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Independence Christian School

**Elementary
Guide to ICS**

2011 - 2012

Independence Christian School

This handbook was designed to acquaint you with our school. I hope it will answer some of your questions concerning our program. It is designed so that you and your child might become aware of your responsibility in making this a successful year. In addition to the material contained in this handbook, please be sure to read the information found in the *Guide to Curriculum*. The information contained in both of these publications will provide you and your child a better understanding of our purpose, goals and guidelines.

Welcome to our family! May we continue to develop God's character in our lives together.

Sincerely,

Ron Cushing

Principal

School Mission and Philosophy

We, the School Board and staff believe in:

- **The inspiration of the Bible, equal in all parts and without error in its origin.**
- **The one God, eternally existent Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who created man by a direct and immediate act.**
- **The pre-existence, incarnation, virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection, ascension to Heaven and second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.**
- **The fall of man, the need of regeneration by the operation of the Holy Spirit on the basis of grace alone, and the resurrection of all to life or damnation.**

A Christian School is an extension of the Christian home in training young people for time and eternity. The staff will work closely with parents to train the whole child.

The objective of our school is to provide a program, which will develop the individual spiritually, mentally, physically, and socially. The student is taught to interpret life according to God's principles and purposes. The main goal of Christian education must be to help the child fulfill the purpose for which he was created; that is, to bring glory to God. We endeavor, through qualified and dedicated Christian teachers, to make this objective a reality and help young people in their preparation for life.

A.C.S.I. Affiliation

The Association of Christian Schools International (A.C.S.I.) provides a host of services and benefits for Christian Schools. In addition to receiving enrichment through speech meets, art fairs, spelling bees, music and athletic competitions, member schools receive assistance, which prevents legal red tape. The Association also provides a standard for accreditation. As a member school, we will benefit from yearly teacher and administrator conferences, printed materials, survey information, training tapes, speakers, and the opportunity to be involved with other member schools. Part of your child's registration fee covers membership in A.C.S.I.

School Staff

All personnel of Independence Christian School must first and foremost give evidence that they have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Then, they must display good parental traits. Finally, they must be able to teach. All three of these qualifications are essential in order to have a properly balanced role model. This is the part the teacher plays in a child's life.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Our school has a non-discriminatory policy. Independence Christian School shall make no distinction in its admission policy of educational services on the grounds of race, color or national origin.

Standards of Conduct

At school, a well-adjusted and fulfilling experience can be achieved by following the standards of conduct listed (but not limited to) below:

- Follow all adult directions without comment;
- Respect the feelings and rights of others;
- Keep hand, feet and objects to self;
- Remain in assigned areas;
- Complete all work assigned on time;
- Obey all playground rules;
- Stand in line in an orderly and quiet fashion;
- Use equipment properly;
- Eat in designated areas only. NO chewing gum;
- Do not litter;
- No smoking. Cigarettes or tobacco of any kind will **NOT** be allowed on campus at any time. This includes parents, friends, and guardians;
- Books, magazines, posters, logos, labels, stickers, clothing and jewelry which are questionable in moral standards will not be allowed on school grounds and will be confiscated by the Principal.

School is a place of business, a place where we are learning more about life and our responsibility in it, we feel strongly that each student must be diligently striving to accomplish these standards. If students are not in control of their behavior and / or are behind in their schoolwork, they may have to forfeit all privileges. Privileges are extended to the responsible student.

Curriculum

Our entire curriculum is Biblically based with every course encouraging the child to seek to understand God's perspective on the subject. Programs are designed to challenge each student to his / her optimum. The basis of our reading program is phonics. Phonics begins in our Preschool and is continued until the child becomes a successful reader. Through a well-balanced program, we seek to develop the individual spiritually, mentally, physically, and socially.

Luke 2:52 “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.”

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their child’s education. Classroom help is always appreciated. If you would like to become a Room Parent, please let your child’s teacher know. Membership in the Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) is encouraged.

Office Hours

Office Hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. through the school year. Summer hours vary.

School Hours

Classes begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. School ends at 2:15 p.m. on Fridays.

Weekly Newsletter

A weekly newsletter is distributed via e-mail each Monday to every family. This newsletter contains important information regarding school activities.

