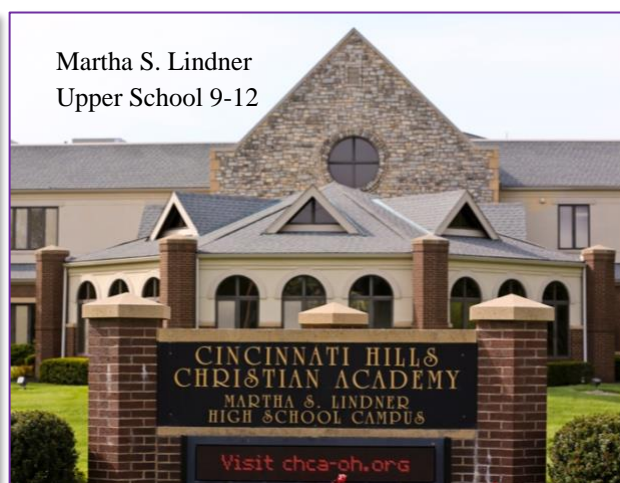
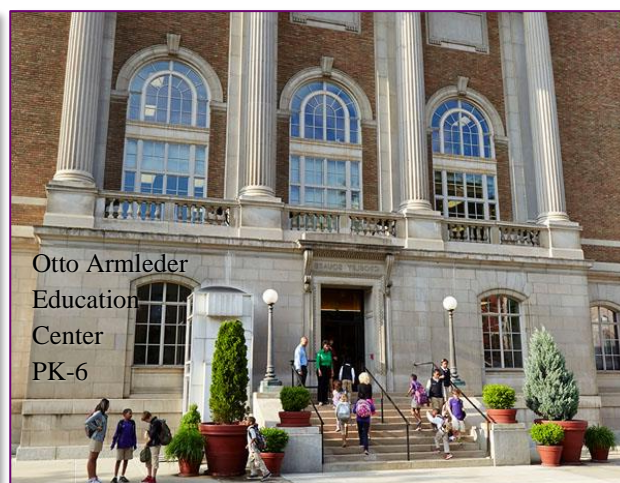
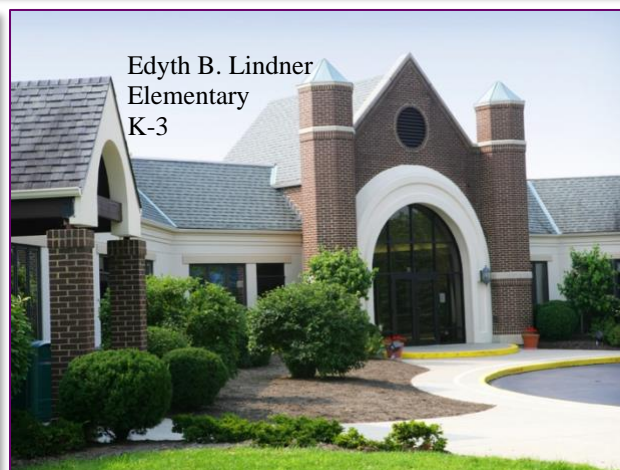


# Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy



ISACS Self-Study Report  
Site Visit: November 10-13, 2019

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## 1. Introduction: Welcome from the Head of School

Greetings from Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy! We're glad you're reading this report and soon plan to be with us here in Cincinnati. I believe you will find CHCA to be a unique and special place. In my 16 years here, I have grown to love this place more and more every year. What makes this place so unique?

**Our mission:** CHCA was founded 30 years ago to be a place that celebrated and challenged the mind. Our founders believed deeply that excellence isn't just a slogan, it's a must. Students from all giftings and leanings must test and hone their minds to experience a quality expression of the passion within them. And the natural companion to the development of the mind is actually an understanding that not everything can be fully known. There is just too much complexity in the world in which we live for anyone to consider mastering it, which is why we approach scholarship with an understanding that there will always be more to learn. For our community, the key to unlocking much of that learning comes through a connection to the God of creation who indeed does know all things. As we discover more about this world and how it works, we discover more about the amazing God we love and serve. Indeed, we believe faith and reason undeniably work together.

**Student engagement:** We have invested heavily in student engagement. Students today don't want to listen to the choir, they want to be *in* the choir. And they learn at a far deeper level when they are fully engaged and in the driver's seat of their learning. We're moving methodically toward becoming a school where students "own" their learning path. As teachers, we create authentic provocations where curiosity and interest stimulate a natural response of engagement. And then we stand ready to assist them when they get stuck or veer off course. Are we consistently expressing this new genre of instructional pedagogy? Not even close. But we are convinced that a student with a hunger to "do" becomes a student that is hungry to learn. The days of the "sage on the stage" are nearly extinct in terms of effectiveness. We are committed to this new path, and in fact, our last capital funding drive was solely designed to create spaces and funding grants that allow our teachers to fully pursue this new kind of engaged learning. But we're just scratching the surface...we have much to learn.

**Quality facilities:** CHCA has been blessed from its beginning with donors who have supported the school with quality facilities. We continue to dream and the donors continue to support those dreams. Our arts, academics, and sports facilities have helped us recruit quality staff and students and helps us articulate a high-level focus on excellence in each of these areas.

**Quality staff:** CHCA has been able to attract some incredibly talented faculty and staff to carry out the mission of the school. Having a clear mission helps CHCA stand out amongst its competitors in onboarding some of the finest educators in the field. Educators regularly tell us that the ability to teach freely in conjunction with their own concept of faith and reason working together is an overwhelmingly enticing prospect. They make the magic happen, and we are blessed by their profound commitment to student growth and development.

Thank you for your help in making us a better school. Much of the work has already been done as we have peeled back the layers for in-depth look at ourselves to derive this self-study. We know we are much too close to the product to be the only arbiter of our effectiveness. We need you, and we invite a very close and honest assessment. In this our fourth round of accreditation, we're not nearly as worried about the outcome as we are anxious to learn how we can be a better school. Thank you for helping us grow.

Blessings,  
Randy Brunk  
Head of School



## 1b. The Mission, Vision, and Core Values of CHCA

### Mission Statement

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy is a Christ-centered, multi-denominational, college preparatory academy that exists to prepare students intellectually and spiritually for success in higher education and beyond, and to impact and influence the world according to their unique gifts and talents. This will be accomplished by:

1. Creating an environment that encourages students, faculty, staff, and families to develop and live out their relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. Developing a passion for lifelong learning that leads to thoughtful, effective service through excellent, intentional curriculum and extra-curricular offerings.
3. Empowering outstanding Christian faculty and staff to fully use their passions and expertise to create engaged, critical thinkers.
4. Fostering an exceptional environment that develops students' gifts and talents in the arts, athletics, leadership, and additional extra-curricular opportunities for God's purposes.
5. Building an engaged school community – encompassing faculty, staff, students, families, alumni, and donors – that reinforces the school's vision, mission, and core values.

### Vision of CHCA

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy will unleash each student's God-given gifts through Christ-centered academic excellence. We are devoted to developing the whole person, and instilling a lifelong passion to learn, lead, and serve.

### CHCA Core Values

#### *Christ-centeredness:*

We believe in following how Christ himself led, served, taught, loved, and lived; we strive to base all we do on His word.

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#### *Academic Excellence:*

We believe in reflecting that we are an academy of learning. It is our primary (but not exclusive) goal to prepare our students academically for college and beyond.

