



2021/2022

General Handbook

*Families who enroll agree with the terms and provisions set forth
in the Desert Christian Schools handbook.*

Desert Christian Schools Administrative Team

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School Administrator

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Operations Manager

Karen Allen
Learning Tree Preschool Director

Lisa Costello
Elementary School Principal

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Middle School Principal

Brian Roseborough
High School Principal

Jan Hallam
Business Manager

Shannan Case
Director of Community Relations

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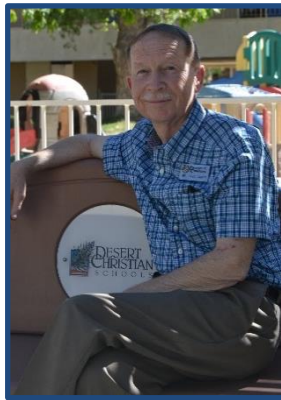
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Office Manager/Admissions

Ron Schmidt
Facilities Director

Hannah **Gibson**
Home Education Programs Director

Maria Williams
Peach Factory Director

Kathryn Dimmitt
Gym Center Director



A Letter to Parents from the School Administrator

Dear DCS Family,

I thank you for partnering with Desert Christian Schools for the education of your child. This decision about your child's education is one of the most important parental decisions you will have to make. By choosing DCS, your child will be surrounded by teachers and other staff that will guide, direct, educate, and love them. Not only will they receive excellent academic instruction, but their emotional, physical, and spiritual needs will also be addressed. Your child will be trained to interact with their world through a biblical worldview.

Throughout this year the teachers and staff will strive to glorify God in all that we say and do in and around your child. That includes driving the bus, sweeping the sidewalk, serving lunch as well as teaching in the classroom. Students will be challenged to do their best and rise to a level they did not know they could achieve.

If you have not made up your mind to enroll in DCS, please come for a tour, visit a classroom, attend a sporting or musical event and you will see why Desert Christian Schools could be a great partner with you and your child.

Sincerely,

Dave Pratt

School Administrator

Desert Christian Schools

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INTRODUCTION

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' MISSION

Desert Christian Schools exists to glorify Jesus Christ in all that we do by educating with excellence the whole student; spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically.

Luke 2:52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man.

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' VISION

We will provide an exceptional and comprehensive Biblically-integrated education to equip students to excel, to impact their world for the glory of Christ, fulfilling God's purpose for their lives.

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' STRATEGY

We will develop the tools necessary for our students to think clearly and listen carefully with discernment and understanding; reason persuasively and articulate precisely; understand life from a Biblical worldview; and do all with joyful submission to God. We will instruct our students to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love others as much as they love themselves. Our students will be taught to be socially graceful and spiritually gracious, desiring to grow in understanding of God and Christ-likeness; to have a heart for the lost and a commitment to share the Gospel and their lives with those around them. We will train our students to possess all of these characteristics with humility and gratitude to God.

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' HUMAN SEXUALITY STATEMENT

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of fornication, adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, and pornography are sinful perversion of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' CORE VALUES

- Creating a safe environment for students
- Partnering with families in their child's education
- Valuing people: students, parents, and staff
- Integrating Biblical truth in all we say and do
- High level academics
- Being excellent in everything we do
- Developing the whole child
- Developing Christian leaders

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' STATEMENT OF FAITH

As a school we commit ourselves to the following statement of faith, which will be the basis of our instruction:

We believe . . .

In one God, Creator of all, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That Jesus Christ is true God and true man, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, rose bodily from the dead, and ascended into heaven where, at the right hand of God, He is our High Priest and Advocate.

That the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ, convict men, regenerate the believing sinner, and indwell, guide, and empower the believer for godly living and service.

The Bible to be the only inspired Word of God, without error in the original, the complete revelation of God's will for the salvation of men, and the final authority for all Christian faith and life.

That all people are sinners and have fallen short of the glory of God. Only by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.

That the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for redemption and only those who receive Christ are born of the Holy Spirit and are the children of God.

That the true Church is composed of all who have been regenerated by saving faith and are united as

the Body of Christ of which He is the Head.

In the personal, imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the personal life and service of the believer.

In the bodily resurrection of the dead: the believer to eternal joy with the Lord and the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting punishment.

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

We live in a world with two views of life. It is from these two opposing worldviews man contemplates his existence and finds value and purpose in life. We believe God is the center of His creation.

Man can only be understood in context of a God-centered worldview. Our potential, our reason, and our purpose are enveloped in the fact that man is the centerpiece of God's creation.

God's Word, the Bible, is His revelation to man. The daily lives of God's people will be changed as a result of knowing and studying God's Word. Absolute truth and objective reality are found only in a worldview focused on God.

Education must address the needs of the "whole man." A Christian approach to education will ensure sensitivity to the unique needs of each individual. The imparting of God's knowledge and wisdom is the goal of Christian education. The desire to be a life-long learner of His truth is the mark of a maturing disciple.

The education of a child or young person must be a cooperative effort with the family. It is the parent's responsibility to see that children are taught a proper understanding of the world. Thus Christian education becomes a partnership between parents, the church, and the school in this important task of exploring and discovering a God-centered worldview.

Education itself is not the answer to man's problems. It is only as we start with the knowledge of an all-knowing and loving Creator that we can successfully educate.

In this process of education, we will not only impart wisdom and knowledge for this world, but we will prepare man for eternity!

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

At DCS, we believe there are two important principles that facilitate academic excellence in a learning program. The first principle is "age-appropriate academics." This means that subject matter and learning concepts are carefully reviewed to be presented at the most advantageous time in a child's or young person's maturation process. In doing this, teaching and learning can take place with maximum efficiency. For example Six- and seven-year-old children easily grasp concepts that may take weeks for the four- or five-year-old child.

We also know that effective learning is sequential. Learning is most effective when it is built on a strong foundation of well-understood supportive concepts. Moving too quickly through foundational concepts will create a base of understanding that is simplistic and will not support more advanced thinking skills.

The second principle of our learning philosophy is "the involved learner." We believe that the most effective learning takes place when the child or young person is a participant in the learning process. This principle has very specific application to the early childhood and lower elementary child who understands concepts on the concrete rather than the abstract level. It is our goal to involve all students in the learning process in order to create excellence in the learning experience.

These two principles of learning are exemplified in Jesus' teaching. He always waited until the appropriate time to teach a concept. He also involved His learners with the world around them (e.g. a fig tree, a coin, and a net). Jesus' role as the "Master Teacher" was not to pour all the knowledge He had into the heads of His followers, but instead He carefully waited until the appropriate time and circumstances to teach His truth. In doing this, His followers were participants in the learning process and eagerly waited for the next installment of learning from the Lord.

We want to nurture and train our students in the truth of God's Word. By presenting academics in an age-appropriate time frame and involving the learner in the learning process, young people will develop into eager lifelong learners.

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' CREATION PHILOSOPHY

At DCS, we feel a strong duty to teach creation science as a basis for understanding our origins. We believe that God created all that we know *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). All life is a wonderful gift from God to be respected and cared for.

A true understanding of the present world requires correlation of all the data of science within the framework of the Bible. This includes the following thoughts:

- Special creation of all things occurred in six literal days,
- The fact of the universal flood is evidenced by both Biblical and geological record,
- Biblical genealogies are for origin purposes making it difficult to use them for establishing absolute time prior to Abraham,
- Man's theories of fossil and geological record of time are contradicted by physical evidence,
- Man's methods of dating are often based on circular reasoning and a "belief" in a very old earth.

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' MISSIONS PHILOSOPHY

At DCS, missions education and involvement have been identified as an important part of the program. Students and staff may be involved in missions experiences both locally and globally.

This occurs through an ongoing relationship with mission organizations or through opportunities for students and staff to participate in short term mission outreach trips. Opportunity is also provided to share resources with people in need. The entire school community is thereby able to extend God's love in the Antelope Valley and around the world.