Kitchen

The kitchen is “off-limits” to ALL students at ALL times, with the exception of the home economics’ class. This also applies to our staff children. Groups wanting to use the kitchen should check with the school office.

Medication

We are happy to assist you in the administration of medication for your child in accordance with your doctor’s instructions. Any prescribed medication (such as Ritalin) will be dispensed to a student with a “Medication Release” form on file. These forms are located in the school office. All prescribed medications MUST be in their original prescription bottle. It is the responsibility of the student to go to the office for their medication. ALL prescribed medication must be in tablet form. **NO LIQUID MEDICATION WILL BE DISPENSED. NO EXCEPTIONS.** Students are not permitted to carry any medication on their persons, pockets, purses, backpacks, lockers, desks, lunch pails, etc. All medication (including cough drops) must be kept in the school office or with the teacher.

Illness

If a student is sent home from school with a temperature, that student will not be allowed to return to school until the fever has been broken for a 24-hour period.

Leaving Campus

If your child needs to leave campus during the day for an appointment, please send a note to your child's teacher stating the time your child is leaving, the purpose for which he/she is leaving and the time your child will return. Date and sign the note. Parents / Guardians must sign children out through the school office.

Skateboards-Roller Blades-Bicycles

Students who ride their bikes to school must dismount before entering school grounds. Bikes may not be ridden on school grounds at any time, including before and after school. All students are required by law to wear a helmet. No skateboards or roller blades are allowed on campus at any time. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Field Trips

Students have field trips schedules throughout the school year. Each grade has particular curriculum-based outings designed for your child. These include trips to community businesses, the zoo, tide pools, Sacramento, etc. Although such off-campus experiences are of real enjoyment to the students, the main purpose is to enrich learning. Parents will be notified in advance of all field trips. **Due to limited space on some field trips, a lottery will be used to determine which parents / guardians may attend.** Permission slips for each field trip must be signed and returned no later than the day before the field trip.

Fund-Raisers

ICS fund-raisers are a source of additional income, which we use to improve our school. It is a necessary part of our operation to continue to grow. We have enjoyed great parental support and ask for your continued involvement.

Spelling Bee

All students participate in a school spelling bee. The winners then go on to the district ACSI competition.

Math Olympics

Students from each class will be selected to go to the A.C.S.I. Math Olympics to compete against other A.C.S.I. schools.

Speech Meet

Students from each class will compete in a speech meet. The winners will then go to the A.C.S.I. Speech meet to compete against other A.C.S.I. schools.

Art Festival

Each year A.C.S.I. presents us with a theme for the art festival. Students are then challenged to create an art project. The first place winners from each grade will then go on to compete with the district art festival in La Verne.

Christmas and Spring Musicals

Every student will participate in one of our two musicals. They will learn these during their music class time and perform them for family and friends.

Book Fair

Every year we have an annual book fair. Proceeds raised will enable the library to purchase new and updated materials.

Chapels

Every Thursday we have chapel in the sanctuary. Students recite Bible verses, put on plays, sing and have a good time praising Jesus and learning the Bible. Standard chapel dress is mandatory. See section on Chapel Dress. Students are not allowed to change their clothes unless their scheduled P.E. Day is Thursday.

Spiritual Emphasis Week

One week a year is set aside as a special chapel time. Our students are taught about different topics that will help them with their spiritual walk. This is a special time for the students to renew their “spiritual walk.”

Back to School Night and Open House

Twice a year we open our school to parents during the evening to come and see their child’s classroom, teacher and their child’s work.

Last Day of School Activity

Attendance is mandatory on the last day of school. The day starts out with Awards Chapel. After chapel, the students get to enjoy a picnic. Games, activities are the order of the day. Students report back to their classrooms, receive their report cards and are dismissed by their teachers. Parents are invited to join in the fun. **NO REPORT CARDS WILL BE PASSED OUT EARLY – NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Summer Camp

We offer a fun and exciting summer program for students entering grade first through eighth.

Birthdays

Students are permitted to bring cupcakes, doughnuts, cookies or other individually prepared treats for the class. Drinks are permitted as long as they are individually wrapped, such as juice boxes. Please no cakes or jugs of juice for birthdays.

STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO PASS OUT INVITATIONS TO BIRTHDAY PARTIES AT SCHOOL UNLESS INVITATIONS ARE GIVEN TO THE ENTIRE CLASS, OR INVITATIONS ARE GIVEN TO ALL THE BOYS, OR ALL THE GIRLS. PLEASE BE SENSITIVE TO THE FEELINGS OF OTHER STUDENTS.

After School Sports

We offer after school sports to all students in grades 4th and up. Grades 4th through 6th will compete in the elementary league; grades 7th and 8th will compete in the middle school league. These include: basketball, flag-

football, soccer and volleyball. We compete in a Christian league. All girls and boys of the appropriate grade level are encouraged to try out for the sports of their choice.

Hot Lunch

Hot lunch is offered daily through the Pacific Catering Company. Lunch tickets may be purchased in the school office. Menus for the current month will be sent home via the school newsletter. If your child has loss, misplaced, or forgotten his / her lunch, every attempt will be made to secure them a “snack” at a small charge to the parents.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

A parent-teacher conference is required after the 9th week of school. The conferences will be scheduled by the teacher to accommodate their schedules. Please make arrangements for both parents to attend. We encourage you to discuss problems concerning your child with the teacher. Meetings outside of the parent-teacher conference week can be scheduled through the school office. Although very tempting, please refrain from stopping a teacher before, during or after school. We ask that all “meetings” with teachers be scheduled through the school offices.

Progress and Report Cards

Independence Christian School has four 9-week grading periods. Unsatisfactory progress reports will be sent home in the 5th week of teach term to students who are failing one or more subjects or when grades have dropped by one or more grade points from the prior quarter. The purpose is to inform the parent prior to report cards so that the possibility of a failing grade might be raised. Report cards are to be signed and returned promptly. Quarter grades are averages to a semester grade and only semester grades are kept on file permanently.

Discipline

Today discipline is one of the most important areas of education. The rebelliousness we see in the world around us and our own attitudes toward authority are a result of progressive education wherein discipline is placed on a very low priority. Therefore, proper discipline is the key to a productive, purposeful, spiritual life and an effective learning environment.

Discipline is basically the responsibility of the parents. Without parental involvement and support our attempts of discipline are undermined. Each teacher has a list of posted rules and consequences. ICS works on a positive reward system. Please become familiar with them. Serious discipline problems are sent to the Principal who is

permitted by Board policy to administer necessary punishment. Should a child be a continuous discipline problem, he or she may be expelled.

Attendance

Regular school attendance is required by law and is necessary for good scholarship. It is our school policy that anyone absent 15 or more times (excused or unexcused) is considered on academic probation, meaning that advancement and promotion to the next grade will be conditional upon school board approve. Excessive absence often means that a child has missed important discussions and classroom activity that may hinder his / her education. Excessive absence is also a violation of the State of California mandatory education law.

There are 3 types of absences:

- Excused: Illness, injury, family emergency. A signed note from the parent/guardian or doctor will excuse the student. All missed work must be made up. For every day a child is out, he / she has one day back to make up the work. Any request, by a parent, for make-up work must be received by 9:00 am (the morning of the absence) to be available at 3:15. Planned absences must be prearranged. A note to the teacher explaining the absence MUST be received at least ONE WEEK PRIOR to their absence in order for the absence to be excused. This is school policy.
- Unexcused: Other absences that could have been taken care of in some other manner, even though approved by parents.
- Truants: Absence for reasons which are neither acceptable to the school or the parents, or when evidence shows that parents have misrepresented facts regarding the absence.

Consequences:

- Excused: All missed work and tests will be made up.
- Unexcused / Truant: Work and tests will not be made up. A grade of zero will be given to any missed work or tests.

Tardiness

Students arriving more than 5 minutes late must first go to the office to get a tardy slip. An unexcused tardy will be given to any student who is late and **not accompanied to the office by an adult or with a note.** Some excuses do not warrant an excused tardy i.e.: overslept, just wanted a few minutes extra to sleep, business phone calls, ill prepared for the day, lost days, etc. **Five unexcused tardies will count as one unexcused absence.** This will reflect on the student's report card. Tardiness has been a problem. The majority of our parents / guardians seem to have no problem getting to school on time. However there are a few chronic offenders. Being late is rude to the teacher and others who have managed to arrive on time. One or two

students will not be allowed to steal time, knowledge, or a smooth-running structured environment from the entire class. If there is ever a foreseen problem, please contact the school office.