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#### *Whole Person:*

We believe in recognizing all are gifted by God in unique ways. We believe in developing all forms of spiritual, intellectual, artistic, and athletic gifts in each student to their fullest potential.

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#### *Servant Leadership:*

We believe in the power of servanthood. Servant leadership will be taught, modeled, and encouraged to all students, staff, and families, so that all are equipped for the situations in life when God calls them to lead.

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#### *Outreach/Service:*

We believe in modeling Christ in all we do. We will provide opportunities daily and through special events for students, staff, and families to share Christ's love through service and witnessing to others.

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*Stewardship:*

We believe in acknowledging that we are blessed in many ways. We as a school will model strong fiscal stewardship and will encourage, train, and expect students, staff, and families to be wise and generous stewards over their time, talents, and money.

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*Value of Each Person:*

We believe in the Value of Each Person: Demonstrating biblical equality, we will embrace each individual as a distinct creation of God; ensure an emotionally, socially, and physically safe and nurturing environment; and intentionally enroll a student body, faculty, and staff who reflect the socioeconomic and racial makeup of the community in which we live.

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*Vibrant Sense of Community:*

We believe in acting intentionally. We will foster a vibrant, connected culture of empathy, fellowship, and respect among students, staff, and parents.

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*Accountability:*

We will hold ourselves and each other to the highest standards of integrity, excellence, and constant measurable improvement.

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*Joyful Spirit:*

We believe in having an attitude of gratitude for God's blessings that are lived out in everyday smiles, laughter, and by celebrating demonstrated character and unique achievements. This results in a contagious joy that connects at the heart level.

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## School Profile Form

May 7, 2019 \_\_\_\_\_ DATE SUBMITTED

To be submitted with each of the following reports (please indicate in space provided):

<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Study/Visiting Team Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Provisional Member Annual Report
<input type="checkbox"/> Reaction Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Mini-Team Report	<input type="checkbox"/> New Application for Membership

School Name: Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy  
 Address: 11525 Snider Road  
 City, State, Zip: Cincinnati, Ohio 45249

Head of School: Randy Brunk  
 Date Appointed: July 1, 2003

Type of School: Non-denominational Christian, PK2-12 College Preparatory Coed Day School

(Please reference any religious affiliation, specialized teaching method/philosophy, specific student population served, etc.)

(Please check all that apply):  
☒ Coed ☐ Boys Only ☐ Girls Only  
☐ Boarding/Day ☐ Boarding Only ☒ Day Only

Grades Served, from PK–PG: PK2-12 Enrollment: 1,284

School Programs: Community Service/Outreach; Upper School Intersession; Visual and Performing Arts; Athletics; Robotics;

Student Leadership Program; Entrepreneurial Coffee Bar, Smoothie Bar, and Print Shop; Greenhouse/Aquaponics; Interactive Learning Gardens; Atelier; Chapel

(special needs/exceptionalities, adult education, community service, athletics, etc.)

Size of Campus: North Campus is 76.5 acres and Downtown Armleder Campus is 7-story building with  
 Buildings: Square Footage of 348,326

Date Founded: Incorporated in 1987 and Opened in Fall of 1989

Dates of last ISACS evaluation visit:



**October 14-17, 2012**

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Dates of last 2 full-opinion financial audits: June 30, 2017 and June 30, 2018

Date current mission and philosophy approved by board of trustees: May 30, 2018

Status of current strategic planning with date of last action by board of trustees: \_\_\_\_\_  
**In progress, work began on April 26, 2019 at a Board Retreat**

Year last Constituent Survey was conducted: 2017

Has your school added any of the following since your last evaluation visit?

☒ Additional Grade(s) If so, grade(s) added: PK2 Date of addition: 2017

☐ Additional Campus(es) If so, date of addition: \_\_\_\_\_ Location (city, state) \_\_\_\_\_

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		3 Years Ago	1 Year Ago	Current Year
Number of Board Members	Men	7	10	9
	Women	6	5	5
	Total	13	15	14
	% of color	8%	13%	7%
Number of Students	Boys	701	647	653
	Girls	651	605	631
	Total	1,352	1,252	1284
	% of color	22%	22%	25%
Tuition	Grade 1	\$ 13,150	\$ 13,995	\$ 14,495
	Grade 6	\$ 13,150	\$ 13,995	\$ 14,495
	Grade 12	\$15,150	\$ 16,225	\$ 16,795
Faculty FTE	Men	36	36	34
	Women	81	85	87
	Total	117	121	121
	% of color	9%	9%	9%
Administrators FTE	Men	9	8	5
	Women	17	17	28
	Total	26	25	33
	% of color	12%	4%	3%
Faculty Salaries	Low	\$ 33,915	\$ 34,932	\$ 35,805
	Average	\$ 51,051	\$ 52,631	\$ 52,686
	High	\$ 72,232	\$ 80,816	\$ 82,836
	Median	\$ 50,171	\$ 52,828	\$52,275
Benefits as % of Total Salaries		19%	20%	20%
% of Expenses to Salaries/Benefits		65%	65%	64%
% of Expenses to Professional Development		1%	1%	1%
Need-Based Financial Aid	Total	\$ 2,195,110	\$ 2,458,726	\$ 2,159,205
	% Student Body	22%	26%	20%
No-Need Financial Aid	Total	\$ 428,890	\$ 367,653	\$ 514,977
	% Student Body	23%	23%	28%
Tuition Reimbursement	Total	\$ 915,192	\$ 1,088,796	\$ 1,170,063
	% Student Body	11%	10%	10%
Endowment Value		\$ 36,260,000	\$ 37,000,000	\$47,000,000 as of 5/7/19
Annual Giving – Total Received		\$ 420,000	\$ 485,000	\$ 429,816 as of 5/7/19
Capital Giving – Total Received		\$ 1,405,000	\$ 1,740,000	\$ 396,000 as of 5/7/19
Debt Owed		\$19,200,000	\$11,000,000	\$9,400,000 as of 5/7/19
Income from ALL sources except capital/endowment giving		\$23,400,00	\$23,500,000	\$24,900,000

**d. Roster of the CHCA Steering Committee**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Role at CHCA</b>	<b>Self-Study Area of Oversight</b>
Mr. Kris Gilbert	Director of 21st Century Learning	Steering Committee Chair, Technology and Library Curriculum, Technology Services
Mr. Randy Brunk	Head of School	Leadership and Operations
Mr. Mike Wallace	Chief Financial Officer	Leadership and Operations
Dr. Dean Nicholas	Upper School 7-12 Principal	Upper School Overview, PK-12 Christian Studies, World Languages
Mr. Steve Sideris	Lower School 4-6 Principal	Lower School 4-6 Overview, Mathematics, Science
Ms. Sandy Breitholle	Lower School PK-3 Principal	Lower School K-3 and Early Childhood, English Language Arts, K-12 Arts Curriculum
Ms. Cammie Montgomery	Armleder School PK-6 Principal	Armleder PK-6 and Early Childhood, Social Studies, P.E. and Health Curriculum
Mrs. Holly Metzger	Upper School 7-8 Assistant Principal	School Life
Mrs. Natalie Pfister	Director of Advancement	School Community
Mrs. Karen Hordinski	Upper School Outreach Coordinator	School Community
Mrs. Kara Ussery	Upper School Guidance Director	Student Services
Mrs. Jen Rogers	Upper School Student Support	Student Services