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' EXPECTED SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING RESULTS

Students at Desert Christian Schools will -

Develop physically by:

- participating in activities which promote fitness and health

Develop socially by:

- maintaining respectful and caring interpersonal relationships within and across all cultures
- participating in the community as responsible citizens

Develop spiritually by:

- considering the invitation to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord
- seeking a deeper relationship with God through prayer, Bible study, and other disciplines of the Christian life

Develop intellectually by:

- applying critical thinking skills in all academic disciplines
- communicating effectively through the written and spoken word

DESERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS' HISTORY

In the fall of 1968, the leaders of First Baptist Church (now known as Grace Chapel) began seeking God's direction for the future of the church. At that time the church was located on Lancaster Blvd. and limited in the ability to expand. In 1972 a move was made to a new site on 15th Street West, and plans were developed to build a new church structure which included an educational unit.

The Family Learning Center was opened as a ministry of First Baptist Church in 1977 with one kindergarten class, several preschool classes, and an after school care program for community school children called Peach Factory. Expansion to a grade school took place in 1979 when first and second grade classes were added. The school continued to add grades until a K-8 program was fully established. In 1985 a physical enrichment program was introduced that included gymnastics, dance, and baton.

A major step was taken in 1988 with the change of name to Desert Christian Schools and the opening of Desert Christian High School, which grew by one class per year, yielding its first graduating class

in 1992. A support program for parents who wished to teach their children at home was established in 1991 as an extension of the Desert Christian Schools' ministry.

First Baptist Church released the leadership of the school in 1998 to form a separate non-profit corporation that would assume responsibility for Desert Christian Schools and develop new ministries to accomplish its mission. In the ensuing years the main campus and the high school campus were purchased, the home education program expanded to include independent study classes, the gymnastics center opened classes to the community, the preschool opened a second campus located on the east side of Lancaster, the Runner Student Activity Center and a state-of-the-art gymnastic center were built on the main campus, an international student program was established, and athletic and academic programs expanded to meet the growing needs of the school community.

In July 2015, Desert Christian Schools merged back under the umbrella of Grace Chapel. This puts both the school and church in a stronger position in all areas of ministry, and both the school and the church communities are thriving.

God has richly blessed Desert Christian Schools in many ways. Attendance has grown from 94 students in 1977, to a current enrollment of nearly 1200 students. Additionally, the ministry has expanded from one campus to programs at four locations. The faculty, staff and administration praise God for the opportunity to partner with parents in providing a Christian education experience for children and youth in the Antelope Valley.

ACCREDITATION

Desert Christian Schools has been accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) since 1988. The current renewal will run through 2025.

AFFILIATIONS

DCS is affiliated with the Association of Christian Schools International. ACSI provides teacher certification, leadership seminars, teacher and administrator conferences, and representation of Christian schools in state and national issues

concerning Christian education.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

THE LEARNING TREE is a preschool program that offers full-day **and half-day** care for children from the ages of eighteen months through five years old. Social, language and motor development, coupled with a variety of enrichment experiences, are a part of both programs. The preschool operates in three locations, one on the main school campus, one at 43260 Challenger Way on the east side of Lancaster, and one located at 39625 20th Street West in Palmdale.

DESERT CHRISTIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL is a transitional kindergarten through fifth grade program that is designed to evangelize, educate, and equip children for godly living. Students are provided with a sound educational foundation in a nurturing academic environment. The elementary school is located on the main school campus.

DESERT CHRISTIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL is designed to provide a caring, student oriented, Christ-centered setting for inspiring, enthusiastic, and cooperative young people in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. It is a foundational program that prepares students for high school. The middle school is located on the main school campus, adjacent to the elementary school.

DESERT CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL offers a robust curriculum preparing ninth through twelfth grade students for college, university, or career pursuits. Students are challenged to develop and mature in faith, academics, interpersonal relationships, social awareness, individual talents, leadership, and service. The high school campus is located at 2340 West Ave. J-8 in Lancaster.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS are available for students who face academic challenges and need a specific intervention. The Advantage Program offers additional academic support to middle school students with identified learning needs. The high school offers the REACH and At-Risk programs for helping students tackle the rigors of high school.

DESERT CHRISTIAN HOME EDUCATION PROGRAM exists to provide support and encouragement to families who have chosen to offer a Christ centered education for their children

at home. It exists to honor God's word and parents, offer practical opportunities, provide mentorship from veteran homeschool moms, and encourage through connecting families. ***DCS assists families in educating their child by providing record keeping, oversight, standardized testing, academic support, community support, and mentorship. Preschool through 8th grade is provided with an independent or co-op option. High school is provided with an independent option, along with additional academic support and opportunities.***

FINE ARTS PROGRAM includes instrumental and choral music, worship, drama, and art, which are offered throughout the transitional kindergarten-twelfth grade curriculum as classes or clubs.

PEACH FACTORY provides before and after school care for children in transitional kindergarten through eighth grade. Peach Factory is available from 6 a.m. until school begins and continues after school until 6 p.m. Supervision and planned recreational activities including crafts and games are provided. Peach Factory is available during the summer and on most school holidays.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS offer enrichment experiences in gymnastics and cheerleading. The main campus program of beginning recreational gymnastics and cheer is offered for Desert Christian students in preschool through fifth grade.

The beginning recreational gymnastics experience emphasizes basic skills for the development of strength, flexibility, and coordination. Basic gymnast routines are also taught.

The beginning cheerleading program teaches partner stunts, pyramids, jump techniques, tumbling, music routines, and cheers.

Desert Christian Gymnastics offers the nationally known CheerBears program for children four years old through second grade. This is an hour long class filled with cheers and tumbling.

The Desert Christian Gymnastics Center is also open to the community and offers gymnastics for every age and ability, from Mom/Pop & Me classes (starting at eighteen months old) to adult classes, and advanced Junior Olympic competition teams for boys and girls.

SUMMER SCHOOL is a program for first through eighth grade students. Classes are offered in the mornings daily for four weeks.

SUMMER CLINICS provide opportunities during the summer for children and may include volleyball, cheer, gymnastics, and basketball clinics.

All programs are subject to change based on current health (COVID 19) guidelines.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Families who enroll at DCS agree to the DCS Parent Handbook in its entirety including all changes and amendments that may be made throughout the school year. A current handbook with amendments is accessible on FACTS under Resource Documents.

It is agreed that Desert Christian Schools shall not be liable for any delay or failure in performance resulting from a force majeure event resulting from acts beyond reasonable control, including but not limited to, acts of God, war, governmental action, acts of terrorism, epidemic, pandemic, state of emergency, or any other event beyond Desert Christian Schools' control. The duties and obligations in this agreement may be postponed for a period of time or terminated depending on circumstances.

DCS AND FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

DCS staff believes in partnering with families to deliver a quality education that includes helping students develop intellectually, spiritually, socially, and physically. Parents are informed and responsible for financial arrangements, discipline, absences, tardies, and grade reports.

Administrators have the right to design and limit the participation of parents and students to ensure harmonious cooperation among families, faculty, staff, and students. (This includes but is not limited to parent classroom visits, providing distance between students, and preventing detrimental parent behavior.)

SUMMER PARTICIPATION

Students must be fully enrolled or re-enrolled prior to participating in any school associated summer activities. This includes, but is not limited to,

athletic practices (e.g. football, cross country, volleyball, or soccer); camps or retreats (e.g. yearbook or leadership); and rehearsals (e.g. drumline or worship team).

NONDISCRIMINATORY STUDENT POLICY

DCS admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its policies.

RIGHT TO TERMINATE AND REFUSE SERVICE

DCS reserves the right to terminate service to a student at any time. There are two basis for this. As a Christian school, DCS has educational and religious objectives, as well as beliefs, which guide its actions and efforts. Thereby first, it is reasonable to expect a student to cooperate with these objectives and beliefs. Secondly, it is reasonable to expect parents to cooperate with the school as they understand these rules and objectives, and have signed a document to certify their agreement. Therefore, when a student or family refuses to cooperate with and support DCS, the right to terminate enrollment will be reserved.

As DCS has no obligation to provide service, it also reserves the right to refuse service. If a potential student is not believed capable of meeting academic, belief, or behavior standards, service may be refused. Similarly, if a parent is not believed to be cooperative and supportive or willing to meet financial obligations, service may be refused.

DEMONSTRATION OF RELIGION

DCS is a Christian school with a Christian mission and statement of faith. As such, its purposes and practices are decidedly Christian.

Therefore, all students, regardless of religious affiliation or lack thereof, will be required to participate in teaching and practices such as chapel, Bible classes and times of prayer. In addition, demonstrations of other religions will not be permitted on campus.

