

www.easternchristian.org

Mission Statement

Adopted: March 17, 2009

By providing an excellent academic curriculum, offering a variety of extra-curricular activities, and assembling a caring, culturally diverse community, we, with support of parents and local churches, empower students from Christian families to develop their gifts within the context of a Reformed Christian worldview so that they can act as Christ's transforming agents in a global society.

Statements of Beliefs

As a Reformed educational institution, we believe that God is sovereign over all creation. We make a connection to God's claim in every subject, not just in biblical studies or chapel; in all behavior, including language, dress; and in all attitudes, including those toward others and toward property. The overall purpose of an Eastern Christian education, shaped by this Reformed perspective, is to encourage students to use their heads, hearts and hands for God and to use discernment to create a worldview that is formed through the lens of faith.

Engaging the Mind

We believe that this is not a throw-away world; God will renew it rather than destroy it. This makes all actions to improve life on earth worthwhile. It makes us also recognize that all children are made in the image of God and are worthy of our best teaching efforts, regardless of learning style. Our responsibility is to educate each child to the best of his/her ability and help each child recognize the gifts that s/he possesses.

Nurturing the Spirit

We believe that the line between good and evil runs through people and organizations, rather than around them. No person or no thing is absolutely evil or absolutely good. The world cannot be divided into good and bad guys. We all fall short of the glory of God. Education, therefore, through the action of the Holy Spirit, always appeals to the heart, and has as its purpose to lead students to follow Christ actively.

We believe, therefore, that the spirit must be nurtured so that the students gain self-confidence in discovering the gifts that God has given them. The development of discernment that results from self-confidence and recognition of spiritual gifts sets the tone and community of the school.

Transforming the World

Just as the discovery and use of God-given gifts nurture the spirit of the individual and the school, we believe that this self-knowledge also produces the desire to share those gifts with others and to provide leadership for the community and for the world.

This is appropriate, for we believe that Christ, through the agency of human beings, wants to restore everything in the world to His definition of how it should be. We, therefore, engage culture, familiar and unfamiliar, and do so in the confidence that God is in control.

Engaging • Nurturing • Transforming

Eastern Christian School began on August 17, 1892, as 65 persons gathered in the basement of Second Christian Reformed Church to create the Holland Reformed School Society, later renamed Christian School Society. The first classes were held in the basement of the First and Second Christian Reformed Churches. The society opened its doors for schooling in 1892 by renting a church's classrooms for a K–4 school of 102 students. Grades were added regularly and a high school, known as Eastern Academy, was established in 1919. Consolidation of North Fourth Street Christian School, Midland Park Christian School, Pine Street Christian School, along with the Eastern Christian High School was finalized in 1951. Now Eastern Christian has three campuses, nearly one thousand students and a large faculty. It draws most of its students from within a ten mile radius, but some students come from as far as Newark in the south, Sussex in the north and out to Emerson, Hoboken, Jersey City and New York City. It is approved by the New Jersey State Department of Education and is accredited by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges. Eastern Christian School is a member of Christian Schools International.

This school system is governed by a Board of Directors elected in an annual election by association members; association members are school supporters who have contributed within the past year and who hold membership in a church of Reformed persuasion, and meet all other requirements as shall from time to time be prescribed by the by-laws. The school board determines policies for Eastern Christian and directs the administrators to carry out its policies. The school's building principals are a leadership team; together they serve the staff and students in carrying out the school's mission.

The school's mission is to serve parents by guiding God's children toward a life of responsive Christian discipleship. The people primarily accountable for achieving this mission are teachers; however, the school board expects every participant in this school—custodians, secretaries, bus drivers, volunteers, principals, board members, parents, pastors, students, grandparents and community supporters—to support this aim.

Eastern Christian's mission is based on God's infallible Word, the Bible, and its explication in the ecumenical creeds and confessions of the Reformed tradition; all association members, including teachers, must subscribe to this summary:

THE BIBLE • That God by His Holy Word reveals Himself; renews man's understanding of God, of man himself, of his fellowman, and of the world; directs man in all his relationships and activities; and therefore guides His people also in the education of their children.