Homework

Homework assignments are given to:

- Reinforce skills and material learned in class
- Prepare students for upcoming class topics
- Teach students to work independently
- Aid in evaluating student progress

Assigned homework will require only those skills students have already learned in class. Homework will be assigned one to four nights per week and the following guidelines will generally be observed. All work from excused absences must be made up. For every day a student is out of school, he / she have one day to make up the work that was missed.

- Kindergarten 15 minutes
- First Grade 15 minutes
- Second Grade 20 minutes
- Third Grade 30 minutes
- Fourth Grade 45 minutes
- Fifth Grade 45 minutes

Special long-range assignments such as research projects may take extra time in upper elementary grades.

We expect:

- All homework to be complete.
- All homework to be done to the best of their ability.
- All homework to be done neatly.
- All homework is to be done in a timely manner.

We suggest that parents help their children with their homework by establishing homework as a top priority. We also encourage parents to provide positive support when the student is doing homework and not allow student to “get out” of doing homework. With instructions carefully given to the student, and effectively communicating with supportive parents, homework has been proven to work.

Dress Code (Kindergarten-5th Grade)

Jr. High Dress code is in the Jr. High Handbook

Students are expected to follow modest guidelines of dress. Students, in all areas of appearance, clothes, hairstyles, etc. should look neat and natural with emphasis on cleanliness and modesty. When traveling off-campus for events such as field trips, these same dress code guidelines apply.

Boys Hair-Boy's hair must be neatly trimmed must not be touching the collar or top of their shirt or t-shirt, must not be capable of hanging below the eyebrows, out of the students' eyes, and not hanging below their chin. No unnatural hair colors or hair designs including Mohawks will be tolerated. Bleaching or highlighting of one's hair is **NOT ALLOWED**.

Boys Clothing-Pants should be worn without holes, frayed edges, and are not to drag on the ground. A belt should be worn when appropriate. Pants must not ride lower than 1" below natural waist. No oversized pants. No tank tops, picture slogans that may be controversial, etc. No earrings or body piercing will be allowed. Baseball caps may be worn; however they are to be removed when entering a classroom.

Girls Hair-Girls must keep their hair clean and neat. No unnatural hair colors or hair designs including Mohawks will be tolerated. Bleaching or highlighting of one's hair is **NOT ALLOWED**.

Girls Clothing-All clothing should be modest and in good taste. Dresses, skirts, and pants are appropriate. Dresses, skirts, skorts and shorts should be no shorter than 3" above the knee, when kneeling. Proper undergarments must be worn at all times. We suggest girls wear shorts under their dresses, for modesty reasons. Halter-tops, tube tops, tank tops, sheer blouses, off the shoulder, spaghetti straps, revealing, low-cut or bare midriff tops, are not to be worn. STRAP SIZE MUST BE AT LEAST 2" OR MORE. Anything less will be considered a tank top. If lifting arms above their head reveals their stomach, it is too short. No cosmetics, dangling earrings or body piercing. Standard chapel clothes are mandatory on chapel day. If any article of clothing is in question, DO NOT WEAR IT. **Grades K through 5th are not allowed to wear acrylic nails. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.**

Every student is required and expected to follow the dress code. Parents can help their child follow these guidelines. Parents will be called and asked to bring a change of clothes if their child is in violation of the dress code.

Chapel Dress

Chapel is every Thursday. ALL students are required to wear Mandatory Chapel clothes from the list below:

- Solid (non-emblem) red, white or navy blue polo shirt.
- Boys are to wear solid navy blue or khaki pants with a black belt.
- Girls are to wear a solid navy blue, khaki, or blue plaid skirt, jumper or short.
- All students must wear solid red, white or navy blue socks.
- Solid red, white or navy blue sweaters or jackets may be worn.
- No oversized clothing will be allowed.

All items listed can be purchased from a company called True Grits located in Orange.

Hygiene

All students are expected to take personal pride in their appearance. Showering daily is recommended.

Facilities

All facilities are the property of Orange-Villa Bible Church.