

HERITAGE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



6340 Autumn Drive, Hudsonville, MI 49426

"United in One Faith, One Hope, One Heritage"

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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I. Welcome

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at Heritage Christian School. Thank you for donating some of your time for the good of our school community. It is our hope that you will participate with a love and zeal for our school and out of thankfulness for all that God has blessed us with at HCS.

Our volunteer program is designed to encourage supporters to volunteer while protecting the safety and interests of our students. The purpose of this manual is to clearly define the Board's expectation for Heritage Christian School volunteers in a written form. The manual is a compilation of ideas which is necessarily more comprehensive than written school policy. It states the objectives of the Board and the Administrator for the school as we work together to accomplish the goal of a distinctly Reformed Christian education. It is our hope that this Volunteer Handbook will serve as a helpful reference to ensure a safe, productive and Christ-centered learning environment for our students, staff members and you.

A. Stated Purpose of Heritage Christian School

The purpose of Heritage Christian School is to provide for and give to our youth that weekday instruction which is an agreement with our Statement of Faith, and which is necessary if they as children of God's covenant are to occupy their places worthily in all spheres of life.

B. Mission Statement

In obedience to God's instruction that we "teach our children the fear of the Lord", and in response to our covenant vows at baptism, the parents and fellow-believers have established Heritage Christian School.

The instruction our children receive at Heritage Christian School will be a Christ-centered education of high academic quality based on the Holy Scriptures and the Reformed Confessions, as defined in our Statement of Faith. This instruction will be given in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation between parents, students, and teachers. These sensitive and compassionate teachers will guide the children in order that they may develop their talents to the best of their ability.

The goal of that education is that our children will view all of the subjects taught through the "spectacles" of the Holy Scriptures, and that through this instruction the students will increase in their knowledge of God. Through the Holy Spirit working in the lives of our children, this knowledge of God will evidence itself in a living faith as our children learn to apply what they have learned to all of their lives in service to God.

C. Statement of Faith

The supreme standard of Heritage Christian School shall be the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, herein confessed to be the infallibly inspired written Word of God; the doctrine of which is contained in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dordrecht, and the Netherlands, or Belgic Confession. These form the basis for administration, instruction, and discipline in the school.

Acknowledging that these Scriptures in instructing us of God, ourselves, and God's creation contain certain basic principles, which are authoritative and relevant for education, we hold that:

1. Our Sovereign, Triune, Covenant God has from eternity chosen, and in time, forms a people unto Himself, that they may stand in covenant relationship to Him and live in praise, friendship, and loving service in all spheres of life in the midst of a sinful world (I Peter 2:9, Ephesians 1:4, 5.)
2. The Christ proclaimed in the Scriptures is the Redeemer and Renewer of all our life, including our teaching and learning. Accordingly, in a school that seeks to provide Christian

education, it is not sufficient that religion be a separate subject in the curriculum, but the Word of God must be the basis of the entire educational program.

3. The authority of educating children resides in the parents or guardians of the children, and not in the state or the church. Parents, however, may exercise this authority through those who can competently carry out this God-given parental right (Mark 10:14-16, Deuteronomy 11:19.)
4. God's covenant is not only for individual believers, but encompasses their families as well. He made His gospel promise to Abraham, the "father of believers," and fulfilled that promise in sending Christ, the Redeemer of sinners, in order that "the blessing of Abraham might come" upon those nations through their believing in Christ (Gal. 3:8,9,14). Understanding that the family is ordained by God and its structure must then be maintained according to biblical principles, we believe that marriage is between a man and a woman alone, who are thus entrusted as husband and wife with the calling to raise their children in "the fear of the Lord" (Genesis 2:18-24, Psalm 34:11.)
5. Since God's covenant promises extend to these children, and to all who keep His covenant, they are not then neutral concerning Christ, but belong to Him and are to be educated in the way of covenant faith and loyalty. Christian parents, when exercising the authority for education their children, shall do it through those institutions which seek to provide a truly Christian education for the students. The training of covenant children in the school, as well as in the home and in the church, must serve to prepare them to follow their life-long calling to reveal the glory of their God in a life lived from the principle of Regeneration by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-10, John 10:25-30.)
6. Within a community made up of covenant families, Christian parents and teachers must talk to one another in a Godly manner when dealing with conflict and sin between their children and students. In as much as possible, resolution of these conflicts should be addressed in the way of Matthew 18 so that unity of the body prevails (Ephesians 4:1-16), and private sins can be dealt with in a private manner.