LIFESTYLE PURITY

Because there are many different views in the world regarding sexual practice, and because students are

confronted on a regular basis with sexual images, it is understandable that students may be confused about the Biblical standards to which he or she should adhere. Students are expected to live by standards of conduct that are consistent with Scripture.

The school believes that God's design for intimate sexual conduct is reserved for marriage between one man and one woman and that He has forbidden certain behaviors according to Scripture. This includes sexual contact between those who are not married, whether heterosexual or homosexual. Prohibited sexual contact includes, but is not limited to, heavy petting, physical contact with or without clothing with another person for sexual gratification, sexual intercourse, oral sexual activities, public exposure of one's genitals or breasts, and the use of pornography (Leviticus 18). Moreover, students should make every effort to avoid compromising situations which might give the appearance of being involved in such activities.

The school also desires for each student to develop a Biblical understanding of his or her sexual nature as a young man or woman. This development is especially meaningful when students face conflicting ideas of acceptable cultural norms. The school believes that, in God's providence, He created human beings as male and female in His own image (Genesis 1:27); that the character of each person as a man or a woman (sometimes referred to as "sex" or "gender" or "gender identity") is determined by God at the individual's conception and is revealed in physical form at the individual's birth (Psalm 139:13-16); and that the character of the individual as a man or a woman is not open to change later in life. Deuteronomy 22:5 states, "A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God." Students must not dress in clothing that does not reflect their own gender.

For these reasons, the school regards confusion over one's sexual identity, and identifying oneself as homosexual, gay, lesbian, transsexual, transgender, or other similar classification, as contrary to God's design and a mark of the sinful nature of mankind. The school believes it is important that a student not adhere to or use such a classification to identify him or herself, but rather, remain open to understanding his or her sexual

nature in the context of Scripture and the work of the Holy Spirit. The school, therefore, will not permit a student to classify him or herself as such, or to condone, promote or advocate the use of such classifications by others, believing that to do so is inconsistent with Scripture and God's creation for healthy sexual development (Genesis 19:4-5, Leviticus 18:22, 20:13, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, and Jude 7). Students who violate these standards may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the school.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

DCS has a policy that forbids sexual harassment of students by employees or by other students.

Student Sexual Harassment

DCS is committed to maintaining an academic environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect and which is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation and harassment. DCS is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination or expulsion.

Definition

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, online, or physical conduct of sexual nature, made by someone from or in the work or educational setting, under any of the following conditions:

- Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's academic status or progress.
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through this school.
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the

individual's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Examples

Unwelcome sexual conduct of this type can include a wide range of verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Among the types of conduct, which would violate this policy, are the following:

- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions;
- Offering academic benefits in exchange for sexual favors;
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances;
- Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters;
- Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs and jokes;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations;
- Sexually motivated physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, impeding or blocking movements; and
- Any use of social media or electronic communication that includes any of the aforementioned behaviors is prohibited and subject to discipline.

Employee-Student Sexual Harassment

Employee-student sexual harassment is prohibited.

Student-Student Sexual Harassment

Student-student sexual harassment is prohibited.

What To Do If You Experience Or Observe Sexual Harassment

Students who feel that they have been subjected to conduct of a harassing nature are encouraged to promptly report the matter to one of the school officials designated below.

Students who observe conduct of a sexually harassing nature are also encouraged to report the matter to one of the school officials designated below.

All complaints will be promptly investigated.

Where to Report Sexual Harassment

The following individuals are specifically authorized to receive complaints and to respond to questions regarding sexual harassment:

Dave Pratt
School Administrator
948-5071, Ext. **2019**
(cell) 816-6753

Brian Roseborough
HS Principal
723-7441
(cell) 435-6851

Karmae Shiplett
HS Vice Principal
723-7441
(cell) 305-5873

Lisa Costello
ES/MS Principal
723-0665
(cell) 406-9537

Karen Allen
Preschool Director
948-5071, Ext. **2312**
(cell) 917-0018

Human Resources
948-5071, Ext. **2212**

Confidentiality

Every effort is made to protect the privacy of the parties involved in any complaint. However, the school reserves the right to fully investigate every complaint, and to notify a student's parent/guardian and appropriate government officials as the circumstances warrant.

Protection Against Retaliation

It is against the school's policy to discriminate or retaliate against any person who has filed a complaint concerning sexual harassment or has testified, assisted or participated in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing concerning sexual harassment.

Procedure For Investigation Of The Complaint And For Taking Corrective Action

When one of the school officials designated in this policy receives a complaint, he or she shall immediately inform the School Administrator. The School Administrator will direct an investigation. If the investigation confirms the allegations, prompt corrective actions shall be taken. The individual who suffered the harassing conduct shall be informed of the corrective action taken. In addition, any employee or student found to be responsible for sexual harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or termination of employment. The severity of the disciplinary action will be based upon the circumstance of the infraction.

Individuals who feel they have been subjected to conduct of a harassing nature are encouraged to report the matter to a school administrator.

CONCERN RESOLUTION PROCESS

In any large institution, even with the best of intentions and efforts, disagreements and misunderstandings may occur. The test of that institution is not that problems arise but how they are handled. As a Christian organization, it is important to resolve matters as outlined in the Bible by taking the concern directly to the person involved. Matthew 5:22-24, 18:15-20

It is therefore agreed that concerns will be resolved in the following manner. The person with the concern will go first and only to the other party. If the matter is not resolved, the principal or supervisor of the involved employee will be contacted. If an administrator or supervisor is approached with a concern that has not been first presented to the staff member involved, they will redirect the individual with a concern to the staff member.

If the matter is not resolved there, the parent may take the matter to the School Administrator. Pursuing the matter beyond the School Administrator requires the aggrieved party to place their concern in writing for consideration by a committee of the Board of Directors of Desert Christian Schools. The school board's decision will be final.

The parties to this agreement are Christians and believe that the Bible commands them to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian community in conformity with the Biblical injunctions of 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, Matthew 5:23-24, and Matthew 18:15-20. Therefore, the parties agree that any claim or dispute arising out of or related to this agreement, including claims under federal, state, and local statutory or common law, the law of contract, and law of tort, shall be settled by Biblically based mediation. If the 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 arbitration process to be conducted in accordance with the Christian conciliation Rules of Procedure 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 (hereafter ICC), a division of Peacemaker Ministries of Billings, 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 of procedure, the arbitrator shall issue a written opinion within a reasonable time.

The parties acknowledge that the resolving of conflicts requires time and financial resources. The issue of final responsibility for such costs will be an agreed issue for consideration or determination in the mediation or arbitration.

The parties agree they will endeavor to exchange information with each other and present the same at any mediation, or, if to arbitration pursuant to the ICC Rules of Procedure, with the intent to minimize costs and delays to the parties. They will seek to cooperate with each other and may request the mediator, case administrator, and/or arbitrator to direct and guide the preparation process so as to reasonably limit the amount of fact-finding, investigation, and discovery by the parties to that which is reasonably necessary for the parties to understand each other's issues and positions, and to prepare the matter for submission to the mediator and/or arbitrator to inform the mediator

and / or arbitrator. In addition, the parties agree that in the event of an arbitration, they will use a single arbitrator who is experienced in the relevant area of law and familiar with Biblical principles of resolving conflict.

The parties to this contract agree that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of the employment relationship or this agreement and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit against each other in any civil court for such disputes, including any class action proceeding, except to enforce a legally binding arbitration decision. The parties acknowledge that by waiving their legal rights to file a lawsuit to resolve any dispute between them, they are not waiving their right to employ legal counsel at their own expense to assist them in any phase of the process.

RELEASE OF STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Student directory information consists of student name, address, telephone number, email address, date and place of birth, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous public or private school attended by the student. Information will be released according to the following guidelines:

- Photographs, videos, or other physical likenesses of a child for purposes of sharing school announcements, marketing, advertising, publicity, and other promotions in print, DCS websites, social media pages, or on public displays related to promoting the school.
- Press, television, and other organizations: Information concerning participation in athletics, other school activities, the winning of scholastic or other honors and awards, and other such information.
- Colleges and universities: Transcripts and letters of recommendation.
- Private business or professional schools or colleges: Names and addresses of graduating seniors.
- Official recruitment representatives of private industry; federal, state, and local

government agencies; and the military forces of the United States: Career guidance information including names and addresses of graduating high school seniors.