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### Roster of the Visiting Team

Member	ISACS School and Role	Assigned Report Areas
Mr. Rob Brisk, Visiting Team Lead	The Wellington School, Fmr. Head of School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mission, Vision, Core Values</li> <li>▪ Governance</li> <li>▪ ISACS Standards</li> </ul>
Mr. John Kruzan	The Wellington School, Director of Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Technology Services</li> <li>▪ Technology &amp; Library-Media Instr.</li> <li>▪ Health Care &amp; Records</li> </ul>
Mr. Steve Hendrickson	Trinity School at River Edge, Dean of Boys, Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mathematics</li> <li>▪ Athletics</li> <li>▪ Honor and Discipline Systems</li> </ul>
Dr. Scott Holley	Westminster Christian Academy, Upper School Teacher, Academic Dean & Curriculum Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School Climate</li> <li>▪ English Language Arts</li> <li>▪ Upper School 7-12 Overview</li> </ul>
Ms. Sara Jacobson	Minnehaha Academy, Executive Director of Institutional Advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Admissions</li> <li>▪ Advancement</li> <li>▪ Alumni Body</li> </ul>
Mr. Joseph Foote	Southfield Christian School, Social Studies Department Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social Studies</li> <li>▪ SDL/PRT</li> <li>▪ Business Entrepreneurship</li> </ul>
Ms. Shannon Swann	University High School of Indiana, Teacher/Director of International Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ World Languages</li> <li>▪ International Students Program</li> <li>▪ Local Community</li> </ul>
Mrs. Beth Unfried	University Heights Academy, Head of School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business Operations</li> <li>▪ Equity and Justice</li> <li>▪ Personnel</li> </ul>
Mrs. Hannah Kelly	The Oaks Academy, 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Christian Studies</li> <li>▪ Spiritual Life</li> <li>▪ Lower School 4-6 Overview</li> </ul>
Mrs. Rebecca Hoffmann	Summit Academy of Greater Louisville, Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Science</li> <li>▪ STEM</li> <li>▪ K-12 Support Services</li> </ul>
Dr. Marlise Albert, Ph.D	Visitation Academy, Lower School Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Administration</li> <li>▪ Armleder K-6</li> <li>▪ Extended Day Programs</li> </ul>
Mrs. Jennifer Williams	Sycamore School, Early Childhood Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Early Childhood Learning Center</li> <li>▪ Extra-Curric: Student Government</li> <li>▪ Parent Body</li> </ul>
Mrs. Theresa Kowcheck	Wheeling Country Day School, Director of Learning Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Guidance/School Counseling</li> <li>▪ Student Body</li> <li>▪ Summer Enrichment/Intersession</li> </ul>
Mr. John Sarra	Westminster Christian Academy, Visual Arts Department Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ K-12 Music, Drama, Visual Arts</li> <li>▪ Extra-curriculars: Fine Arts and Armleder Programs</li> <li>▪ K-12 Physical Education and Health</li> </ul>

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### e. Visiting Team Schedule

<b>Sunday, November 10, 2019 First Day Arrival and Orientation of the Visiting Team</b>	
2:00 pm	Arrival of team at Drury Inn and Suites, 9956 Escort Drive, Mason, OH 45040 (513) 336-0108
2:30 pm	Brief preliminary meeting of the Visiting Team in the hotel meeting room
2:45 pm	Board shuttle from Drury Inn to CHCA North Campus Welcome Center
3:00 – 5:30 pm	Visiting Team arrives at Welcome Center to tour the North Campus
6:00 pm	Welcome Dinner at deSha's Restaurant, 11320 Montgomery Road, Cincinnati, OH (513) 247-9933. Attendees include Visiting Team, CHCA Steering Committee, Executive Committee of the Board, Board Committee Chairs, and Head of School's Executive Team.
8:00 – 10:30 pm	Visiting Team meets in Drury meeting room to organize, orient, and plan
<b>Monday, November 11, 2019 ~ North Campus and Armleder Campus Visits and Meetings</b>	
6:00-7:15 am	Breakfast at the Drury Inn
7:45 am	Shuttle bus arrives at Drury Inn for pickup; drop off to catch Armleder shuttle is at Welcome Center (See shuttle schedule below for departure/arrival times at each campus)
8:15 am-9:15 am	Designated Visiting Team member(s) meet with the Board's Executive Committee in the Beshear Family Welcome Center
8:15 am-11:30 am	Designated Visiting Team member(s) visit classes, talk with faculty and school personnel at North Campus and Armleder (If Team members are at Armleder and not ready to come up to North Campus, lunch will be provided at Armleder)
11:30 am-12:30 pm	Lunch at Founders' Campus Conference Room
12:30 pm	Shuttles leave Founders for Welcome Center, Martha S. Lindner Upper School, and Armleder Campus
12:30 pm-3:30 pm	Visiting Team members visit classes, talk with faculty and school personnel at North Campus and Armleder; Last shuttle leaves Armleder by 2:50 pm
1:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Designated Team member(s) meet with Parent Group in MSL Innovation Space
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Designated Team member(s) meet with Faculty Group in MSL Innovation Space
5:00 pm	Final Shuttle departs North Campus for Drury Inn
6:00 pm	Dinner in the meeting room at Drury Inn catered by CHCA
6:30 -10:30 pm	Visiting Team in hotel meeting room discussion, examination of exhibits, preparation of reports, review of reports
<b>Tuesday, November 12, 2019 ~ North Campus and Armleder Campus Visits and Meetings</b>	
6:00-7:15 am	Breakfast at the hotel
7:45 am	Shuttle bus arrives at Drury Inn for pickup; drop off to catch Armleder shuttle is at Welcome Center (See shuttle schedule below for departure/arrival times at each campus)
8:15 am – 11:30 am	Visiting Team members continue classroom visits, meetings with school personnel and selected groups, and drafts of reports (If Team Members are at Armleder and not ready to come up to North Campus, lunch will be provided at Armleder)
11:30 am-12:30 pm	Lunch at Founders' Campus Conference Room
11:45 am-12:30 pm	Designated Visiting Team member(s) lunch w/9-12 students MSL Simpson Innovation Space
11:30 am- 12:30 pm	Designated Visiting Team member(s) lunch with Alumni in Founders' Campus Coggins Innovation Space
12:30 pm-3:30 pm	Visiting Team members continue classroom visits, meetings with school personnel and selected groups, and drafts of reports
1:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Designated Team Members(s) meet with Armleder Parent Group in Armleder Board Room
School dismissal – 4:45 pm	Meetings with special groups such as faculty committees, departments, etc.
5:30 pm	Dinner at the meeting room at Drury Inn catered by CHCA
6:00 – TBD	Visiting Team in hotel meeting room discussion, examination of exhibits, preparation of reports, review of reports

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<b>Wednesday, November 13, 2019 ~ Final Day Reporting</b>	
6:00-7:15 am	Breakfast at the hotel
By Noon	Departure of Visiting Team after submission of all reports
2:00 pm	Visiting Team Leader holds exit interview with Head of School
3:45 pm	Oral exit report of major findings by Visiting Team Leader to all school personnel, Martha S. Lindner Upper School Theater

## Shuttle Bus Schedule

### Monday, November 11 – Tuesday, November 12, 2019

**Morning Shuttle from Drury Inn to North Campus buildings**—Bus arrives at Drury—7:45 am, departs by 8:00 am (arrives at North Campus locations by 8:10)