II. Volunteer Opportunities, Requirements and Conduct

A. Opportunities

Heritage Christian School welcomes parents, grandparents, and other supporters of Heritage to volunteer! Generally the requests for help are for the length of a class period on a weekly or every other week basis. Volunteer opportunities are posted at enrollment time, and then in the first few weekly memos of the school year. Some of the areas in which we utilize the help of volunteers include reading with lower grade students, recess attendants for a few days of the school year, library helpers, test proctors, band helpers, and helping with our robotics program.

B. Requirements

All volunteers who work directly with a student will be subject to a criminal background check through a state law enforcement agency or other provider of such service.

Information obtained through background checks will be held in strict confidence and only administration and human resource personnel will have access to it. When indicated by references and/or background checks, candidates who pose a threat to others, or have a prior history of physical or sexual abuse will be removed immediately from consideration for volunteering.

C. Appropriate Conduct

The following list includes some guidelines for helping your volunteer work go smoothly and productively. This list is not all-inclusive; when in doubt about whether an action or decision is appropriate, please ask but always err on the side of caution.

- **Two Adult Rule:** In all supervision of students there shall be at least two-screened, unrelated adults present. This accountability is to occur not only during school hours but also at every school function, program, or extra –curricular activity involving students. No one adult should ever be alone with one child or youth. When the Two Adult Rule cannot be supported, at least three individuals (at least one being an adult employee or volunteer) must be present. This is commonly referred to as the “Rule of Three.” The age and capacity of the children being supervised should be taken into consideration when utilizing the Rule of Three. It may not be appropriate for one screened adult to be with two toddlers as there would be no accountability regarding the adult’s actions. Similarly, one screened adult should not be alone with a youth volunteer and a very young child as there would be no accountability regarding the interactions between the adult and the youth volunteer. Children must be at least five years old when considering the Rule of Three, with the Two Adult Rule being preferred for younger children.
- There are times when the “2 adult” rule is not able to be followed for discipline or practical reasons (individual testing, first student in the room, discipline matters,...). In these cases, staff will ensure the safety of students by maintaining a line of sight to the hallways, by leaving doors open, by creating accountability with others, or by using cameras (webcam, phone, or school installed).
- **Confidentiality:** Volunteers are expected and required to keep all student information acquired while working as a volunteer confidential. Student information includes all academic, medical, and personal information. It is important that you do not discuss students or their progress with others, even their parents. If parents ask about their student’s progress please suggest in a kind way that they contact the teacher.
- Do not post any pictures or names of students on your personal social media sites.
- Do not engage in one-on-one digital communications with a student such as texting, social media, etc.
- Use appropriate language. Students should be addressed in a manner that reflects the fact that they are a child of God.

III. Heritage Christian School Abuse Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a safe environment for all Heritage Christian School employees, volunteers, and students so as to allow them to attend school free from subjection to offensive physical or verbal abuse of any nature including but not limited to sexual abuse. Any abuse of others will not be tolerated.

A. General Policy Statements

1. All employees, volunteers, and students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the dignity of others.
2. We do not condone or allow any abuse of others by teachers, administrators, support staff, volunteers, coaches, or students.
3. Any person who believes he or she has been abused or has knowledge of abuse should report it immediately to an adult not involved in the abuse following the guidelines listed below to ensure appropriate handling of the situation.
4. Reports of abuse and subsequent investigations will be handled discreetly to avoid embarrassment of the person making the report against a person who may be unjustly accused.
5. Any person who is determined to have committed abuse of any sort will be subject to disciplinary action including the possibility of employment termination (for staff members) or expulsion (for students).
6. If the abuse is determined to be of a criminal nature, HCS Board will report to legal authorities who must be made aware of this abuse.