CREATION • That in their education children must come to learn that the world, and man's calling in it, can rightly be understood only in their relation to the Triune God who by His creation, restoration, and governance directs all things to the coming of His kingdom and the glorification of His name.

SIN • That because man's sin, which brought upon all mankind the curse of God, alienates him from his Creator, his neighbor, and the world; distorts his view of the true meaning and purpose of life; and misdirects human culture; man's sin also corrupts the education of children.

JESUS CHRIST • That through Jesus Christ and the work of His Holy Spirit, we are graciously forgiven, guided in the truth, and recommitted to our original calling. Only through Him can there be renewal of our educational enterprise because He is Redeemer of, and the Light and the Way for, our human life in all its range and variety.

SCHOOLS • That the purpose of Christian schools is to educate children for a life of obedience to their

calling in this world as image-bearers of God, that this calling is to know God's Word and His creation, to consecrate the whole of human life to God, to love their fellowman, and to be stewards in their God-given cultural task.

PARENTS • That the primary responsibility for education rests upon parents to whom children are entrusted by God, and that Christian parents should accept this obligation in view of the covenantal relationship which God established with believers and their children. They should seek to discharge this obligation through school associations and school boards, which engage the services of Christian teachers in Christian schools.

TEACHERS • That Christian teachers, both in obedience to God and in cooperation with parents and the Christian community, have a unique pedagogical responsibility while educating the child in school.

PUPILS • That Christian schools must take into account the variety of abilities, needs, and responsibilities of young persons, that the endowments and calling of young persons as God's image-bearers and their defects and inadequacies as sinners require that such learning goals and such curricula will be selected as will best prepare them to live as obedient Christians; and that only with constant attention to such pedagogical concerns will education be truly Christian.

COMMUNITY • That because God's covenant embraces not only parents and their children but also the whole Christian community to which they belong, and because Christian education contributes directly to the advancement of God's Kingdom, it is the obligation not only of the parents but also of this Christian community to establish and maintain Christian schools, to pray for, work for, and give generously in their support.

EDUCATIONAL FREEDOM • That Christian schools, organized and administered in accordance with legitimate standards and provisions for day schools, should be fully recognized in society as free to function according to these principles.

Teachers in the schools of the Eastern Christian School Association recognize that their calling to the profession is based upon our commitment to God as Creator and Lord and to His Word as the standard for faith and living. They recognize that while the parents of students are primarily responsible before God for the instruction of covenant youth, the Christian school is the medium which parents have chosen to enlist partnership in fulfilling this responsibility. Faculty recognizes the Board of Eastern Christian School Association as the governing authority delegated by the parents to see that the schools are administered well.

Within this framework Christian educators affirm their belief in the worth and dignity of man as a being created in the image of God and recognize their obligation to pursue the truth, to encourage scholarship and to promote meaningful Christian citizenship in our democracy. Christian educators regard as essential to these goals the protection of the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of educational opportunities for all.

They also acknowledge their responsibility to practice their profession according to the ethical standards as revealed in the Word of God and expressed in the basic Reformed principles (outlined below) to which our Christian school community subscribes.

Therefore, Eastern Christian faculty understands the following principals of commitment:

COMMITMENT TO THE STUDENT • We measure success by the progress of each student toward the achievement of his maximum potential as a child of God. We therefore work to stimulate the spirit of inquiry and the acquisition of knowledge and understanding. We seek to guide the student in the making of his own commitment to the claims of Christ and in the formulation of his personal goals in the Kingdom of God.

In fulfilling our obligations to the student, we --

- 1. Cultivate the spiritual life of the student in all our relationships with him.
- 2. Strive to deal justly and considerately with each student, taking particular note of individual and cultural differences and needs.
- 3. Encourage the student to study varying points of view, ever holding before him the norms of the Word of God.
- 4. Seek constantly to improve learning facilities and opportunities.
- 5. Withhold confidential information about a student or his home unless it is required by law or unless we deem that its release serves professional purposes without unnecessarily hurting the student or his home.
- 6. Make discreet use of available information about the student.
- 7. Conduct conferences with or concerning students in an appropriate place and manner.
- 8. Give counsel willingly to a student whenever necessary.
- 9. Refrain from commenting unprofessionally about a student or his home.
- 10. Tutor only in accordance with officially approved policies.
- 11. Inform appropriate individuals and agencies of the student's educational needs and assist in providing an understanding of his educational experiences.

COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY • We acknowledge the responsibility delegated to us by the ECSA Community to educate its covenant youth. We therefore accept our obligation to participate in the development of a sound Christian educational program and to interpret this program to the supporting community.

In addition, we have a responsibility to the broader community. We are obligated to assist in the development of public educational programs and policies and to interpret these to the public also.

In fulfilling our obligation to the ECSA community, we --

- 1. Will maintain an active communicant membership in an evangelical Protestant church and such affiliation shall be consistent with Item 7 of the Teacher Contract.
- 2. Dedicate ourselves to a life which causes no reproach to the causes of Christ.
- 3. Provide education that is truly Christian and at the same time has high academic standards.
- 4. Treat all students without discrimination.
- 5. Communicate with parents concerning the needs and progress of students.
- 6. Accept advice graciously from parents and other members of the community.
- 7. Hold as confidential information received from parents regarding their children.

In fulfilling our obligation to the broader community, we --

- 1. Appreciate all racial, religious, cultural, and social elements in the community.
- 2. Refrain from speaking disparagingly of the community in which we teach.
- 3. Participate personally in civic and cultural projects of the community.
- 4. Prepare students to be intelligent Christian citizens.
- 5. Instill within students an active appreciation for democracy without advocating the principles of any particular party.
- 6. Encourage students to participate actively in community affairs consistent with Christian living.
- 7. Urge student participation in educational and cultural activities sponsored by community groups.

COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION • We recognize that a profession must accept responsibility for the conduct of its members, and we understand that our conduct may be regarded as representative. Therefore, both as individuals and as members of the profession, we must maintain high professional standards, encourage competent people of all cultures to become trained educators, evaluate the programs of the profession as a whole, and promote that which is consistent with out commitment to Christian education.

In fulfilling our obligations to the profession, we --

- 1. Seek broadened teaching ability and mastery of our fields by continued study, research and application of new methods.
- 2. Take an active role in the affairs of our profession and thus promote the welfare of Christian education in general.
- 3. Interpret and use the writings of others and the findings of educational research with intellectual honesty.
- 4. Help responsibly in the development and implementation of policies affecting education.
- 5. Refrain from assigning professional duties to nonprofessional personnel when such assignment is not in the best interest of the student.
- 6. Report dishonorable practices to an administrator if the problem cannot be resolved by personal conference.
- Provide, upon request, a statement of specific reasons for administrative recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
- 8. Respond accurately to requests for information or evaluations of colleagues seeking professional positions.
- 9. Encourage those with appropriate gifts to enter the field of Christian education.
- 10. Provide applicants seeking information about a position with an honest description of the assignment, the conditions of work, and the related matters.
- 11. Cooperate in the selective recruitment of prospective teachers, including those culturally different, and in the orientation of those colleagues new to their positions.
- 12. Refrain from unprofessional and unchristian attitudes, practices, and remarks.
- 13. Accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession in the exercise of their professional rights and responsibilities and support them when unjustly accused or mistreated.
- 14. Keep the trust under which confidential information is exchanged.
- 15. Refrain from exerting undue influence based on the authority of our positions in the determination of professional decisions by colleagues.
- 16. Never undermine the character or work of a colleague directly or by implication, nor make an issue to others of differences between us.
- 17. Publicly evaluate the educational profession or any part of it only in a constructive manner and after careful consideration of all the facts.

COMMITMENT TO THE ADMINISTRATION • We recognize that the administrators are the professionally trained educational leaders and executives hired by the board to administer our schools. They are, therefore, worthy of our respect and loyal support.