- Another school district in which pupil intends to enroll or has enrolled: School records and/or transcript of grades and credit.
- Families within DCS: Names for elementary school children *may* be released in order to include an entire class in a social event (e.g. birthday party). Records marked “Do not release information” will be kept confidential.
- Name and contact information for other students or parents may be released for school related purposes with the approval of a school administrator.
- Parents and legal guardians: All student directory information on file for their child.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Desert Christian Schools loves our volunteers! The DCS Volunteers Program allows our school to tap into skills, experiences, and talents beyond what our excellent faculty and staff already bring to DCS.

As part of our commitment of including our DCS family in all aspects of our school life, our faculty and staff continually look for ways to involve volunteers in their work. Through various volunteer opportunities at DCS, volunteers can add value to our campus and programs and lead by serving.

Opportunities to volunteer include, but are not limited to:

- Assist in classrooms
- Athletic Coach, Assistant Coach
- Club Advisor
- Library assistance
- Field trip chaperones/drivers
- Assist with fundraisers

- Assist in offices
- School events
- ***Community Relations and*** marketing events

Requirements

All volunteers who will supervise children, will be alone with children, will be volunteering at an overnight event, or will be providing bathroom assistance for children on field trips must meet the following requirements:

- Complete an Application to Volunteer
- Provide three references
- Provide current TB test results (good for four years)
- Complete two interviews with school administrators
- Pay for either an online background check, which must be renewed annually, or Live-Scan fingerprints, which are kept on file and cleared with the Department of Justice and FBI and remain effective during the attendance of the student or until revoked by the volunteer or the government agency.
- Complete a Volunteer Directory Questionnaire
- If driving, fill out an Application to Provide Transportation to DCS Activities.

What to expect as a volunteer:

- All classroom and office volunteers are screened in advance to ensure they are qualified for the duties performed. In the case of large school-wide activities, volunteers are supervised by the school personnel in charge of the event.
- Volunteers are provided with training and/or information (policies, procedures, dress code, etc.) appropriate to the task to ensure that the task is performed in alignment with the standards of the school.
- Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is in keeping

with Christian Role Model statement and professional standards.

- Volunteers are under the direct supervision of the staff member in charge. Volunteers may not be with individual students in an area that is not openly observable.
- Volunteers may correct students in keeping with the discipline guidelines of the program in which they are volunteering. Any serious disciplinary actions should be referred to a staff member.
- When volunteers fail to perform a task satisfactorily or there is a problem of any other nature, the **program director** will be informed.

As a reminder, our goal is placement for volunteers into a service opportunity that best suits their interests and schedule within the DCS campus.

LOGO USE

In an effort to increase unity and brand awareness across all programs, DCS has developed a set of approved logos and logo use specifications. A version of an approved logo is to be included on all uniforms, spirit wear, practice gear or other items ordered by any DCS team, club, class, or support group, and must be authorized by the Director of Community Relations prior to use. The approved logo may be incorporated into artwork that is individualized for the team or group according to the specifications laid out in the logo use spec sheets. Spec sheets are available in hard copy or electronic versions. Approval forms are available from the Director of Community Relations.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR STUDENT COMPUTER USAGE

Students at DCS have the opportunity to use computers with Internet access in labs, libraries, and classrooms. This opportunity offers the ability to research information, investigate issues and correspond with individuals worldwide. The potential benefits of this kind of information to each student, their class, and the school as a whole, are immense.

Along with the benefits of this information access comes potential risks to everyone involved. Not all of the information available on the Internet is truthful, accurate, or beneficial. A certain amount of it is offensive, damaging, or even illegal.

However, DCS believes by building a partnership with families, it is possible to enjoy the benefits of electronic information while avoiding the potentially harmful effects. This partnership is a shared responsibility of the school, each student, and their parents.

It is the responsibility of the school to provide safe, filtered Internet access through hardware and software that is current, in order to enhance the learning process. Included in this is the basic functioning and security of the network as well as adult supervision of students.

It is the responsibility of each student to make responsible and ethical choices while accessing electronic information. It is also the responsibility of each student to abide by the terms and conditions set forth in this Acceptable Use Policy. Students will use the Internet to gain information but will not copy and plagiarize another person's intellectual property without the author's prior approval or proper citation.

It is the responsibility of parents to provide guidance and oversight of students during the information gathering process and by evaluating their students work upon completion.

DCS will provide computer workstations and printers for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Usage of these computers is a privilege and not a right. Students who do not follow the Terms and Conditions as set forth below may lose their privilege of computer access and may be subject to school or legal disciplinary action.

Given sufficient evidence or reasonable suspicion of misuse of the computer network, school administrators may review files, video recordings and/or communication logs to maintain system integrity and to ensure responsible usage. Users should not expect that communications and/or records of usage would be private.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Usage Guidelines

Technology plays an important role in the academic process, and it is the goal of Desert Christian Schools to effectively integrate its use into daily educational activities. In order to maximize the benefit provided by technology and minimize any potential risks, DCS has developed a comprehensive Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). This document applies to all students and defines what is both acceptable and unacceptable behavior related to the use of computers, electronic devices, information systems, and the Internet.

Before being allowed to use any technology at school, all parents and all students (4th - 12th) must carefully read and agree to abide by all parts of the AUP.

Examples of acceptable usage will include but not be limited to the following: completing classroom assignments; conducting on-line research; using reference materials; communicating with individuals or businesses regarding school issues; accessing appropriate websites.

Examples of unacceptable usage will include but not be limited to the following: purposely attempting to access inappropriate websites; conducting commercial or personal business; using games without the knowledge and permission of the supervising adult; distributing personal contact information; attempting to access or accessing DCS network servers (except to retrieve documents).

Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network behavior. These include but are not limited to the following: being polite, using appropriate language, not using swear or other offensive words, not substituting symbols for inappropriate words, not revealing personal contact information, not harassing, insulting, or defaming another individual.

All students will be given a Desert Christian Gmail account in order to utilize Google Classroom during the current school year. G Suite for Education will be used in compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

Copyright—DCS students and staff will observe all copyright laws. Students will not place copyrighted material on any computer workstation without the

permission of the supervising adult. Students may not download copyrighted data, including digital music, software or photos without permission of the copyright holder.

Security—The security of the DCS computer network is a high priority. Students who identify a security problem are to contact an adult immediately and must not demonstrate this problem to other students. Passwords must be kept private. Students must not attempt to bypass or change system settings.

Destruction of Property or Data—Students shall not misuse any school hardware to destroy data belonging to someone else.

Penalties—Students who do not follow this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

First and foremost, students are encouraged to always exercise the utmost caution when participating in any form of social media or online communications, both within the DCS network and beyond.

Students who participate in online interactions must remember that their posts reflect on not only themselves, but also their families and the school. As such, actions in the social media realm are subject to the same behavioral standards set forth in the Student Code of Conduct.

Technology is a neutral force and people choose whether to use it for right or wrong. One handbook can not spell out all possible uses or abuses but generally speaking, students need to know that what they say or do online is subject to the same guidelines as if the act took place in person.

The proliferation of technology has made access to inappropriate material prolific. As an emphasis, students should avoid accessing and/or sharing inappropriate material at all costs.

In addition to the regulations found in the Acceptable and Unacceptable Usage Guidelines, students are expected to abide by the following:

- To protect the privacy of DCS students and faculty, students may not, under any circumstances, post the names of other students.
- Students and parents may not use social

media sites to publish disparaging or harassing remarks.

- Students who choose to post editorial content to websites or other forms of online media must ensure that their submission does not reflect poorly upon the school, including but not limited to:
 - Making disparaging remarks about the above stated
 - Using profanity or inappropriate language
 - Divulging confidential information about DCS students.
- Students and parents should not create a social media account on behalf of DCS or other entity of Grace Chapel without explicit consent of DCS Administration.

Failure to abide by this Policy, as with other policies at DCS, may result in disciplinary action as described in the Student Handbook, or as determined by Administration.

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is defined as mistreating peers through the use of technology or any electronic device. Typically, these devices are, but not limited to, computers, cell phones, and text messaging devices and displayed as, but not limited to, writing, images, sounds that are defamatory, violent, abusive, profane, and/or sexually oriented. Cyberbullying is to be reported to Administration immediately and is not acceptable in any form.