- Stop 1: Martha S. Lindner (MSL) Upper School 9-12
- Stop 2: Welcome Center, Armleder Shuttle Connection
- Stop 3: Founders' Campus (Upper Elementary 4-6 and Upper School 7-8)
- Stop 4: Edith B. Lindner (EBL) Elementary K-3 and Blake Lindner Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC)

#### North Campus Shuttle Times:

- After arrival, shuttles are available at each campus every hour beginning at 9:00 am. The final shuttle leaves MSL Upper School at 5:00 pm/EBL by 5:15 pm. Approximate shuttle arrival times at each campus are as follows:
  - MSL Upper School—9:00 am
  - Welcome Center—9:05 am
  - Founders—9:10 am
  - EBL and ECLC—9:15 am

#### Shuttle from Welcome Center to Drury:

- 10:30 am, 1:00 pm, 3:30 pm, 5:00 pm

#### Armleder Shuttle Departure Times (30-40 minutes in transit):

- From Welcome Center to Armleder—8:15 am
- From Armleder to Founders' Campus (Lunch)—11:00 am
- From Founders' Campus to Armleder—12:30 pm
- From Armleder to Welcome Center—3:00 pm



## **f. Summary and Highlights of the CHCA Constituent Survey**

CHCA began Year 1 of the self-study process in 2017. Administering the CHCA Constituent Survey was a significant piece of that process as the school community gathered data about each program area, engaged in an all-school review and revision of curriculum, and saw the Board of Trustees affirm the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of the school. All of this provided the foundation for the work in developing the self-study during the 2018-2019 school year.

### **Nature of the Survey**

CHCA contracted with the Kensington Group LLC to develop the Constituent Survey. The Kensington Group used a survey model focusing on relationship development, loyalty of existing constituents as it relates to attracting new families and retaining current families, the quality of education, as well as the school's image, cost, and overall performance. The survey consisted of Kensington's standard questions for measuring these factors benchmarked against ISACS schools' norming data, as well as eight custom questions developed by CHCA intended to help school leadership align priorities and strategic planning with topics of highest resonance identified by respondents.

CHCA launched the online ISACS Constituent Survey on November 7, 2017 and solicited responses through December 5, 2017. A survey link was sent via email to all current families, alumni and alumni families, as well as to all faculty, administrators, and the Board of Trustees (one invitation per household). A separate link was created for posting on CHCA Alumni social media pages (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter); this allowed Kensington to separate social media responses from the larger internal survey responses and to ensure the most reliable and accurate assessment of incoming data. Students from grades 5-12 took the survey during the school day to maximize participation. Of those invited to respond, 40% of current parents, 66% of faculty/administrators/staff, and 85% of students responded—near average results. Meanwhile, 100% of trustees responded to the survey—higher than average.

### **2017 Survey Banners and Context**

Tabulated survey results are broken into a standard banner as well as a custom division banner. The standard banner shows responses from constituent groups against ISACS benchmarks for each question, while the division banner shows parent, faculty, and administration responses from each of division. Division banner labels appear as follows:

<b>CHCA Program Division/Building</b>	<b>Division Banner Title Heading</b>
Blake L. Thompson Early Childhood Learning Center (PK2-4)	Early Childhood Learning Ctr
Edith B. Lindner Elementary (EBL, or Lower School K-3)	K-3 Lower
Founders Campus Upper Elementary (Lower School 4-6)	4-6 Upper
Founders Campus Upper School 7-8	7-8 Upper
Martha S. Lindner Upper School 9-12 (MSL 9-12)	9-12 Upper
Otto Armleder Memorial Education Center PK-3	PK-3 Armleder
Otto Armleder Memorial Education Center 4-6	4-6 Armleder

The division breakdown gives some insight into the unique CHCA context of fall 2017. The divisions listed above did not exist in those forms at the time of the last constituent survey (2011). Old division banner headings from the 2011 survey and 2012 self-study reports include: EBL Elementary (PK3-Grade 4), Middle School (Grades 5-8), Otto Armleder Memorial Education Center (PK3-Grade 8), and MSL High School (Grades 9-12). By contrast, CHCA launched the 2017 survey just as the school was emerging from a season of massive changes. The “Light the Way” capital campaign (2016-2017) brought major renovations in three buildings: expansion of the pre-school into a PK2-4 *Reggio*-inspired program, construction of the Upper Elementary 4-6 wing at Founders’ Campus, and focus on innovation in learning with construction of new innovation spaces at Founders’ Campus and Martha S. Lindner (MSL) Upper School, as well as the greenhouse at MSL Upper School. In fact, the 2017 survey went to the community only four months after the newly-built spaces opened. Construction projects matched concurrent shifts in division structure, the elimination of the grade 5-8 Middle School in 2015 in favor of lower school and upper school delineations being among the more substantial changes. Thus, the current division banner is in many respects a “ground floor” measure of CHCA as it is now, while division banner comparisons with the 2011 constituent survey would be cumbersome at best.

The Kensington Group also provided an additional custom banner breaking down respondents’ income levels (available as an addendum for the Admissions and Advancement reports).

In all, the survey gauged CHCA constituents’ perceptions of nine focus areas:

### ***1. The Mission of CHCA***

Responses to mission-related questions indicate that the school’s mission resonates with parents. Yet interpretations of the mission seem to vary between constituencies, leaving room for CHCA to more clearly articulate the mission, vision, and core values of the school (e.g., what it looks like for Christ-Centeredness to work hand-in-hand with Academic Excellence), and to celebrate accomplishments that clearly exemplify CHCA’s mission and vision.

### ***2. Loyalty and Relationship***

The survey indicates constituent groups have a positive relationship with the school, are likely to recommend, and are likely to continue their relationship with CHCA; this includes  $\frac{3}{4}$  of current parents, with families in the lower school grades showing a higher likelihood to increase their financial support for the school. Faculty generally tend to view their relationship with the school positively with high likelihood to recommend and continue at CHCA (Upper Elementary 4-6 faculty slightly less favorable than other divisions). Students indicate high likelihood to recommend the school (71%) and continue (82%), percentages within ISACS benchmark. These were on par with parents of alumni, while alumni responses are below benchmark in several measures (54% for Young Alumni, 65% for Old Alumni).

Almost half of parents, faculty, and administration/staff consider financial support for CHCA a high priority, while more than half of parents in each division consider support “extremely” or “very” high priority. Parents also showed a higher likelihood to donate talent, time, or skill, a

tendency also high across divisions for faculty. Alumni and alumni parents remain within benchmark for likelihood to give.

### ***3. Future Planning Focus***

While parent views tended to vary based on grade level and division, leadership programs (51%) and integration of technology (43%) resonate strongly. Teachers, however, place technology integration much lower on list (12%), making for one of the widest response gaps in the survey. Teachers overwhelmingly value faculty compensation (74%) and need-based scholarships (62%) as the highest priorities. Increasing diverse enrollment trend high with multiple groups (faculty, 41%; trustees, 50%; old alumni, 43%; young alumni, 60%), and professional development rose in importance with pre-school and lower school K-3 teachers.

In the narrative comments, parents generally refer to 1.) expanding academic opportunities/exploring new, innovative approaches to teaching and learning, 2.) economic factors, like reducing costs and overall affordability, and 3.) staying true to the Christ-centered mission of the school and fostering spiritual growth opportunities. Second tier areas touch on a wide range of topics, including faculty quality, technology, character development, diversity, athletics, and enrollment among several others.