In fulfilling our obligations to the administration, we --

- 1. Support the leadership of the administrator in the development of the educational program.
- 2. Work loyally with the administrator to develop and sustain effective operating procedures to further the objectives of the school.
- 3. Meet each class session; or if unable to do so, promptly notify the principal.
- 4. Provide necessary aid to substitute teachers according to school policy.
- 5. Attend and participate in faculty, committee, and departmental meetings.

- 6. Hold inviolate all confidential information received in faculty and committee meetings and use discretion in divulging any school business.
- 7. Keep proper records and make requested reports promptly.

COMMITMENT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS • We recognize the Board of the ECSA as the governing authority delegated by the parents to see that the schools are administered well. It is, therefore, worthy of our respect and loyal support.

In fulfilling our obligations to the board of directors, we --

- 1. Work loyally to uphold the standards, objectives, policies, and the procedures adopted by the Board of Directors.
- 2. Make appropriate use of time granted for professional purposes.
- 3. Conduct professional business through the recognized educational and professional channels.
- 4. Accept no gratuities or gifts that might influence our judgment in the exercise of our professional duties.
- 5. Engage in no outside employment that will impair the effectiveness of our professional service and permit no commercial exploitation of our professional position.
- 6. Seek promotion only through channels established by the Board, and not by self-advertising or seeking offers elsewhere as a means to force increased prestige and salary.
- 7. Apply for or offer a position only on the basis of professional and legal qualifications.
- 8. Apply for a specific position only when it is known to be vacant and refrain from such practices as underbidding or commenting adversely about other candidates.
- 9. Give prompt notice of any change in availability of service, in status of applications, or in change in position.
- 10. Adhere to the conditions of a contract or to the terms of an appointment until either it has been terminated legally or by mutual consent.
- 11. Resign when we can no longer uphold and foster sympathetically the theology, objectives, policies, and procedures of the school system.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Adopted January 1, 2013

The Board of Directors of Eastern Christian School Association desires to support and encourage its teachers professionally to remain current regarding instruction, leadership, educational ideas, methods, materials and technology. Eastern Christian School has a strong culture that supports our belief that teachers are the single most important school-related factor in student learning. Improving student learning is our base line goal for clarifying standards we believe will anchor instruction and establish the Eastern Christian way of teaching and learning.

Therefore, the foundational components of our Career Development Plan are based on an emphasis on continuing professional learning and experience. Eastern Christian is committed to providing targeted and purposeful professional learning for each teacher to develop knowledge, skills, practices and dispositions to meet every student's learning needs.

The Eastern Christian Career Development Pathway provides opportunity for teachers to move through professional pathways from Novice Level Teacher to Master Teacher, Senior Specialist or Education Leadership with increasing compensation.

Teacher Pathway	Education Leadership Pathway	Senior Specialist Pathway
Novice Inexperienced new hires up to three (3) years - \$36,500		
Requirements to Move to Experienced Teacher Level • State Certification (or ECSA Board waiver) • Required ECPDA Courses • Reformed Christian Worldview • Instructional applications of MAP Data • 4MAT Lesson Planning • Evidence of professional growth in annual Professional Growth Reviews		
Experienced Teacher \$38,500-\$60,000	Experienced Teacher Leadership Pathway \$38,500-\$60,000	Experienced Teacher Sr. Specialist Pathway \$38,500-\$60,000
Compensation increased to \$38,500 or \$1,000 over current salary + \$1,500 per year to be used towards an approved masters degree program from an accredited university.	Compensation increased to \$38,500 or \$1,000 over current salary + \$1,500 per year additional tuition reimbursement (2 years) and Praxis Test Fees	Compensation increased to \$38,500 or \$1,000 over current salary + \$1,500 per year additional tuition reimbursement (2 years) and Praxis Test Fees
All experienced faculty and new hires (75%-100%) who are state certified or ECSA Board endorsed with 3 or more years teaching experience.	All experienced faculty and new hires (100%) who are state certified or ECSA Board endorsed with 3 or more years teaching experience and are enrolled in an approved Masters Degree program leading to a school administrator endorsement or principal endorsement may apply for this pathway.	All experienced faculty and new hires (75%-100%) who are state certified or ECSA Board endorsed with 3 or more years teaching experience and are enrolled in an approved Masters Degree program leading to a specialist endorsement may apply for this pathway.