B. Definitions and Indicators

1. Physical abuse - Physical abuse is the non-accidental infliction of physical injury. Abuse might be characterized by injury, such as bruises, lesions, and fractures that result from hitting (hand, stick, strap, or other object), punching, shaking, kicking, beating, choking, burning (with open flame or hot objects – boiling water, cigarettes), throwing, stabbing or otherwise harming a child. Physical abuse indicators include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, black eyes, or welts in the shape of an object (wire hanger, stick, belt, etc).
 - b. Has fading bruises or other noticeable marks.
 - c. Seems frightened of certain adults.
 - d. Flinches or cowers at the approach of adults.
2. Sexual abuse - Any sexual behavior with or sexual exploitation of a child. This includes but is not limited to rape, molestation and distribution or production or possession of child pornography.
 - a. Child sexual abuse includes a wide range of behaviors, including, but not limited to:
 1. Rape: vaginal or anal penile penetration.
 2. Oral sex by or to any adult.
 3. Genital contact with no intrusion.
 4. Fondling of a child's breasts or buttocks.
 5. Indecent exposure.
 6. Production, distribution, or possession of child pornography.
 7. Sexual Exploitation: Use of a child in prostitution or pornography.
 - b. Some signs of sexual child abuse include, but are not limited to:
 1. Inappropriate interest in or knowledge of sexual acts.
 2. Seductive behavior by a child.
 3. Avoidance of things related to sexuality or rejection of one's own genitals or body.
 4. Over-compliance or excessive aggression.
 5. Fear of a particular person or family member.
 6. Uninhibited behavior
3. Emotional abuse (aka: verbal abuse, mental abuse, and psychological maltreatment) - Emotional child abuse is any attitude, behavior, or failure to act that interferes with a child's mental health or social development. A repeated pattern of caregiver behavior or extreme incident(s) that convey to children that they are worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered, or only of value in meeting another person's needs.
 - a. Emotional abuse is illustrated by:
 1. Belittling, rejecting, ridiculing, blaming, scape-goating, bullying.
 2. Terrorizing, threatening violence, or fearful conditions.
 3. Isolating, confinement, restricting the child from social interactions, etc.
 4. Exploiting or corrupting.
 5. Denying the child an emotional response.
 6. Deliberately not talking to a child for an extended amount of time.
 - b. Indicators include, but are not limited to:
 1. Shows extremes in behavior - overly compliant or demanding behavior, extreme passivity, or aggression.
 2. Is either inappropriately adult (e.g. parenting other children, their own parent, caregiver, or siblings) or inappropriately infantile (e.g. frequently rocking or head-banging).
 3. Is delayed in physical or emotional development.
 4. Has attempted or threatened suicide.
 5. Reports a lack of attachment to the parent or teacher.

C. Reporting Policy and Procedures

Any person who believes he/she may have been the victim of abuse or any person who has knowledge of misconduct which may constitute abuse of another covered by this Policy should report the alleged act(s). The report should be submitted to any adult, parent or teacher. The school encourages the reporting party or complainant to report to the school Administrator.

1. Employees and volunteers of Heritage Christian School are mandated reporters. Thus, when a credible allegation of abuse is brought to the attention of any HCS employee or volunteer, this allegation must be shared with the authorities. Guidelines for doing this are on the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services website (www.michigan.gov/mdhhs) as well as published in notebooks in the HCS Teacher's Lounge.
2. Following this verbal report to MDHHS, a report should also be made to the school Administrator. In the event the Administrator is the alleged, this report should be made to the Board President.
3. If the alleged abuse is NOT of a criminal or sexual nature, the Administrator and Assistant Administrator shall form an investigation committee to investigate the allegation with the Administrator serving as chair. In the case of an allegation or conflict of interest with either the Administrator or Assistant Administrator, the Board President and Vice President will appoint the committee. The committee shall interview the complaining party. The committee shall notify the accused. They shall also inform parents of children alleged to be involved.
4. All allegations will be reported to the Education Committee as soon as possible.
5. The investigating committee, with consultation with the Board President, will attempt to determine expeditiously if the allegations can be resolved internally or if a formal investigation is more appropriate. Any disagreement between the investigating committee and the Board President on the disposition of an allegation will be referred to the Education Committee of the Board for resolution by that committee.
6. The investigating committee will review the investigation, and in consultation with the Board President, will determine the appropriate course of action. Disagreements between the investigating committee and Board President on the action to be taken will be referred to the Education Committee for resolution.