### ***4. Strengths and Opportunities***

Common themes of strength and areas of potential growth emerged from narrative responses. The areas of academics, school culture/community, the faculty and staff, and course offerings are mentioned as strong points. Comments also singled out innovation and leadership as strengths. Parents tended to drill down further to identify Christ-centered focus, academic curriculum, caring faculty, and a welcoming school culture. At the same time, tuition and school affordability resonate as challenge areas, as do concerns about enrollment, perceptions of bullying/cliques, and school security. Parents also tend to mention fears about compromising Christ-centered focus, concerns in athletics (e.g., lack of female focus, coaching changes), and concerns about dress code/uniform policy that came with the shift to 7-12 Upper School program and elimination of uniforms at grades 7-8. Diversity is seen as a challenge all around.

### ***5. Quality of CHCA Education***

Education quality at CHCA is highly-rated, with nine of ten parents viewing it as “excellent” or “very good,” comparative ratings tending to decline by the Upper School grades. Faculty rated the quality of education high across divisions, with “excellent” and “very good” responses ranging from 82% (Armleder 4-6) to 97% (Early Childhood Program). Students view education quality favorably, but below benchmark; alumni perspectives are positive, within benchmark.

### ***6. Cost and Value of CHCA Education***

Parent responses indicate that the cost of a CHCA education is a pressure point across divisions. About half of parents see cost as “very” expensive and comparably “higher.” Two-thirds rate the overall value as favorable, below benchmark. Favorable faculty responses are also consistent across divisions. Ratings of “Value for the Money” were less favorable and below

benchmark among students (57% “excellent/very good”) and young alumni (44% “excellent/very good”), however.

### **7. School Image and Attitudes**

Image and attitude questions give an overall perspective on school community life, relationship, academics, and the school environment as a whole, with choices ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” and “Don’t Know/No Opinion.”

Highest-rated areas include “support of academic achievement,” “Positive School Spirit,” “Equal opportunity for boys and girls,” “Caring environment,” and “Innovative Education.” Lower-rated areas include “Diverse enrollment,” “right amount of homework,” “appropriate dress code,” “number of administrators” (rated low by faculty/staff). Administrators and trustees seem to agree less with “adequate funding.” Students also rated “support for academic achievement” highly, while “right amount of homework,” “dress code,” and “student feels well known” were the lowest-rated areas. Alumni rated “communication” high, but responses indicate they do not always feel their input is valued or that relationship with alumni is a priority (older alumni).

Regarding custom questions about school attitudes (CQ. 4-6), nearly all constituent groups agreed that the school intentionally provides opportunities for spiritual growth (CQ. 4). Almost 2/3 of parents agree that faculty are fairly compensated (CQ. 5), compared with 34% of faculty and 46% of administrators. Roughly 2/3 of parents, faculty and administrators believe cost is reasonable given quality (CQ. 6).

### **8. Performance**

Performance-related questions gauged attitudes about academic programs, departments, and various operational areas of the school. Academic programs, fine arts, building and grounds, community services, faculty, and extracurriculars were rated high. Lowest ratings went to school security, transportation, and food service.

Reviews of other areas in the Academic Services category are mixed. The Student Support program trends well above ISACS benchmark in all divisions except Armleder, which does not have Student Support personnel. Library and computer technology tend to rate in the 60% range—within benchmark for parents, faculty, administration; below benchmark for students.

### **9. Alumni Relations**

A number of survey questions probe alumni perceptions as the school strives to maintain close ties to graduates at all ages. Alumni tend to rate alumni relations favorably with younger alumni trending lower; alumni *events* are lower rated for older alumni. Most prefer email communication from the school, while social media is second tier and above benchmark. As most alumni (between half and 2/3) live within 50 miles of CHCA, many indicate that they are likely to attend alumni events and reunions; younger alumni (most of whom are in college) indicate that they prefer to “self-manage” their relationship with the school.

### ***Implications and Conclusions***

More granular aspects of the Constituent Survey are referenced throughout this self-study, yet we see some data points providing a useful panoramic snapshot of that particular moment of change and possibility in the life of CHCA in 2017. The overall picture reveals that the mission and vision of CHCA is widely known and embraced, but that members of the school community have wide-ranging understandings of the school's mission and vision depending on their particular roles and relationships to the school. An understanding of the word "Christian" and what that connotes can run the gamut in a community with over 160 church affiliations represented, and from one division level to the next. The range of narrative comments around the Christ-centered mission of the school evidences this. In specific program areas, challenges stemming from construction projects, reorganizing division structures and changes in division leadership, and the challenges of learning and managing an array of classroom technology options—all within the year prior to the survey—informed some of the disparate responses between constituent groups in areas like "implementing classroom technology" as a priority area, or "dress code enforcement" as points of concern.

Even so, regression analyses of responses reveal several high-impact topics that inform CHCA's current direction and long-term planning. Regarding Image/Attitude, the regression of parent responses shows the largest positive effect sizes for: 1.) Support for Academic Achievement (0.28), 2.) Innovative Education (0.25), Achievement of the School's Mission (0.18), Values and Character Development (0.15), and Providing a Caring Learning Environment (0.09). As CHCA's top-rated strengths, these inform the Board of Trustees in current strategic planning and other departments within the school. With regard to CHCA's overall performance, nine top-rated areas stand out that we wish to continue to support for greatest possible impact: 1.) Academic Program (0.26), Academic Departments (0.26), Academic Services (0.17), Fine Arts (0.16), Community Service (0.16), Extracurricular Offerings (0.14), Administration and Staff (0.13), the Development Office (0.11), and Buildings/Grounds (0.10). Further, the school is engaged in efforts to invite more diversity and to build conversations around diversity among parents and faculty. The school is also taking deliberate steps to address areas with potentially negative effect: school safety/security, transportation services, and food service (all with effect size of 0.0 and lowest favorable ratings). In all, the data is not only a starting point for self-study but continues to inform our efforts to engage with the CHCA community, and to continue our fulfillment of the mission of CHCA in the years to come.

### **Addenda:**

2017 CHCA Constituent Survey

Chris Everett Constituent Survey Presentation to All-Staff, September 27, 2018

### **Submitted by:**

Kris Gilbert, Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Steering Committee Chair

### **[g. Guide to Addenda and Support Documents](#)**

All addenda items and self-study support documents can be accessed through the Sharepoint links below. The “Addenda” link at the end of each report will take you to the individual addenda folder for that report, with files listed as indicated in the report’s addenda list. Global folder links are here:

[Addenda Items Folder, All Report Areas](#)

[2017 Constituent Survey \(All Banners\)](#)

[CHCA Student and Family Handbooks](#)

[All-School Curriculum Documents:](#)

- CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks: A Statement of Curriculum
- Course Syllabuses (by division and by subject)
- Curriculum Maps, K-6
- Course of Study, 7-12
- Lower School ERB Test Scores

[CHCA 2012 Self-Study Report](#)



#### **h. Executive Summary of KeyTerms**

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy is intentional about being academically excellent as well as Christ centered in all we do. In order to do this thoroughly, we challenge our students to think about all disciplines and subjects through the lens of a thoughtful Christian worldview. To achieve this, our students must have a general understanding of the Bible, Church History, Theology and Christian Spirituality. They must also be forced to consider connections between these fields of knowledge and their other academic disciplines. The key to this endeavor is properly training our faculty in what we refer to as Theological Integration.

