



Eastern Christian School Association

50 Oakwood Avenue
North Haledon, NJ 07508-2449

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 the Mind, Nurturing the Spirit, Transforming the World”

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 our 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.
7. 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 --

- I. 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.
- II. 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 School way of teaching and learning.

Therefore, the foundation 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 School Career Development Plan provides opportunity for teachers to move through a professional pathway from Novice Level Teacher to Master Teacher with increasing compensation.

Novice Level Teacher - \$36,500

- Inexperienced new hires up to three (3) years

Experienced Teacher - \$37,000 - \$60,000

- All experienced faculty and new hires who are State Certified or ECSA Board endorsed with three (3) or more years teaching experience.

Senior Teacher - \$45,000 - \$70,000

- All experienced faculty with at least a Masters Degree or equivalent in credits (30).

Master Teacher Level – per academic year stipend range \$2,500 – \$4,000 to be determined annually

- A Master Teacher Level candidate who, as a full-time teacher, has reached Senior Level by earning a Masters Degree or its equivalent in GE credits plus an additional 15 graduate or GE credits may apply with a nomination from an administrator or supervisor.



SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
BENEFITS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL EMPLOYEES
(70% or more)

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH:

- Graduate Courses – must be from an accredited educational institution. Reimbursement will be given to a maximum of six (6) graduate credit hours in a three-year (3) period. Reimbursement is not to exceed \$600 per credit hour. Reimbursement is not made for books or travel expenses incurred in obtaining graduate credits.
- Conferences – Teachers and administrators attending conferences or conventions shall be limited to the following, contingent upon available funds:
 - Registration fees
 - Reasonable lodging expenses
 - Meal expenses not to exceed the General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rate in the area of the conference.
 - Travel Allowance based on the IRS mileage reimbursement for business travel

SOCIAL SECURITY: You must contribute 6.2% of the first \$113,700 of your salary to Federal Social Security, and 1.45% of your salary to the Federal Medicare Program (no salary limit). The Association contributes a matching amount.

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

TEMPORARY DISABILITY INSURANCE: All eligible employees are covered by temporary disability insurance through the New Jersey State plan. In order to be eligible to apply for STD benefits, you must have had at least 20 calendar weeks in which you earned \$145 or more, or have earned \$7,300 or more during the 52 weeks immediately before the week in which your disability began. 0.36% on the first \$30,900 in covered wages earned during this calendar year (maximum worker contribution for 2013 is \$111.24) provides you with this benefit. Application forms are available at <http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/forms/pdfs/tdi/WESI.pdf>. If you are enrolled in the CSI pension plan, you may be eligible for additional STD benefits after you have been disabled for at least 30 days.

LIFE INSURANCE: If you work 70% (50% if employed prior to 1/22/08) 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.

NEW JERSEY STATE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE: 0.4% of the first \$30,900 of your salary provides you with unemployment insurance. New Jersey invoices Eastern Christian for your unemployment benefit amount.

HEALTH INSURANCE: The Association offers its employees health and dental insurance plans. Your contributions to health and dental insurance may be deducted from your pay under a Flexible Spending Plan (pre-tax) provided you complete the proper forms. The Association makes a fixed contribution toward the cost of the plan chosen. You must work at least 70% (50% if employed prior to 1/22/08) to be eligible for this benefit. If you work less than full time, 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 the reimbursement of IRS-approved health and dependent care expenses that would otherwise have to be paid with after-tax dollars.

ECSA SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS - Benefits For Instructional Employees (70% or more)

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

ECSA TUITION: Full-time employees may request a reduction of 13% per family. Those working 70% (50% if employed prior to 1/22/08) or more may request this reduction proportionate to the fraction of full-time they work.

TAX SHELTERED ANNUITY: All employees may have income withheld and placed into an annuity account.

CREDIT UNION: All employees may join the Northern New Jersey Credit Union to have monies withheld and deposited directly.

DIRECT DEPOSIT: You may have your paycheck directly deposited in your own checking or savings account at the bank of your choice.

SICK LEAVE: Sick leave is earned generally at the rate of one day per month, up to 10 days annually, cumulative to 30. Five of these days each year may be used to attend to sick family members. Those with one or two decades of service at EC can accumulate 40 to 50 days respectively.

FAMILY LEAVE ACT: In cases of a serious health condition of an immediate family member, your own serious health condition, the birth, adoption, or a qualifying demand arising from the active military duty (or notification of an impending call or order to active duty) for your spouse, child or parent, employees, who have worked at least 1,000 hours during the last 12 months may request unpaid leave of absence for a period not to exceed 12 weeks in a 24-month period with the guaranteed restoration of their job, or an equivalent job, at the end of that leave pursuant to the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (N.J.S.A. 34:11B-I, et seq.). Complete information is available through the Association Office.

NEW JERSEY FAMILY LEAVE INSURANCE: NJ Family Leave Insurance provides eligible employees with up to six weeks of partial wage replacement to care for newborn, adopted or seriously ill family members every year. This program is funded by a payroll tax on employees. Complete information is available through the Association Office.

DAYS OF GRIEVING: Five days are allowed for an immediate family member. Employees may take two additional days of grieving for extended family at their discretion.

PERSONAL DAYS: You are allowed two personal days annually, cumulative to three. These may not be used to extend a vacation.

FLEXIBLE PERSONAL DAYS: When a faculty member begins the school year with 30 unused sick days, he/she will be allotted 2 flexible personal days to use during that school year. These "flex" days cannot be accumulated. Flex days will be deducted from the current year's sick days. Each flex day must be requested using a special form submitted to the administrator and approved by the head of school prior to the absence stating the reason for the additional day/days. A copy of the approved form must be submitted to the head of school's office.

CHILDCARE LEAVE: A maximum of eight weeks unpaid leave is allotted for pregnancies and/or adoption. Disability benefits are also available to individuals who are pregnant.

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

1-May-13