Teacher Pathway	Education Leadership Pathway	Senior Specialist Pathway
Requirements to obtain Senior Teacher Designation • Masters Degree or at least 30 graduate or G.E. credits • Track record of sustained professional growth • Annual Professional Growth Reviews • Ongoing professional development (avg. 2 credits per year) For newly hired experienced teachers, completion of required ECPDA courses	Requirements to obtain Senior Teacher Designation • Masters Degree in Administrative Leadership or Educational Leadership • Track record of sustained professional growth • Annual Professional Growth Reviews • Ongoing professional development (avg. 2 credits per year) For newly hired experienced teachers, completion of required ECPDA courses	Requirements to obtain Senior Teacher Designation • Masters Degree in Educational Specialist Field, i.e. Literacy, LDTC, Curriculum Supervision & Development, Media, Technology • Track record of sustained professional growth • Annual Professional Growth Reviews • Ongoing professional development (avg. 2 credits per year) For newly hired experienced teachers, completion of required ECPDA courses
Senior Teacher \$45,000-\$70,000 Compensation increased to \$45,000 or \$1,000 over current salary.	Senior Teacher Leadership Pathway \$45,000-\$70,000 Compensation increased to \$45,000 or \$1,000 over current salary + \$2,500 one time award upon completion of degree to be applied to the Leader to Leader Mentor Fees	Senior Teacher Senior Specialist Pathway \$45,000-\$70,000 Compensation increased to \$45,000 or \$1,000 over current salary
Requirements to Obtain Master Teacher Designation Must be employed 75% or greater 15 additional graduate or G.E. credits Application (annual due date - June 30) Portfolio Nomination by administrator or supervisor Evidence of exceptional professionalism Evidence of living out our Eastern Christian Core Values in life and practice Track record of sustained professional growth Annual Professional Growth reviews Ongoing professional development (avg. 2 credits per year)	Requirements to Obtain Leadership Designation At least one year of 150 hours serving in a leadership internship as agreed upon in collaboration with your principal or supervisor. Proposal for leading a project which will enhance the mission and vision of Eastern Christian (annual due date – January 15) Evidence of exceptional professionalism Evidence of living out our Eastern Christian Core Values in life and practice Track record of sustained professional growth Annual Professional Growth reviews Ongoing professional development (avg. 2 credits per year)	Requirements to Obtain Senior Specialist Designation Must be 75% or greater Certification Completed Completion of Research Project or internship in an approved area of specialty. Application (annual due date January 15) Evidence of exceptional professionalism Evidence of living out our Eastern Christian Core Values in life and practice. Track record of sustained professional growth Annual Professional Growth reviews Ongoing professional development (avg. 2 credits per year)

Teacher Pathway	Education Leadership Pathway	Senior Specialist Pathway
Master Teacher Stipend of \$2000 - \$4000 per year for three years	Education Leadership Project Stipend of \$2000-\$4000 per year for the duration of the project	Senior Specialist Project Stipend of \$2000-\$4000 per year for the duration of the project
A Master Teacher Level candidate who, as a 75-100% teacher, has reached Senior Level by earning a Master's Degree or its equivalent in G.E. credits plus an additional 15 graduate or G.E. credits may apply with a nomination from an administrator or supervisor. A committee composed of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, the teacher's Principal and a selected experience educator will review the application, interview the candidate and evaluate the teaching portfolio.	An Education Leadership candidate who, as a full time teacher, has reached Senior Level by earning a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership and has served at least one year in a designated teacher-leadership role may apply for an Educational Leadership designation. This position will include a mutually agreed upon project as determined by the Education Council. The project will have a defined timeline of not longer than 3 years.	A Senior Specialist candidate who, as a 75-100% teacher, has reached Senior Level by earning a Master's Degree with a special emphasis, i.e. Literacy, LDTC, Curriculum Supervision & Development, Media, Technology, may apply for an internship position. This position will include a mutually agreed upon project as determined by the Education Council. The project will have a defined timeline of not longer than 3 years.