Theological Integration is the process by which our teachers engage students to think deeply about how thinking in a “Christ-centered” way affects all areas of study and learning. We train our faculty in a basic understanding of Christian theology and borrowing from an *Understanding by Design* model, expect them to incorporate theological “essential questions” into their units of study. In this way, students make connections between theological understandings and other areas of learning as age-appropriate.

As an institution, we hold to a high view of Scripture. Our first article in the Statement of Faith reads, “We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.” Therefore the Bible shapes the way we think about theology and all of life. For this reason, we attempt to exegete the Bible to understand key principles inherent in its teachings (“biblical principles”). The difficulty in this process though is that mining key principles from a complex book that was written millennia ago in a multitude of cultures and a number of different languages is no easy, straightforward task. Our school families represent over 160 different churches and while there are some “biblical principles” that we agree on, others are rooted in denominational understandings and sectarian theological readings. Therefore we are careful to use the language of “Theological Integration” rather than the older term, “Biblical Integration” for how we attempt to enrich our curriculum theologically. This alludes to the fact that in a non-denominational school, certain sectarian or denominational interpretations should not be given priority by teachers based on their personal interpretations and given preference in their curricula. As a school, we focus on five key theological “big ideas” based on Cornelius Plantinga’s *Engaging God’s World: A Christian Vision of Faith, Learning, and Living*. These “big ideas” are 1.) all humans have a longing and hope for something greater, 2.) God is Creator, 3.) the Creation is Fallen, 4.) Jesus Redeems Creation through His Life, Death, and Resurrection, and 5.) We Can Be a Part of God’s Restoration through our Vocation.

As our teachers engage students in their specific disciplines, we desire for them to find connections where their subject matter intersects these five theological “big ideas.” We expect them to employ “essential questions” which are open ended, thought provoking questions that do not have objective answers and can continually be reconsidered at different developmental levels, requiring students to reflect on their knowledge and synthesize it with theological understandings. In this way, we believe that our students grow intellectually and in the area of faith development in a way that fosters faith without indoctrination.

## Purpose, Goals, and Philosophy

### Brief History and Purpose of the School

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy is located in Symmes Township of Hamilton County in the Greater Cincinnati, Ohio area. The school is a multi-denominational Christian coed day school whose program is PK2-12 college preparatory on the North Campus (located in Symmes Township) and PK3-6 college preparatory at the Armleder campus (located in downtown Cincinnati). The school fulfills the vision of a small group of founding families who began meeting in October 1987 to discuss and pray about starting a school. Two goals were foremost in their minds: that the school be a Christ-centered extension of their homes and that the curriculum enable the students to enter the country's finest institutions of secondary and higher education—goals now embodied in our Core Values of “Christ-Centeredness” and “Academic Excellence.” The founding families envisioned a school where students would be encouraged, through a growing personal faith and through knowledge, to learn and serve. In addition, the founding families envisioned a full complement of athletics and extra-curricular activities that would promote student leadership development, as referenced in the school motto: “learn, lead, serve.”

Beginning with approximately 25 acres in 1987, the school built its first building and was ready for up to 168 enrolled students (preschool through grade 7) opening fall of 1989. After several additions, CHCA expanded in 1992 to a second building called the Edyth B. Lindner Elementary School or Lindner Elementary School, on the same acreage and now hosts approximately 510 students in preschool through grade four. The original building, now called the Founders' Campus, includes the 2017 addition of an Upper Elementary wing (Lower School grades 4-6) while continuing to house the Upper School grades 7-8, with current Founders' Campus enrollment at 409 students combined.

In 1995, CHCA started construction on a new high school facility approximately ½ mile from the original campus on about 20 acres of land. CHCA's Martha S. Lindner Upper School now enrolls approximately 470 students in grades 9-12. In August 2000, the school completed the purchase and renovation of a six-story historic building in downtown Cincinnati, which houses approximately 135 students PK-grade 6. This campus is officially called the Otto Armleder Memorial Education Center but is more commonly referred to as “Armleder.”

In 2001, CHCA purchased 20 acres approximately three miles north of the Martha S. Lindner Upper School Campus; this has served as practice fields for athletic teams since 2006. In 2007 we added a 220-space parking facility on nine acres of basically raw ground on Snider Road between the High School and the Elementary/Middle School properties. This parking allowed for an expansion of the high school building to host additional classrooms, fine arts practice spaces, science and computer labs, and an expansion of the cafeteria. At this same time we completed the addition of a science lab and additional classroom at Lindner Elementary School and fine arts practice spaces were added at the middle school (now named the Founders' Campus). While student enrollment has expanded from the original 168 in 1989 to almost 1,300 in four buildings on three campuses at the start of the 2019-2020 school year, and while the

graduating classes have increased from the first graduating class of 27 students to the 129 graduates in the Class of 2019, the physical facilities have expanded to serve the increased enrollment and program needs, and to anticipate the needs of the next generation of learners.

Our 2016-2017 “Light the Way” Campaign raised almost \$10 million for renovations at all of our Symmes Township buildings—the transformation of our pre-school at Edyth B. Lindner Elementary into an expansive, inviting new Early Childhood Learning Center now provides Reggio-inspired learning experiences for children at age 2. Students in our Founders’ Campus and MSL Upper School can now build meaning and make powerful, hands-on connections with classroom content in the new state-of-the-art innovation spaces, including the new Environmental Science Center and Greenhouse at the MSL Upper School Campus. Construction of the Beshear Family Welcome Center on the corner of Snider and Kemper Roads now provides a central office hub for the entire school as well as a visible location for prospective families to learn more about CHCA.

Inviting classrooms, dedicated areas for technology, fine arts, gymnasiums, libraries, cafeterias, playgrounds, and sports facilities complement the total CHCA experience. Students represent over 37 public school districts, multiple denominations, and varying socio-economic status and academic abilities. The faculty is an exceptional group of dedicated Christian educators who see their teaching role as a mission and commitment beyond a job. Each building is staffed with faculty, support staff and administrators to enable the realization of the mission in a rich and comprehensive expression in keeping with the vision of the founding families.

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy was first chartered by the State of Ohio to begin its operation fall 1989. Since that time, CHCA has received three additional charters to operate each of its buildings as a chartered, nonpublic school in the State of Ohio. CHCA was first accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States following a successful site visit in fall of 1998. CHCA maintains membership in the Association of Christian Schools International, in the Ohio Association of Independent Schools, in the National Association of Independent Schools, in the Council on Educational Standards and Accountability, in the Ohio High School Athletic Association, in the College Board, the National Honor Society, and various other organizations that further the interests of CHCA students’ participation within and beyond the school setting and further professional development of its faculty and administrators enabling them to serve the students and families and school community.

From the school’s beginning, the values of academic excellence and Christ-centeredness have driven the vision of the school. Most recently in May of 2019 the Board of Trustees reaffirmed their commitment to the school’s Mission and Core Values Statement, which is widely distributed in school publications, the Admission Packet, Parent, Student and Faculty Handbooks, Statement of Curriculum, and on the school website. In addition, the Mission and Core Values Statement is posted in each building and classroom, presented and discussed at teacher, parent, and student orientations and serves as a topic for discussion and exchange during teacher in-service workshops. The Constituent Survey reports a highly positive perception by parents, faculty, students, administration, trustees, and total alumni that the

mission is widely known, those same categories and response levels being within the ISACS benchmark, and with trustees' responses well above the benchmark in responding that the mission is achieved.