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT FOR NEW STUDENTS

All students will be accepted and enrolled into the school following these procedures:

1. Starting Point
 - a. Tour recommended
2. Complete
 - a. Admission Online Application at www.desertchristian.com under the admissions tab

3. **Upload** Documents

- a. Latest report card
- b. Latest Standardized Test Scores (if available)
- c. HS Forms
 - i. DCS Transportation Form
 - ii. Academic and Pastor Reference Form
 - iii. Transcript (10th-12th)
 - iv. Computer Use Form
- d. Immunization Records
 - i. (1st Grade must include physical)
 - ii. (7th Grade must have proof of TDAP Booster)
 - iii. (All students new to California must present documentation of a Mantoux TB test or screening (given within 12 months of school Entry).
- e. Birth Certificate

The state of California requires the document to show:

- i. Name of student
- ii. Date of birth
- iii. Place of birth

Documents **may also** be faxed to (661)948-0858 or emailed to admissions@desertchristian.com **within seven days.**

4. Pay

- a. \$50 application.
- b. The application fee is non-refundable.

5. Enrollment

- a. ***Complete the online enrollment packet, which includes the handbook agreement and setting up an automatic payment plan.***
- b. ***Pay the*** enrollment fee of ***\$210*** for one student or ***\$420*** per family (TK-12 only).

- c. ***Kindergarten students will also be charged a \$10 assessment fee.***
- d. ***\$50 FACTS Family Fee will be paid directly to FACTS upon finalization of payment agreement. This is a once per family annual fee.***

6. ES: Kindergarten Assessment ***and Family Consultation with Principal*** (K-5 grade)

MS: Family Consultation with Principal.

HS: Student and Principal Interview (9- 12 grade)

(The elementary, middle, and high school offices will contact parents to set up the appointment.)

All incoming kindergarten ***students*** will have a Kindergarten Assessment in order to determine the best academic placement for each student.

7. Acceptance

- a. Notification of acceptance is given in a timely ***manner following*** completion the application ***and enrollment*** process and receipt of all required documents or assessments.

8. Orientation

All new families to the elementary and middle school are expected to attend the orientation meeting held at the end of the summer in August.

Accepted students will be placed on a principal's wait list when a grade level is filled. When a space is available, our protocol allows for student selection which benefits the needs of each classroom and the student body as a whole. An effort will be made to enroll students who are accepted earliest, but there is no guarantee.

Middle School:

Grades and credits transferred from other institutions or homeschool are not merged with grades from DCMS. Grades and credits start to accumulate when the student begins. A student must complete at least two quarters of school at DCMS to graduate with the class.

Students entering DCMS from our elementary school are not automatically accepted. Selection

for all middle school students is based on their effort to do their best in academics and citizenship.

High School:

Academic and Pastor References are sent to those listed on the application form. The two must include a present academic teacher or counselor and someone in leadership at the student's church.

After the student interview, an additional assessment may be required of applicants to determine acceptance. An official transcript will be requested from the previous school when the student is officially enrolled.

Students who are considered for enrollment into high school are people who:

- Have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
- Are members or actively involved in a Bible-believing Christian church whose doctrinal position supports the DCHS statement of faith.
- Have demonstrated on a standardized test that they are adequately prepared to achieve well in high school.
- Have a satisfactory citizenship record in the school they are presently attending.
- Are achieving at least an average of a "C" grade in the present school year.
- Desire to attend Desert Christian High School and are willing to comply with the school's standards as printed in the handbook.

Parents NEW to FACTS START HERE

- Go to web browser and type in the address <https://factsmgt.com>.
- Click the "Parent Log in" Tab
- Click "FACTS Family Online (ParentsWeb)"
- Log in as follows:
 - District Code = DCS-CA
 - Skip down and make sure "Parent" is highlighted
 - Click "Create New ParentsWeb Account" link next to the "Login" button

- Type DCS-CA in the “District Code” box
- Type in the primary email address that you have provided the school in the “Email” box
- Click “Create Account”
 - You will be emailed a link (to the e-mail address you typed in, which must be the same e-mail address that you provided to the school). Please open the email and click the link provided to gain access to the page where you can create your password. For security purposes, **this link will only be active for 15 minutes from the time it is sent to you.**

RE-ENROLLMENT

Re-enrollment for the following school year begins in January. Family accounts must be current prior to completion of re-enrollment. Families currently enrolled with DCS will receive priority re-enrollment for a short period of time before enrollment is opened to the general public.

Re-enrollment into all DCS programs will be completed online. Families will receive an email with instructions on how to access the online re-enrollment packet in mid-to-late January. TK-12 enrollment fees for the **2021/2022** school year are **\$210** per student or **\$420** per family. Enrollment fees for the **2022/2023** year will be released in January **2022**. Enrollment fees will be due at the time of packet submission. Families will be asked to sign the financial and handbook agreement, and select a payment plan for the coming year as part of completing the re-enrollment process. Once paid, re-enrollment fees are non-refundable. Enrollment fees for returning families will increase after **April 30, 2022**.

A \$50 FACTS family fee will be paid directly to FACTS upon finalization of the payment agreement. This is a once per family annual fee.

STUDENT AND FAMILY CHANGES

Parents need to inform the school office of any changes that occur during the school year regarding addresses, telephone numbers, or alternate emergency contact persons.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TUITION AND FEES

Enrollment fees are due as the family enrolls.

During the enrollment process, families will be prompted to pick a payment plan. Tuition can be paid over 12, 11, or 10 months. Availability of number of payments (12, 11, or 10) will be determined based on enrollment date. There are no discounts for payment by cash or payment in full. All textbook payments are due July 15. Consumables and class fees are due by August 31.

Tuition for other immediate family members enrolled in elementary school, middle school, or high school is reduced by the sibling discount.

Tuition is based on a yearly amount and will be billed to your family account upon enrollment using FACTS Management. Tuition will not be prorated for days absent or vacation periods. Students leaving during the year will have their tuition prorated for that month. The July 1 tuition will not be prorated. Students withdrawn after August 15 are still responsible for August tuition. Students enrolling later than September shall have tuition established with regard to the portion remaining in the school year. For withdrawals after May 1, families will be responsible for the balance of the annual tuition.

All account balances are due on the first of each month. Any accounts with a balance due after the 17th of the month are subject to a \$50 late fee.

FAMILY ACCOUNTS

Family accounts may be viewed on FACTS (under Financial/Financial Home). All correspondence from the business office regarding account balances is sent via email. Parents are encouraged to check their email regularly and review their family accounts. Students can be assigned to multiple accounts only under certain circumstances. In the situation of split parents if the tuition is to be divided between parents, both parents will need to sign a financial agreement. These agreements will hold parents liable for all fees including but not limited to tuition. The business office must receive completed financial agreements from both parents prior to any division of financial obligations.

Family accounts are considered delinquent when 30

days past due. Families with delinquent accounts will be locked-out and prevented from attending school, viewing information on FACTS, and/or participating in student activities until the account is paid in full or satisfactory arrangements have been made with the business office. Delinquent financial obligations will result in exclusion from re-enrollment for the next school year, year-end graduation ceremonies, and end of the school year activities. Five or more lock-outs in one year will result in the family not being accepted for re-enrollment for the next school year. Student records will not be released to parents until all financial obligations are settled.

All family account balances through the month of May need to be in good standings by June 2 at 3:00 p.m., when FACTS access will be disabled for any outstanding balances.

PAYMENTS

Payment plans through your FACTS Family Portal are required for all family accounts. Payments may be made by cash, check, money order, echeck, or credit/debit card. All checks and money orders must be made payable to Desert Christian Schools with the name of the child and the program the check is covering included in the memo portion of the check. Payments paid in cash must be submitted to the school office where a receipt will be issued. Credit/debit card payments are subject to the current processing fee (currently 2.85%, subject to change) regulated by FACTS and paid directly to FACTS when your automatic payment is processed. Echeck (electronic check from a checking account) can be used at no charge.

Participation in band, choir, athletic activities, elective courses, and lab courses carry additional costs. Students will not be allowed to participate in athletic activities if the fees are not paid in full within two weeks after team selections. Entrance fees or transportation costs for outings or field trips may become the family's responsibility.

