AT ANY TIME THE SCHOOL FEELS THAT THE COOPERATION OF THE PARENTS IS LACKING, THE PARENTS WILL BE ASKED TO WITHDRAW THEIR CHILD(REN). ALSO, IF A STUDENT'S BEHAVIOR OR ATTITUDE INDICATES AN UNCOOPERATIVE SPIRIT OR ONE WHICH IS NOT IN HARMONY WITH THE SPIRIT AND STANDARDS OF STARKVILLE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, WHETHER OR NOT THERE HAS BEEN ANY DEFINITE BREACH OF CONDUCT, THE PARENTS WILL BE ASKED TO TRANSFER THE STUDENT TO ANOTHER SCHOOL

DISCIPLINE POLICY

SCS recognizes Five Steps to effective discipline:

1. Instruction: (Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:6)
2. Reinforcement: remind the student, helping him recognize he deserves and needs discipline.
3. Correction: the ultimate goal of discipline is training in responsibility for actions.
4. Restitution: right the wrong if possible (Ephesians 4:28)
5. Restoration and Reassurance: expressing love and concern for the one disciplined.

To carry out the parents' wishes for total character development, it is necessary the School follow Scriptural admonitions to correct their child(ren) if behavior violates appropriate and reasonable rules and procedures. There are occasions when paddling a child becomes necessary. Corporal correction is appropriate when a student willfully, repeatedly flaunts appropriate authority and/or so disrupts his environment others are significantly impacted. When warranted, corporal correction will be exercised by the Principal or a discipline-trained teacher under the following guidelines:

1. Every student will be clearly and repeatedly instructed in the proper behavior expected and required.
2. Every student will be informed when his behavior becomes inappropriate.
3. An offending student will be taken aside and his offense will be clearly discussed.
4. The Principal or a teacher will discuss spiritual applications.
5. Corporal correction will be administered only for willful and repeated flaunting of authority.
6. Corporal correction will be handled justly and in a loving manner.

7. The Principal will ask the Business Manager to confirm the parents'/guardians' consent to corporal discipline evidenced by a Corporal Correction Consent form signed by the student's parents/guardians in the student's Permanent Record file.
8. Upon confirmation of the parents'/guardians' consent, corporal correction will be administered as follows:
 - a. Corporal correction will not be administered in the presence of other students.
 - b. A witness (a teacher, Principal, Business Manager or the student's parent) will be present.
 - c. Using a simple fiat paddle, the Principal or a discipline-trained teacher will administer a reasonable number of strokes not to exceed three (3).
 - d. After administering the strokes, the Principal or teacher will pray with the student, assuring, him that he is loved.
 - e. A written record will be made of the date, offense, number of strokes, and the name of the correcting teacher and witness. A copy will be sent to the parents/guardians by the student or by mail. This copy should be signed and returned to the teacher the following day.
9. If the parents/guardians have not consented to corporal discipline of their child, the Principal or Business Manager will call the parents at the telephone number on the Corporal Correction Consent form and endeavor to resolve the matter. The student will remain under in-school suspension pending resolution of the matter.

If corporal punishment is not effective or the parent(s) will not give permission, suspension may be used in or out of school for up to three days. The amount of time assigned is determined by the infraction. In-school suspension may include work detail.

Expulsion (Matthew 18:17) may be the only option left if the student refuses to listen to other less severe disciplines. Parents may appeal to the School Board for a formal hearing. This request must be made in writing within 5 days of expulsion.

The school generally follows its discipline procedures contained herein. However, there are circumstances in which the school administration and/or board may determine, in their sole discretion, that it is appropriate not to follow progressive discipline steps. In cases in which a student has engaged in egregious, immoral, or other unacceptable behavior, the school reserves the right to suspend or expel the student immediately.

ACADEMICS

HOMEWORK AND STUDY HABITS:

Success in the academic field is directly related to efficient study habits. We realize students need more than just the classroom instruction in order to really learn. They also need time in independent thinking and concentration. For this reason, we recommend that there be a quiet place at home for study and that a sufficient amount of uninterrupted time be devoted to this aspect of academic training.

We would like to instill in every student a desire to achieve to the best of her/his ability. Parents can help in this effort by taking the position that the School is of major importance, that its schedule

must be observed, and outside activities must not be so time-consuming or numerous as to infringe on the time necessary for schoolwork.

Homework is due at the beginning of the day or class period. Penalties for failure to complete homework may include extra work, 0 daily grades, or other penalties as deemed necessary. Students in grades 3-8 are provided with assignment pads to assist in keeping parents up-to-date on homework assignments, tests, and projects. The assignment pad should be checked each night and then signed by the parent after they are assured that the work is completed. Teachers may also write brief notes in these to inform you of necessary information regarding your child.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND STAFF

SCS staff and administration will check email daily and will respond during their free/planning period. Our first priority is to teach the students; therefore, we will be unable to respond during other times. We will attempt to answer all email within a 24 hour period. We request that you do not text or email our staff after hours when they are spending time with their families. If you need to set up an appointment or if there is an emergency during school hours, please contact the office.

ACADEMIC EVALUATION

Report cards will be given to students at the end of each nine-week grading period. Students are responsible to return their report cards (with the proper signature) the day after they are issued.

Progress Reports will be issued every three weeks during the 9-week grading period in grades 6-8. Progress Reports will be issued every three weeks to students in grades 9-12 if they have a D or an F in any subject. Parents should make arrangements in advance to visit their child's teacher with any questions or suggestions they might have.

STUDENT ATHLETIC REQUIREMENTS

Basketball and softball players are expected to recognize the importance of the example they are setting for other SCS students and the community. They should make sure that their behavior is Christ-honoring and above reproach.