**Strengths:**

1. CHCA's mission and core values statement expresses well the philosophy of the school.
2. The school has provided program and facilities consistent with the mission of the school.
3. The school provides educational experiences for a diverse community of learners.
4. The school fulfills its charge to prepare students for academic success.
5. The Board of Trustees and administration achieve their mandate to be responsible stewards of the fiscal resources provided.

**Challenges:**

1. CHCA finds itself in the midst of an increasingly secular culture outside of the school. Its Christian values and reliance upon Scripture for critical parts of the program are becoming less commonly understood. This can be a problem for its place in the community in which it resides and the internal community it has recruited.
2. The areas adjacent to the school are becoming increasingly diverse, but the school is not necessarily increasing diversity of staffing or enrollment at the same rate.
3. Communication of who we are and what we stand for is becoming a regular challenge as the community we serve becomes increasingly busy and distracted. Since the "why" is often important to understand the "what," we feel compelled to continue to get the word out on that "why."

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Developing a consistent conversation around what makes CHCA unique and then converting that ethos into print and video for folks to better understand how we mix faith and culture.
2. Developing a specific operational plan regarding what we mean by diversity and what we will specifically do to increase a sense of equity in the culture and a specific plan to deliver a higher level of diversity in our school.
3. Utilize an increasingly well researched set of mediums proven to garner the attention of internal and external audiences that express the "why" of CHCA.

**Addenda:**

1. Board of Trustees Affirmation of the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of CHCA
2. Biography of the Head of School
3. CHCA *History* Webpage

**Submitted by:**

Randy Brunk, Head of School

Kris Gilbert, ISACS Steering Committee Chair

## 2. School Community: Admissions

### Overview:

CHCA's enrollment management process employs a comprehensive and unified approach to marketing, admissions, merit scholarships, financial aid, and retention to build and maintain a sustainable, mission-fit student body. After hitting peak enrollment in 2011-2012 as a result of a confluence of a historically large local student population, strategic enrollment interventions, and funding crises within surrounding public school districts which triggered program cuts, the demographic trends have shifted sharply downward and not surprisingly, the competition among private schools has escalated. Against this backdrop and in the midst of declining enrollment, our focus has been to identify and maintain a sustainable enrollment which delivers a healthy net revenue to the operating budget. Strategically, CHCA has implemented program and facility enhancements in order to distinguish and solidify our unique value proposition; restructured tuition; right-sized the elementary school; and consolidated grades 7 and 8 at the North Campus location, all to support a demographically viable, sustainable enrollment of about 1,150 at the North Campus and 130-135 students at the Armleder Campus.

In recent years, our Marketing and Communications staff have become an integral contributor to the Admissions team, and work collaboratively as one team on annual plans to raise awareness, generate positive word of mouth referrals, and deliver sufficient inquiries to fill the admission pipeline. While some traditional marketing media remain in use (direct mail, billboards, print ads), increasingly, this plan is based upon digital engagement, inbound marketing, leveraging our distinctive programs (robotics, greenhouse, sports performance), and more recently, community engagement and events. Securing sufficient inquiries at the top of the funnel remains a challenge in a saturated market and so we strive to deeply understand one of the main points of entry (the digital journey) of prospective families, meeting them at their point of interest while anticipating and answering potential objections to prevent regrettable funnel losses.

Our admission process follows NAIS Principles of Good Practice in Admissions and is designed to: 1) fully inform prospective families on the mission, opportunities, and financial obligations associated with enrollment, 2) holistically evaluate each candidate against a mission-fit rubric, and 3) deliver the new student enrollment target with qualified candidates who reflect the racial and socio-economic diversity of our surrounding geography each year. With regard to admission, CHCA's admission process does not discriminate on the basis of race, nationality, or ethnic origin. Families are introduced to the school through an expansive, well-articulated website, print materials, visits to the school (private tours, open houses, student shadow visits, informational coffees, and special events), and appropriate follow up by each Admission Counselor. Applicants progress through a defined admission process which includes an application, teacher recommendation(s), admissions testing, review of school records, and culminates in a family interview conducted by the building-level principal. Each applicant is then evaluated on a five-point rubric for academic, behavioral, and spiritual fit. The rubric scores, along with an admission recommendation, are presented to the Admission Committee for review/approval. The Admission Committee is comprised of the Head of School, the Chief

Operating Officer, the Director of Enrollment, and the principals/assistant principals. Families are notified of the admission decision via email or letter, and students offered admission receive an enrollment contract outlining their financial obligation, payment terms, and a link to the Family Handbook. Families are given two weeks from contract issuance to complete the enrollment process and submit a non-refundable enrollment deposit.

Families who have applied for either need- or merit-based financial assistance complete those related processes prior to the issuance of the enrollment contract and receive written notice of any award which offsets published tuition rates. Both types of financial assistance are tools applied strategically to support our enrollment objectives. Need-based assistance at the Armleder Campus is funded by an endowment with approximately 98% of students receiving aid; at the North Campus, it's funded primarily through the operating budget with approximately 16% of students receiving need-based aid or need-based scholarships funded by third parties. An outside agency is employed to provide an assessment of a family's financial need and the Tuition Assistance Committee offers awards within established parameters for each campus.

Merit awards are offered to qualified new and returning Upper School students on the basis of academic achievement (The Cum Laude Scholarship) and potential for positive impact (The Beacon Scholarship), according to a prescribed process for eligibility and approved by The Scholarship Committee, comprised of the Upper School Principal, the Upper School Admission Counselor, the Director of Enrollment, the Chief Operating Officer, and the Head of School. Various other scholarships are available to international students (awarded through the International Student Program) and to rising Upper School students from the Armleder Campus (awarded by the Upper School Principal, Armleder Principal, Armleder Admission Counselor, and Director of Enrollment).

Retaining a healthy student enrollment is a school-wide function and through recent strategic interventions, progress has been made. Last year's attrition rate was 6.3% compared to our five year average of 9% and the local NAIS school average of 8.5%. At the Lower School, the prior stair-stepped tuition structure is being phased out as persistent "step" tuition increases were an ongoing challenge for Lower School families. The formation of the Upper School (grades 7-12) was designed to create a contiguous six-year high school experience, reducing eighth grade attrition. The Admissions team remains the front line conduit for coordinating individual responses to students identified as an attrition risk.

**Strengths:**

1. The Admissions Team is equipped with a solid toolbox from which to build enrollment (strong academic reputation, unique Upper School distinctive programming, positive school spirit and word of mouth, and need/merit-based assistance programs).
2. Our storytelling approach is effective (website, print materials, videos, tours) and is reinforced by the Welcome Center and photography within the buildings.



3. We have been actively cultivating strong internal partners with other functions to support enrollment efforts and prospective family engagement (tours, events, follow up, shadow visits).
4. Recent tuition restructuring has been accomplished without corresponding enrollment loss.
5. The new family experience is being enhanced through the introduction of the Parent Ambassador program.