RETURNED CHECK POLICY

There is a \$30 returned check fee for all checks and echecks returned by the bank due to non-sufficient funds (NSF). FACTS will attempt to collect the echeck NSF fee in 5 days and then will attempt to collect payment in 15 days. FACTS will communicate with all families via email. DCS will charge your family account the NSF fee of \$30 for

any check returned.

When a family has three checks or e-checks returned by the bank, the business office will place the family on a cash-only status for any payment. Once a family is placed on a cash-only basis, the only accepted method of a payment is cash, money order, or credit card for any balance due including tuition, cafeteria payment, sports fees, school prep day fees, field trips, and clubs. The family will continue on cash-only status until their situation changes and the business office releases the family from cash-only payments.

When a family is placed on cash-only status, the business office will notify the main school office and the appropriate program offices so checks from that family will not be accepted.

If a returned check or e-check causes the family to become more than 30 days delinquent on their student account, they will be notified that lock-out procedures will start immediately until their account is current.

TUITION ASSISTANCE

Financial aid is available to both new and returning students enrolled in TK-12th grades to help with the cost of tuition. Financial aid is not available for the preschool or home education programs. The primary goal of the Financial Aid Program is to assist existing families who are experiencing a temporary reduction of income due to job loss or illness. Any remaining funds may be awarded to additional families who demonstrate a financial need depending on available funds. Aid is issued annually and a new application must be submitted each year. Financial aid is awarded for tuition only and does not cover registration and material fees, books, sports, or activity fees. If the reduced rate of tuition is not kept current, the discount becomes void each month and full tuition will be charged.

To apply for financial aid, families returning need to be enrolled for the upcoming school year. New families do not need to be enrolled to apply for financial aid. Applications for financial aid are submitted online at FACTS through the DCS website only. FACTS is a third party vendor used by DCS to process financial aid applications and collect financial data from applicants. Re-enrolling families must apply for financial aid from February 1 through April 30 each year. Award decisions are not made by FACTS, but by the DCS Financial Aid

Committee. FACTS requires a \$35 application fee and will request additional documentation which will need to be uploaded, mailed, or faxed. In general, families are limited to a maximum of four years of financial aid. Once financial aid is given, a student is expected to maintain a minimum of 2.5 or higher GPA. New students must also have a 2.5 GPA to qualify for financial aid.

In addition to maintaining a 2.5 or higher GPA, students must conduct themselves in a way that is consistent with the policies of Desert Christian Schools. Tuition assistance awards will be forfeited if your student does not adhere to standards of conduct in this Handbook for Parents. Students must contribute to the positive Christian culture of the school. Families awarded financial aid will have 10 days to sign and return their Tuition Assistance Covenant. Aid will not be applied to family accounts until the covenant has been returned.

To apply for or to review the FAQs, please visit www.desertchristian.com (Admissions/Tuition Assistance). For further assistance, please contact the DCS Financial Aid Secretary, Heather Welch at (661)948-5071, Ext. **2017**.

MINISTRY DISCOUNT

It is the policy of DCS to give a tuition reduction for those families serving in full-time ministry. All ministry discounts are totally volitional and at the discretion of DCS. Applications are available at the front desk of the main campus and are completed and turned into the Financial Aid Secretary for screening. Confirmation of the applicant's full time employment in the listed ministry and primary wage earning status will be made by the secretary. The School Administrator will meet with all families applying for ministry discount. After this meeting, a decision is made and a response email is sent to the applicant. If approved, notification is sent to the business office for the tuition reduction. The Church/Ministry organization must be evangelical, functioning, and viable. The applicant must be paid full time in the stated ministry and be the primary wage earner, with the majority of the income from the listed ministry. Co-operation of the applicant/family is necessary. Ministry discount is applied to tuition only and does not include enrollment, material fees, books, sports or activity fees. If the reduced rate of tuition is not kept current, the discount becomes void. Ministry

discounts are issued annually and a new application must be submitted each year.

MILITARY DISCOUNT

In an effort to honor our United States active military and their service, Desert Christian Schools offers a 20% tuition discount for students in grades TK-12 ***whose parent or guardian serves in any branch of the United States Military***. A Military Discount Application must be filed each year with current military orders or active duty ID.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Throughout the school year several school-wide fundraisers will be held. Your voluntary participation in student fundraisers will be greatly appreciated. Students may also choose to participate in additional fundraisers for sports, clubs, and other campus organizations.

FUNDRAISING BY STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Classes, clubs, or athletic teams wishing to engage in fundraising activities must submit a group fundraiser application for each fundraiser. Applications are available from the athletic secretary, campus offices, or the Development office. The application must be complete, signed by the Principal, Athletic Director (sports) or direct supervisor (clubs and groups) and submitted to the Director of Development for approval at least two weeks prior to the proposed activity. Students and advisors should be careful to avoid any conflict with DCS school-wide fundraisers in timing and/or type of activity. Priority will always be given to school-wide fundraising activities

DCSRIP AND MERCHANT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Merchant support programs such as escrip.com may be available and will be used to support DCS programs as a whole. DCS participates with Box Tops for Education. The Box Tops program will eventually become digital-only. Log on to BTFE.com to sign up. Follow the instructions to set up the app. Select Desert Christian Schools in Lancaster, California, and scan your receipts.

FUND DEVELOPMENT

The DCS Fund Development program consists of an annual DCS Auction that is held in February, an annual giving campaign, and a Development Event held periodically. Parents, friends, staff and community members are encouraged to take part in these events to support facility development and program enhancement.

DCS ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The DCS Annual Scholarship Fund provides tuition assistance to TK-12th grade students in need through the generous donations of school families, community supporters, and charitable foundations. *Scholarship or* tuition assistance is not available for the preschool or home education programs.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

TEACHING STAFF

The teaching staff is made up of qualified, committed Christians. Teachers are required to hold a Bachelor's Degree and maintain teacher certification with the Association of Christian Schools International. They participate in education conferences, professional development training, and continuing education courses.

STANDARD COURSE OF STUDY

DCS follows the basic curriculum guidelines required for study in the State of California for public schools. While specific subject material may be taught at different times, the objective is to provide the same opportunities that exist in public schools, plus augment those with other valuable knowledge. The goal is to do this from a Biblical perspective so that each student realizes the importance and relevance of the never-changing Word of God.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

In the course of the school year each student TK-8th *grade* is recognized for displaying Christian characteristics such as honesty, respect, obedience, kindness, and love.

TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Textbooks and curriculum materials include standard texts used in California public schools, along with textbooks from Christian publishers dealing with the same subject matter but from a Christian perspective.

When a secular textbook is chosen it is with the following considerations in mind:

- It is the teacher who makes the curriculum "Christian."
- Students need to be guided in the development of critical thinking skills and discernment.
- A proper discussion of a God centered worldview includes analysis of a variety of world views, including those that are false. This helps prepare students for future educational experiences.

Topics covered are indicated in the curriculum overview at the back of the ES and MS sections of this handbook. HS curriculum is available through the HS.

It is required that parents obtain all text books and have them available the day the student starts school. During the summer, families will be emailed the book list. Additional information and instructions are found in each school section of this handbook.

ADDITIONAL TEACHER ASSISTANCE

Students sometimes need help in a subject. The first place to turn for help is the teacher of the course. Teachers at the school are willing to give extra time to students who are conscientiously trying to improve. In some cases a tutor may be needed. An approved tutor list can be obtained at each school office.

BIBLE VERSION

Beginning in second grade, each student is required to have the New International Version (NIV) 2010 Bible for study and memorization.

STANDARDIZED TESTING PROGRAM

DCS will utilize assessments and standardized testing to monitor students' progress.

FACTS

Parents are required to regularly check FACTS to monitor students' grades and behavior (found in the Student Information section).

In addition to the many other ways of tracking student achievement, DCS families can view some student information on-line. FACTS offers families access to their child's assignments, grades, report cards, discipline, account balances, cafeteria purchases, library check-outs, etc.

If, for any reason, parents cannot receive school emails or other FACTS information, they may request a hard copy from the school office. A computer is also available in the main campus library and office for parent use, if needed.

DCS-CA is the district code and the primary email provided to the school is your user name.