D. Reprisal

The school Administrator or the Education Committee will discipline or take appropriate action against any employee, volunteer, or student who retaliates against any person who reports alleged abuse, any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, or any person who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing related to such abuse. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment. Such retaliation shall be deemed a violation of this Policy and subject the person engaged in retaliation to the range of penalties listed in this Policy up to or including suspension or termination.

E. False Reports

Anyone filing a false report shall be deemed in violation of this Policy and will subject the false reporter to the range of penalties listed in this Policy.

F. Staff education

1. This policy will be reviewed by the Education Committee yearly.
2. This policy will be reviewed and signed by all employees, coaches, and volunteers yearly.

3. As outlined in our hiring procedures, we will continue to screen and run background checks all employees, coaches, and volunteers.
4. We will conduct yearly inspections of the building to ensure that all physical spaces are maintained and organized in a way that protects students from abuse.

G. HCS Restricted Access Policy

Those convicted of or who have confessed to criminal sexual conduct have restricted access to all HCS property to the fullest extent permitted by law. All appointments must be approved by the HCS Board prior to the visit occurring. The HCS Board reserves the right to ban any person from the private property of HCS. A list of all people meeting this criteria for restricted access will be stored in the Administrator's office. The administrator and assistant-administrator have access to this list. Communications to staff of persons on the list will be addressed on a case by case basis.

IV. Heritage Christian School Child Protection Policy

The instruction our children receive at Heritage Christian School will be a Christ-centered education of high academic quality based on the Holy Scriptures and the Reformed Confessions. Sensitive and compassionate teachers will guide the children in order that they may develop their talents to the best of their ability.

The school is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for our students. To fulfill these commitments, we have adopted the following procedures.

A. Definitions from Michigan State Law

1. "Child" means a person under 18 years of age.
2. "Child abuse" means harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child's health or welfare which occurs through non-accidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, or maltreatment.
3. "Child neglect" means harm to a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child's health or welfare which occurs through negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care.

B. Staff Procedures

1. The teachers, staff, and volunteers should watch for any signs of child abuse or neglect. Common indications of child abuse:
 - a. Changes in behavior-excessive crying, extreme mood swings, withdrawal
 - b. Wincing or pulling away when being touched
 - c. Nightmares, bed wetting, fear of going to bed
 - d. Demonstrating unusual interest in sexual matters, or acting out inappropriate sexual activity
 - e. Fear of being left alone
 - f. Regression to infantile behavior
2. If child abuse or neglect is suspected, report the suspicions to the School Administrator. You will be required to write up your report for future reference.
3. If you observe or suspect that abuse has taken place, or if a student confides in you of having been abused or neglected, only relate this information to the Administrator. Do not tell any students! Do not push the student for too many details or quiz extensively. Leave this to professionals so you don't put ideas into his or her mind.

4. If the suspected abuse involves one or more staff members or volunteers, that staff member(s) or volunteer(s) shall be placed on administrative leave immediately and removed from student contact until a determination is made of legitimacy of the concern.
5. The students' records and applications shall be kept confidential. The student's file shall only be accessed jointly by the Administrator and Assistant Administrator, or authorized government/health officials.

C. Reporting Procedures

1. The Teacher or Administrator shall make an oral report within 8 hours to Child Abuse Reporting Hotline state wide 24/7 (800-942-4357). If abuse has occurred between a staff person or a volunteer and a student, the proper school administrator will be notified immediately.
2. Within 72 hours a written report shall be made to Child Protective Services. The written report shall contain the name of the child and a description of the reason for the suspected abuse or neglect. If possible the report shall contain the names and addresses of the child's parents/guardian, or the persons with whom the child resides, the child's age, and other information which might establish the cause of the abuse or neglect and the manner in which it occurred.