Sports are an important part of a well-rounded education; however, they are secondary to academics at SCS. In order to be eligible to play sports a student must have passed four major credits the previous academic year. A player must have all assignments current and a minimum of 75 (in each subject) during the season in order to play during a game. Any student who has uncompleted assignments will be withheld from athletic participation until the assignment is completed.

A student who is absent from school the day of an inter-scholastic game will be ineligible to participate. If a student is absent part of the day, due to medical reasons or personal issues, he/she will be eligible only with permission from the Principal. The Principal and/or coaches reserve the right to suspend a player from a team for academic or disciplinary reasons. An ineligible athlete may not practice or participate in any contest, or appear in uniform for any contest in which the team is participating.

GRADING SCALE

	<u>Academic</u>	<u>Conduct</u>
B 8089	A 90100 N Needs Improvement C 7079 U Unsatisfactory D 6569 F 064 I- Incomplete (Changed to "F" if not completed within the number of days assigned by the teacher.)	S Satisfactory

Exemption from Exams:

Academic Requirement:	95 average for the semester
Attendance Requirement:	no more than ten absences per semester (excused or unexcused)
Discipline Requirement:	no Disciplinary Office Referrals (pink slips)

GRADUATION

Seniors will not be allowed to participate in graduation practice or graduation unless all requirements are met before graduation practice. (Tuition/Aftercare accounts must be paid in full, lunch account must be paid in full, all library books returned, and ACT scores received.)

SCS reserves the right to withhold the privilege of participating in the graduation ceremony from any graduate whose conduct (in or out of school) at the time of graduation does not warrant public honor.

Each graduate must meet the following minimum credits for graduation.

Bible	4 credits (or 1 credit for each year a student attends SCS)
English	4 credits
Math	4 credits (Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II)
History	4 credits (World History, U.S. History, Geography, U.S. Government/Economics)
Science	3 credits (Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry)
MS Hist.	½ credit
Computer	1 credit
Health	½ credit
For. Lang.	1 credit
<u>Fine Arts</u>	<u>½ credit</u>
TOTAL:	22.5 credits (minimum)

Advanced electives: Physics, Pre-Calculus or other advanced math above Algebra II, and

Second-year foreign language

- Valedictorian:**
- 1) Must attend Starkville Christian two years between 9th and 12th grade.
 - 2) Must take math beyond Algebra II and science beyond Chemistry, if offered.
 - 3) Student with the highest GPA (over 3.5) averaged between 9th and 12 grades.

- Salutatorian:**
- 1) Must attend Starkville Christian two years between 9th and 12th grade.
 - 2) Must take math beyond Algebra II and science beyond Chemistry, if offered.
 - 3) Student with the second highest GPA (over 3.5) averaged between 9th and 12 grades.

PERMANENT RECORDS

A cumulative record of each child's progress is kept in the School office. This includes Progress Reports, previous schooling, medical forms, disciplinary notes, etc. These records are always available to the parents of the child and are kept primarily for legal documentation in case of transfer and/or promotion. If your child(ren) transfer to another school, all accounts must be paid in full before permanent records will be released.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Our desire in every aspect of the School's operation is to act in obedience to the Word of God. God's Word commands us to make every effort to live in peace and harmony, and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian community in conformity with the biblical injunctions of 1 Corinthians 6:1-2; Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15-20. Parents and the School therefore agree that any dispute or claim arising out of, or related to, their child(ren)'s attendance at Starkville Christian School or to any aspect of this relationship, including statutory claims, shall be settled by:

1. Talking with the child's teacher, in private. The teacher is close to the situation, and thus most understanding of most problems.
2. If not satisfied with the response from the teacher, contact Principal Witbeck. He will, in all likelihood, call in the teacher for consultation.
3. If agreement cannot be reached with Principal Witbeck, parents may request to present the matter formally to the School Board to be placed on the agenda for the next Regular School Board meeting. Please do not contact individual members of the Board and expect one of them to present the matter before the Board. No board member has authority to act on his own, and he should not be expected to present a contested matter before the rest of the Board.
4. If the matter is still unresolved, biblically-based mediation following Matthew 18 will be used.
5. If resolution of the dispute and reconciliation do not result from mediation, the matter shall then be submitted to an independent and objective arbitrator for binding arbitration. The parties agree for the mediation and arbitration process to be conducted in accordance with the "Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation" ("Rules") contained in the Peacemaker Ministries booklet, *Guidelines for Christian Conciliation*. Consistent with these "Rules," each party to the agreement shall agree to the selection of the arbitrator. The parties agree that if there is an impasse in the selection of the arbitrator, the Institute for Christian

Conciliation division of Peacemaker Ministries of Billing, Montana (406-256-1583), shall be asked to provide the name of a qualified person who will serve in that capacity. Consistent with the “Rules,” the arbitrator shall issue a written opinion within a reasonable time.

The parents/guardians, and Starkville Christian School agree that these methods shall be the *sole remedy* for any controversy or claim arising out of the parent/guardianSchool relationship or this agreement and *expressly waive* their right to file a lawsuit against one another in any civil court for such disputes, except to enforce a legally binding arbitration decision.

¹Colossians 3:23

² Dutch churchman Abraham Kuiper

³Ephesians 6:4

⁴2 Chronicles 1:7

⁵John 14:6; Acts 4:2

⁶Ephesians 2:10

⁷Philippians 4:19

⁸Leviticus 19:36; Matthew 5:37

⁹Matthew 5:48

¹⁰Galatians 6:2

¹¹1 Timothy 4:16

STARKVILLE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES IN THE HANDBOOK AS DEEMED NECESSARY.