To access FACTS Parents Web:

- Go to web browser and type in the address <https://factsmgt.com>.
- Click the "Parent Log in" Tab
- Click "FACTS Family Online (ParentsWeb)"
- Log in as follows:
 - District Code = DCS-CA
 - User Name = *the user name you have created for FACTS*
 - Type in your password in the "Password" box
 - "Parent" should be highlighted
 - Click "Login"

CAMPUS PROCEDURES

OFFICE HOURS

The main school office is open from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The elementary/middle school office is open from **7:30** a.m. to 3:00 p.m. during the school year. The high school office is open Monday-Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. and from 7:30 a.m. to **1:00** p.m. on Fridays during the school year. Vacation, holiday, and summer schedules may vary.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the case of inclement weather, check FACTS, www.desertchristian.com, Facebook, and expect a text, email, or automated message for information on school closure. Peach Factory and Learning Tree childcare will remain open even when DCS

school closes, except in extraordinary circumstances.

DCS ALERT SYSTEM AND CALLS TO HOME

From time to time DCS will send a text message, email, or an automated message to parents' home or cell phone number. This message may include school closing status due to inclement weather, information regarding student-specific school programs, or instructions in the event of a natural disaster. The system is completely confidential and does not use any information for advertising purposes. Parents are requested to not use the opt-out feature at the end of the phone call or text message, as it could prohibit the school from contacting them in case of an emergency. Messages will be sent to the cell phone number or email of the custodial and correspondence contacts provided in your family account.

CAMPUS SECURITY

DCS operates under a closed campus policy. Upon arriving at school, students are to remain on the grounds until properly dismissed from school. All visitors must enter through the school office and stop at the front desk for instructions.

All gates are to remain closed at all times, except for designated drop off and pick up times. All doors are kept locked when students are inside.

No simulated or real weapons may be brought on campus.

SECURITY CAMERAS

Our campuses are equipped with security cameras to record events. The video surveillance cameras are installed and record events in public areas, parking lot, main office, high school office, middle school office, outside lockers, court yards, playgrounds, and hallways where there is not an expectation of privacy.

These cameras do not replace direct teacher supervision in the classroom or for any playground activity. The cameras are designed to record events that can assist the school or law enforcement authorities in conducting investigations into different events at the school.

SMOKE FREE CAMPUS

For the health and safety of students and staff, DCS is a smoke-free campus, including parking lots. This

includes smokeless tobacco, electronic and vapor cigarettes, any nicotine substances, and marijuana.

STUDENT SUPERVISION RESPONSIBILITY

DCS has the responsibility to supervise students while they are on school property, participating in school sponsored off-campus activities, and while using school transportation.

DCS releases elementary students from their campus at the end of the school day to authorized pick-up people. Elementary school students may be released to a middle school or high school sibling with written parent approval submitted to the elementary office. In addition, students who need special release arrangements must be approved by administration. Middle school and high school students are released from their campuses on their own.

DCS dismisses students from activities on campus after normal school hours and after school-sponsored off-campus activities and expects parents to arrange for prompt pick-up. Staff will not leave students unsupervised.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE (PEACH FACTORY)

This program is available every school day and all holidays except the following: Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following, Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, and the observed 4th of July holiday. ***For the 2021/2022 year, Christmas Holidays will be observed on December 23 and 24. New Year's Holiday will be observed on December 31.*** All day Peach Factory is available during the Christmas and Easter holidays, during the summer, and any time distance learning occurs for Desert Christian Schools. Tuition is separate for the summer session and all day extended care.

The doors open at 6:00 a.m. for morning care and children are dismissed to their classrooms in time for school to start. The children return after school and must be picked up prior to 6:00 p.m. If a child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m., an additional **\$15** for any portion of the first ten minutes plus \$1 for every minute after that will be billed to the family account. Any parent who is consistently late in picking up their child will lose the privilege of having their child in the Peach Factory program.

In order to attend the Peach Factory program, each child must be registered as either a regular or an occasional user. Regular users attend Peach Factory weekly and tuition is paid by the month. Occasional users attend on an as-needed basis and tuition is charged for the days attended.

On minimum days, all students are allowed to attend Peach Factory until usual school dismissal at no charge. After that time normal charges incur.

Monthly tuition for regular users is set at a lower rate by averaging in all school days, holidays, and in-service days. Because of this, no tuition adjustment needs to be made during ***single day holiday*** or teacher professional development days. ***Months with holiday weeks may be charged a higher monthly rate.*** Daily rates for all-day Peach Factory is available for occasional users and those students who need child care only during holidays, holiday weeks, or teacher professional development days.

All students must be signed in and out by an adult listed on the student's emergency pick-up list, or otherwise authorized by the parent. If this adult is unknown, then I.D. will be required. During the morning hours students are to be signed in at their Peach Factory classrooms.

LOST/STOLEN ITEMS RESPONSIBILITY

DCS is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Items are taken to the lost and found and kept for a maximum of two weeks at which time items are donated to charity.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY PLAN

The objective of the Desert Christian Schools Crisis Management and Security Plan is to provide the maximum practical protection for students and staff in the event of a crisis.

To meet this objective, students and staff are prepared and instructed through student drills and staff trainings. The complete Crisis Management and Security Plan is available for parent review at any office.

Since no two emergencies are the same in nature, scope, or magnitude, the school's plans are basic, flexible, and subject to modification as the need arises. Modification is at the discretion of the administration or law enforcement personnel. However, in any emergency, the following

priorities shall apply:

1. Protection of life.
2. Prevention of injury.
3. Protection of property.
4. Preparation of the campus for extended stay or evacuation.

In an effort to help keep our campus secure, there are designated DCS staff performing security duties during the day and at special events.

KNIGHT'S CAFÉ

Knight's Café is the in-house food service department for Desert Christian Schools. Knights Café will serve lunches only for the Learning Tree Preschool. TK -12th grade families will be asked to pack lunches, snacks, and drinks for their students ***daily. TK-8th grade families may choose to pre-order a catered lunch to be delivered to their student's classroom. Details are provided via email.***

Food delivery services such as Uber Eats, Grub Hub, etc. will *NOT* be allowed for TK-8th grade students at DCS. High school students may utilize delivery services for lunch.

ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL: If desired, parents may bring food in and drop it off at the main office for students. Please be sure to label your child's lunch. If it is determined that a student unexpectedly did not bring lunch to school, the student may be given an emergency lunch. The charge will be placed on the student's account in FACTS.

FOOD ALLERGIES

It is a parental obligation to provide the school, prior to the start of every year, with documentation from their child's physician supporting a diagnosis of food allergy, and any risk of anaphylaxis (if applicable) identifying any food to which the child is allergic. Providing a list of substitute meals would also be helpful. Food substitutions will not be made for personal preference.

HEALTH INFORMATION

PROCEDURES

It is important that every parent cooperates fully with the school health program. Regulations are designed to protect the well-being of all children and to guard as much as possible against avoidable absences for health reasons.

When there are symptoms of illness or other indications that a child is not well enough for school activities, other arrangements must be made for their care. A child with a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, yellow nasal discharge, COVID-19, or COVID-19 symptoms is to remain at home.

When a child becomes ill at school, he/she will be isolated and the parent will be called at work or home, to make arrangements for the student to be picked up within the hour.

The school has no provisions for care of children who are ill. Proper care at the beginning of an illness can often shorten its duration.

Exposure to communicable diseases and any infectious illnesses of other family members, such as pink eye, chicken pox, COVID-19, and head lice, should be promptly reported to the ***school nurse*** so that the school is alerted to watch for early symptoms and provide families with helpful information. The school will send home a notice with helpful information when made aware that children have been exposed to an infectious disease.

Children who return to school after an illness, need to complete a health check by the ***school nurse or*** health clerk BEFORE going to their classroom. Students **MUST** be 24 hours free of flu symptoms and fever without fever reducing drugs, before they are eligible to return to school.

If the absence is due to a communicable disease or unexplained rash, a doctor's note releasing the child to return to school is required.

The school will not administer any form of medication to students without a signed Medication Authorization form, which may be obtained in the school office. All prescription medications must be in a labeled prescription bottle and all over-the-counter medication, including homeopathic medicine, must be in its original container. All medication will be kept in the health

or program office. Students may not carry prescription or non-prescription drugs around campus or have them in their possession at any time.

COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR THE 2021/2022 YEAR

Student and staff health and wellbeing are a priority at Desert Christian. A comprehensive health and safety plan will be provided to parents via email prior to the school year.