D. If Staff-to Student Abuse or Inappropriate Contact is Alleged

1. Any allegation of abuse will be taken seriously and will be investigated by Heritage Christian School.
2. All staff who are the subject of this investigation will be removed from contact with students, with pay, pending completion of the investigation.
3. If allegation is substantiated, the employment or volunteer status will be terminated and Heritage's Board of Directors will determine whether legal counsel should be sought for the protection of the school in this situation.

E. Employee/Volunteer Screening Procedures

1. All candidates, including all employees and volunteers, will complete an application to be reviewed by the School Administrator and to be locked in a file cabinet or other secure location.
2. All employees, coaches, and volunteers of the school will be subject to a criminal background check through a state law enforcement agency or other provider of such services.
3. When indicated by references and/or background checks, candidates who pose a threat to others, or have a prior history of physical or sexual abuse directed against another person, will be removed immediately from consideration anywhere in the organization.

F. Supervision

In all supervision of students there shall be at least two screened, unrelated adults present. This accountability is to occur not only during school hours but also at every school function, program, or extra-curricular activity involving students. (see "Appropriate Conduct" section for further information.)

V. Safety

A. Accidents at School

Occasionally students here at school are injured during the course of the school day. In order to supervise the students appropriately when outside, our staff is assigned to specific time slots

during recesses and before and after school, ensuring that there are adults present at all times. When a student is injured during school hours, the supervising teacher and office staff assess the injury, and, if necessary, fill out an accident report form and contact the parent for further evaluation.

B. Crisis Plan

Our school complies with the guidelines of the Michigan State Police regarding what measures are taken in the event of an emergency. Specific plans and off campus meeting locations are communicated to staff. Facility and personnel information is furnished to the appropriate authorities.

C. Drills

1. Fire Drills

Fire drills are required five times per year. A building diagram, with exit routes marked, is posted in each room. All doors and windows should be closed. Teachers should stay with their class, take the class record book, and take roll outside. Students should walk rapidly but not run and return to their rooms following a bell signal from the administrator.

2. Tornado Drills

Tornado drills are required twice per year. Students are to move to designated areas and kneel down against the walls and cover their heads. The signal for a tornado drill is the sound of a siren.

3. Lockdown Drills

School security lockdown drills are required three times per year. Students are to be moved to the secure location of the room and teachers are to lock the classroom doors and close the blinds. Lockdowns will be announced over the intercom system.

D. Playground

Students are required to remain on school grounds during all recesses and before or after school. Students are assigned to specific locations on the playgrounds at recess time, based on their grade level. Students are not allowed in the parking lots unless they are being dropped off or picked up in approved areas. Students are not allowed to throw snowballs during school hours. No tackle sports of any type are permitted on the playground. We have HCS staff supervision outside during all recesses and before and after school.

E. Security Cameras

For the safety of our students, security cameras are located at entrances and traffic areas throughout the building. They are motion-activated and record activity on the premises.

F. Visitors

Visitors enter the school building through one of two main entrances, the first on the west end and the second on the north side of the school. Both main entrances have a doorbell. Since doors of the facility remain locked at all times, visitors must be buzzed in by the office staff. Once inside, a visitor's pass is worn if necessary. Student visitors from other schools must be approved by the Administrator prior to the date that the visit will occur. School doors will be opened by office staff. Others should not open them to allow access to visitors or volunteers.