This salary schedule is reviewed on a periodic basis. The Board of Directors shall retain the right at all times to make changes in compensation.

Other Allowances

- 1. Department Heads, Faculty Team Leaders and Head Teachers shall be eligible to receive additional compensation (\$1,000 2,500).
- 2. Any teacher who by contract is hired to work the 11th month (one additional month over the regular school year) will be eligible for additional compensation at a rate of 10% of their base salary.

Benefits

Eastern Christian School offers its employees benefits as determined by the Board of Directors annually.

Educational Allowance - Professional Growth

All full and part-time professional personnel are required to take professional growth credits. Professional Development is measured in three (3) year cycles.

- If employed 50% or more, teachers and administrators will earn six (6) approved graduate or graduate equivalency credits.
- If employed less than 50%, teachers and administrators will earn three (3) approved graduate or graduate equivalency credits.

Reimbursement

Approved Conventions/Conferences/Workshops

- Registration fees
- Reasonable lodging expenses
- Meal expenses not to exceed \$25.00 per day
- Travel allowance based on the IRS mileage reimbursement for business travel.

Approved Graduate Courses (must be from an accredited educational institution)

• Reimbursement will be given to a maximum of six (6) graduate credit hours in each three year (3) cycle. Reimbursement is not to exceed \$650 per credit hour. Reimbursement is not made for books or travel expenses incurred in obtaining graduate credits.

SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

CSI PENSION • Eastern Christian participates in the CSI Employer Contribution Plan (ECP). The ECP required that Eastern Christian make a 6% pension fund contribution on your behalf. This provides retirement, death and short term disability benefits.

LIFE INSURANCE • If you work 70% or more, you receive life insurance of one times your annual salary. This is entirely paid for by the Association. Also, the Association will continue to pay your salary to your family for two months after your death. You may also purchase supplemental life insurance for yourself and family members through payroll deduction.

HEALTH INSURANCE • The Association offers its employees health and dental insurance plans. You contribution to health and dental insurance may be deducted from your pay under a Flexible Spending Plan (pre-tax). The Association makes a fixed contribution toward the cost of the plan chosen. You must work at least 75% to be eligible for this benefit. If you work 75-99%, the Association contribution is based upon the percentage you work.

FLEXIBLE SPENDING/DEPENDANT CARE SPENDING ACCOUNTS • The Flexible Benefits Plan allows you to set aside a portion of your salary before taxes are calculated for reimbursement of IRS-approved health and dependent care expenses that would otherwise have to be paid with after-tax dollars.

MOVING EXPENSES • The Association will pay up to 7% of your starting salary to move you to New Jersey.

ECSA ATTENDANCE • Eastern Christian School requires that its employee's school aged children attend Eastern Christian School. The Board of Directors reserves the right to waive this requirement based on the educational needs of the child(ren) of the employee.

ECSA TUITION • Full-time employees may request a reduction of 13% per family. Those working 75% or more may request this reduction proportionate to the fraction of full-time they work.

DIRECT DEPOSIT • You are encouraged to have your paycheck directly deposited in your own checking or savings account at the bank of your choice.

SICK LEAVE • Each employee working 50% or greater shall earn 10 days' sick leave annually between September 1 and August 31 without deduction of pay. Five of the ten days earned each year may be used for illnesses in an employee's immediate family (spouse, child, and parents). Newly eligible employees will begin the year with a bank of 5 days. Following their fifth month of employment, sick days accrue at the rate of 1 day per month until 10 days have been earned.

DAYS OF GRIEVING • Absence for death of an immediate family member (including spouse, child, grandchild, parents) shall not exceed five working days within seven calendar days immediately following the day of death in each instance. The minimum amount of time charged is one half day.

PERSONAL DAYS • Each employee working 75% or greater shall be granted three days for personal absence leave between September 1 and August 31 annually without deduction of pay. The minimum amount of time charged is one half day. When the school calendar calls for a half-day holiday, personal time taken shall be charged as one full day.

Please not that this is simply a summary. It is not intended to replace any policy or define any benefit.