Parents should complete a health screening before being **bringing students** on campus. Students will NOT be allowed on campus if 1) their temperature is 100.4 or greater, 2) they show symptoms of COVID-19, and 3) they have had a “close contact” with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

In addition to daily health checks, students will be asked to 1) maintain proper physical distancing to other students and staff, 2) wear a face mask at all times unless performing a task which requires the removal of the mask such as eating, drinking, running, etc., 3) frequently wash their hands or use hand sanitizer, 4) not share food, drinks, classroom supplies, etc. with other students.

IMMUNIZATIONS

By California State Law (Health and Safety Code 120325-102380), no child will be allowed to attend school until a legally acceptable immunization record is presented.

Families who decide to waive immunizations for medical reasons, must see their health care provider. The only persons authorized to grant medical exemptions from state-mandated vaccinations will be licensed M.D.s and D.O.s (Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine).

Medical Exemptions: Under Senate Bills (SB) 276 and SB 714 (Pan, 2019), all new medical exemptions for school and child care entry must be issued through CAIR-ME beginning January 1, 2021. Medical exemptions can only be issued by MDs or Dos licensed in California and must meet applicable Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) criteria.

CA SB 277 allows that those families who have a PBE signed by a health care provider in effect prior to January 1, 2016 will still be exempt from required immunizations until entering the next grade span. Grade spans are as follows: (A) Birth to preschool (B) Kindergarten to 6th Grade (C) 7th Grade to 12th Grade.

A student who has not completed all mandatory immunization requirements must become fully immunized against all diseases for which immunizations are required. A complete list of immunizations are provided at <http://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-231.pdf>.

Students can be admitted conditionally as long as all immunizations are completed within the established time period addressed in Section 6035 of Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 8 of the California Code of Regulations. Students who fail to comply within the required time periods will be excluded from further school attendance. DCS Health Clerk will be periodically reviewing the records of all students admitted conditionally to ensure that such students become fully immunized against all diseases for which immunizations are required, within the established time periods.

All first grade students must have a physical examination including the California form filled out and signed by a doctor within 18 months of entry into first grade. As part of this CA state physical examination for children entering first grade, health providers will screen students for TB and test them only if a risk factor for TB is present. This TB screening must be documented on the immunization record.

All seventh grade students who have been vaccinated starting as an infant must have two MMR and a Tdap booster before entering seventh grade.

The law provides that if DCS has good cause to believe a student has been exposed to a disease for which he/she has not been immunized, that student may be temporarily excluded from attending school until the local health officer (i.e. the local County Department of Public Health) is satisfied that the student is no longer at risk of developing or transmitting the disease. (Health and Safety Code Section 120335(b).

Questions can be addressed to ***the school nurse, health clerk, or*** Heather Welch at 661-948-5071,

Ext. 2017, or email hwelch@desertchristian.com. You may also visit <http://www.shotsforschool.org/k-12/> for more information.

INSURANCE RESPONSIBILITY

Should a child become injured at school or at a school function and require medical attention, the parents' health insurance carrier is responsible as the primary insurer for the child.

TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

Only DCS staff and approved volunteers may provide transportation for students to and from DCS activities. Staff and volunteer drivers must have an approved "Application to Provide Transportation to DCS Activities" on file. In addition, high school student drivers must have authorization from their parents. DCS, its staff, and volunteer drivers are held blameless in the event of accident.

It is the responsibility of the parent to communicate to their child any special transportation arrangements related to whom they may or may not ride with and it is the student's responsibility to follow those directions. Individuals who provide transportation must do so in a safe manner.

Desert Christian Schools values the safety of your child and because of that; students are not allowed to take UBER, LYFT, or any other ride service to and from school. These drivers are not supposed to transport passengers under the age of 18 without an accompanying adult.

TRAFFIC PLAN

Parents of all students need to provide transportation for their children to and from school. All drivers transporting students must adhere to the designated traffic plan and obey the direction of the school-designated traffic monitors.

The speed limit on campus is 10 mph at all times.

BICYCLES

Students may ride their bicycles to and from school. They must adhere to all safety standards of the California Highway Patrol. They need to provide a lock to secure their bike in the designated area. The school is not responsible for theft of bicycles.

DCS VEHICLES

Any concerns or questions concerning school bus or vans should be directed to **Heather Shreves** at ext. **2003**.

School Vehicle Rider Guidelines

In order to assure the safety of all school vehicle riders, the following guidelines are set forth by DCS. It is expected that all riders be familiar with and follow these rules.

Required on school vehicles

- Riders are to board and exit in a controlled manner.
- The driver is in charge at all times and his/her authority is to be respected in every situation.
- When the rider boards the vehicle, he/she is expected to choose a seat and stay seated in it, facing forward. The driver may assign seats.
- Talking is to be kept at an acceptable level.
- If the bus is equipped with seatbelts, they must be worn at all times.
- In the van, seatbelts must be worn at all times.
- Students may use cell phones while on school buses for receiving and making telephone calls only if permission is given by the bus driver.

Not permitted on school vehicles

- Standing up, switching of seats, or facing backwards.
- Shouting, whistling, or other disturbing noises.
- Destruction of vehicle or throwing of any objects, such as rubber bands, paper wads, etc.
- Pushing or shoving on or while waiting for the bus or van.
- Aerosol cans.
- Eating food or drinking beverages.
- Gum chewing.
- Using cell phones or electronics to play games, listen to music, or surf the web.
- Placing feet on the back of the seat.
- No wearing of cleats or spikes on school vehicles.

- Animals are not allowed on school buses. California law states “No animals except those specified in Civil Code Section 54.2 shall be transported in a school bus, SPAB, or youth bus.”

BUS REFERRAL PROCESS

In an effort to help students follow the guidelines, bus drivers will alert students when a guideline has been violated on the bus. If the behavior is not corrected, a referral will be issued.

On the first referral the student will be referred to an administrator.

On the second referral an administrator will contact

the parent.

On the third and fourth referral the student may be restricted from riding the bus for a specified period of time as determined by the administrator.

On the fifth referral the student may no longer be allowed to ride the bus for the remainder of the school year.

STANDARDS FOR DRESS

Please refer to Standards of Dress in each program’s section.



MINIMUM AND NON-SCHOOL DAYS CALENDAR 2021/2022

Dates subject to change—

Calendars in DCS newsletters will have changes and additions

SEPTEMBER

- 1 **KINDERGARTEN FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**
- 2 **1ST GRADE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**
- 3 **NO SCHOOL K-1**
- 6 Labor Day,
ALL PROGRAMS CLOSED
- 7 **2ND-12TH GRADE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**

OCTOBER

- 11 Teacher Professional Development, **NO SCHOOL**, Peach Factory Available

NOVEMBER

- 22 Teacher Professional Development,
NO SCHOOL, Peach Factory Available
- 23-24 Thanksgiving Holiday, **NO SCHOOL**,
Peach Factory Available
- 25 Thanksgiving Day,
ALL PROGRAMS CLOSED
- 26 Thanksgiving Holiday,
ALL PROGRAMS CLOSED

DECEMBER

- 17 **MINIMUM DAY**,
Peach Factory Available
- 20-31 Christmas Vacation, **NO SCHOOL**,
Peach Factory Available
- 23 Christmas Eve Holiday,
ALL PROGRAMS CLOSED
- 24 Christmas Day Holiday,
ALL PROGRAMS CLOSED
- 25 Christmas Day
- 31 New Year's Day Holiday, **ALL PROGRAMS CLOSED**

JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day
- 3 Teacher Professional Development, **NO SCHOOL**, Peach Factory Available
- 17 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day,
NO SCHOOL, PF Available

FEBRUARY

- 18 Teacher Professional Development, **NO SCHOOL**, Peach Factory Available
- 21 Presidents' Day, **NO SCHOOL**,
Peach Factory Available

APRIL

- 11-15 Easter Vacation, **NO SCHOOL**, Peach
Factory Available
- 18 Teacher Professional Development,
NO SCHOOL, Peach Factory Available

MAY

- 30 Memorial Day,
ALL PROGRAMS CLOSED

JUNE

- 6 **MINIMUM DAY**,
Peach Factory Available
- 7 Last Day of School, **MINIMUM DAY**,
Peach Factory Available