VI. Volunteer Opportunities

- A. **Administering Tests for Resource Room*** – We utilize the use of volunteers at various times throughout the year to assist in administering tests to some of our students. Assistance is given based on the accommodations of the students. Younger children are not allowed to be along if volunteering in this capacity.
- B. **Playing Piano for classroom singing**– Various elementary classrooms will have need of piano players for their classroom singing devotions. Younger children may come along if they are able to not be a distraction.
- C. **Backpack Books** – Backpack Books is a program for 2nd graders. Volunteers are needed one day per week for an hour and a half to two hours, assisting students with their reading and comprehension. Younger children are not allowed to be along if volunteering in this capacity.
- D. **Read Naturally*** – Read Naturally is a program for 1st graders. Volunteers are needed one afternoon per week, reading with students in order to measure progress in reading fluency. Younger children are not allowed to be along if volunteering in this capacity.
- E. **Fearfully & Wonderfully Made***– Once per year we use many volunteers for this special day at HCS. Volunteers are used for most grade levels through 6th grade. Younger children are not allowed to be along if volunteering in this capacity.
- F. **Paper Sorting**– Many of our elementary teachers appreciate help each week with sorting packets of graded papers for their students. Younger children may come along if you volunteer in this capacity.
- G. **Recess Attendants**– Approximately once per month we ask for volunteers to watch the students during noon recess. We typically have a long list of volunteers for this opportunity, so the frequency is 1 to 2 times per year, depending on your schedule. Younger children may come along if you volunteer in this capacity.
- H. **Library Helper***–The Library utilizes volunteers to assist with various duties. Younger children are not allowed to be along if volunteering in this capacity.
- I. **Sports Assistant** – Assistance is needed with running the clock and/or keeping the scorebook at home games during basketball season. Younger children may come along if you volunteer in this capacity, as long as they are able to sit quietly without distracting you.
- J. **Room Mothers***–Some of the activities you will be asked to help with are class trips, outings, and a birthday party. We encourage you to talk with him and find out his needs for the year.
- K. **Hot Lunch**– All mothers at Heritage are put on a serving schedule, which will be published at the beginning of each semester. There is also opportunity to serve on the Hot Lunch Committee.

*volunteer positions that require a background check.

VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND CHECK

Acknowledgment Form

Nonemployment Background Checks Only

Service to provide: _____ Date to Provide Service: _____

In order to ensure the protection of children in the care of Heritage Christian School, school policy requires, prior to any and all persons providing a volunteer service at the school or for any function conducted by the school that all potential volunteers complete a background check. Any applicant declining to complete a "Volunteer Background Check" acknowledgment form will not be considered.

This background check would be required for volunteers who work in small groups or potentially in one-on-one situations. Those who work in larger groups in public places (backpack books, hot lunch, athletic events, etc) will not need to agree to a background check.

POTENTIAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Full Printed Name: _____

Maiden name or other name(s) previously used: _____

DOB: _____ Sex: _____ Eye Color: _____ Hair Color: _____ Height: _____
[mm/dd/yyyy]

HISTORY INFORMATION

1) Have you volunteered at Heritage Christian School before? Yes No

2) Have you ever pled guilty, or been convicted of a felony in a state or federal court?

Yes No

Date and state offense/conviction occurred: _____

If yes, provide a detailed description of the conviction: _____

3) Have you ever pled guilty, or been convicted of a misdemeanor in a state or federal court?

Yes No

Date and state offense/misdemeanor occurred: _____

If yes, provide a detailed description of the conviction: _____

4) Are you the subject of a current criminal investigation or have pending charges against you?

Yes No

Date and state the investigation is ongoing: _____

If yes, provide a detailed description of the investigation or pending charges: _____

Heritage Christian School reserves the right to "approve" or "deny" any volunteer service upon review of the background check returned. The determination will be based upon the individual's fitness to have responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of children. Providing false information, or information contradicting to the background check information, is grounds for immediate volunteer denial.

By affixing your signature to this form you acknowledge your statements are to be true and give full consent to complete the requested background check. Additionally, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the Volunteer Handbook.

Signature: _____
Date Signed: _____

Please return completed form to at Cori Hop at Heritage Christian School. Questions or concerns, please contact Cori Hop at businessoffice@hchr.org.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Approved <input type="checkbox"/>	Denied <input type="checkbox"/>	Date Approved/Denied [mm/dd/yy]	Determining Staff Member [Initials]
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