**Challenges:**

1. Changes in consumer behavior and communication preferences are requiring us to rethink traditional recruitment tools (like open houses) and determine the ROI of increasing digital marketing spend.
2. An increasingly competitive market in pricing/programming with heavy discounting is creating a “let’s make a deal” mentality among prospective families, putting pressure on net tuition revenue. Competitor schools are quickly trying to emulate our unique differentiating programs (Intercession, environmental studies, and entrepreneurship).
3. Recruiting an even more diverse student population is a challenge that the school-wide diversity initiative will help us solve. The constituent survey (question 1f) confirms that our faculty, staff, and parents desire to see us grow in this area, with only 62% of parents and 54% of faculty affirming our current commitment to a diverse enrollment, below ISACS benchmark. Related to this challenge, limited scholarships (funded at 100% of need) for Armleder sixth grade students to continue with CHCA for Upper School creates an unintended schism within the greater CHCA community.
4. Limited support resources in public schools and increasing social-emotional challenges are resulting in a prospective student pool with increasing needs for academic accommodations and emotional support.
5. The shift to Upper School is still being digested and understood by current CHCA families, who are needed to carry this word of mouth message into the broader target community. Work remains to ensure the rationale for, and unique benefits of the Upper School are understood and embraced.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Brand development of CHCA’s unique “differentiator” programs to reinforce value to current families, inspire positive word of mouth, and establish unique equity within the Northeast Cincinnati market.
2. Unify data analytics understanding between digital marketing and website to deepen consumer understanding/insights and more strategically target our marketing spend.
3. Utilize technology tools to optimize and/or supplement on-site visits (like open house) to expand reach.
4. Continuously monitor marketplace discounting tactics and develop guardrails for CHCA discounting practices.
5. Within OHSAA recruiting guidelines, deepen partnership with CHCA’s Program Builder coaches to retain CHCA student athletes and position CHCA as a school of choice for well-rounded student athletes.

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6. Work in close collaboration with building principals to ensure that staffing plans and master schedules are built with the needs/demands of the incoming student pool in mind.

**Addenda:**

1. Sample Admissions Packet (via hard copy upon visiting team arrival)
2. Policy Statement, Admissions
3. Policy Statement, Financial Aid
4. Non-Discrimination Statement
5. Sample Enrollment Contract – North Campus
6. Sample Enrollment Contract – Armleder Campus
7. Enrollment History
8. Enrollment Projections vs. Actual
9. Admissions Rubric
10. Admissions Rubric Summary Chart
11. Student Enrollment-Diversity North Campus + Armleder Campus
12. Student Enrollment-Diversity North Campus Only
13. International Student Program Enrollment and Overview
14. Marketing Plan
15. Attrition History
16. Demographic Study
17. Tuition Restructure
18. Parent Ambassador Program Charter/Description
19. Full Pay/Discount Dashboard-Peer Schools
20. Admissions/Mktg/Comm Team SWOT Analysis
21. Income Distribution Data from 2017 Constituent Survey

**Submitted by:**

Natalie Pfister, Director of Advancement, Committee Chair  
Jennifer Murphy, Marketing/Communications Director  
DeAnne Vallo, Student Advancement Coordinator, Armleder Campus  
Kim Siman, Admissions Counselor, Lower School  
Wendy Easterday, Admissions Counselor, Upper School

### 3. School Community: School Advancement

#### **Overview:**

As part of a Christ-centered community, CHCA's Advancement Office staff engages in the development of relationships with internal and external communities across the school. As part of the relationship development, we engage in prayer to invite God's hand and guidance in our work.

The Advancement Committee, a subcommittee of our Board of Trustees oversees the Office of Development, which serves as the center for fundraising, donor relations, and special events. Constituency groups (including faculty, parents, alumni parents, grandparents, alumni, special donors, and the community at large) stay informed through the CHCA website, CHCA Facebook pages, CHCA Alumni Facebook page, CHCA Twitter accounts, strategic and timely email communication, the Annual Report publication and two e-newsletters: Campus Connection (issued weekly) for current parents, faculty, and staff; and Alumni E-News (issued annually) for alumni and alumni parents.

The Development Office continues to use a donor-centered approach to fundraising, inspiring the community to support CHCA through a number of methods with expressed gratitude including handwritten thank you notes and personal calls for gifts received. The Donor Relations team has launched an outreach program to meet people where they are, understand their interests, answer their questions and help them feel informed. Our view is "people give to people," and we appreciate the significant way this community has transformed the lives of students, faculty, and families through their generous support. More recently the Development Office started a "concierge" approach to reaching out to new families over the summer (beginning in July) to welcome them and offer our assistance as they prepare to begin school in August. We answer their questions ranging from topics of understanding school vernacular and abbreviations, school uniform policies, extra-curricular activities, classroom supplies, teacher specifics, and more. In addition, we recommend specific community building events for our new families to attend allowing them to connect into the CHCA family.

The Development Office benchmarks on a regular basis with the standards and guidelines of the NAIS Principles of Good Practice. This is evidenced by regular review and professional development of staff with seminars and materials provided by NAIS. Additionally, the DASL function for reporting benchmarks several goals for the fiscal year like participation within constituency.

CHCA communicates with our constituency groups through several means: publications mailed to every household, emails announcing upcoming events and activities of interest, a parent newsletter distributed weekly during the school year, School Messenger texts and emails, invitations for major events are mailed and/or emailed, and relevant progress reports are shared with the donor community. The CHCA website contains the most recent press releases and news articles for all to enjoy.

The CHCA Eagle Annual Fund solicitation is launched during the summer, when faculty, staff and Board of Trustees members are challenged to make their gift as we strive for 100% support from these groups. The faculty and staff are encouraged to make a gift of any amount to show their support for the school mission. We ask the Board to make CHCA one of their top three giving priorities. A Board member, the President and/or the Chair of the Advancement Committee solicits fellow Board members. CHCA expects 100% Board support for the Eagle Annual Fund.

The Constituent Survey conducted in 2017 reveals a supportive fundraising environment for areas of passionate interest and a less supportive environment for operating budget annual giving fundraising.

- 83% of parents have been associated with the school for 3+ years
- 53% of parents describe themselves as extremely or very involved at CHCA
- 50% of respondents consider support for CHCA a priority, however constituents are more likely to give talent/skill and time than money and likelihood to increase support falls below benchmark
- 61% of parent respondents reported income brackets of \$150,000 - \$400,000 and above, which represents a 5% increase from the survey conducted in 2011.
  - 65% of the Lower School (PK2-Grade 6) parent community reported income brackets of \$150,000 – 400,000+
  - 62% of the Upper School (Grades 7-12) parent community reported income brackets of \$150,000 – 400,000+
- 50% or more of parents in each division consider CHCA support an extremely or very high priority, although 71% or greater indicated a preference to offer talent/skill and time in their support whereas 49% were willing to offer money as support over the next 12 months.
- 46% of parents across divisions indicate they give as part of their stewardship, while 29% feel that tuition should cover the full cost to educate.

In addition to the Eagle Annual Fund activities, the Development Office hosts two fundraising events: the Homecoming Festival and Celebration Auction and Dinner. Nearly \$200,000 is raised through these events for the operating budget. Other special fellowship events organized by this office include Grandparents Day, class reunions, Alumni Showcase, Lifers Reception and the Soaring Eagle Circle of Giving event.

Since the last ISACS Self Study was conducted, CHCA successfully launched and completed the Light the Way Capital Campaign (2015-2018). Nearly \$9,000,000 was raised among 528 donors with 41% current parent participation and 80% faculty/staff participation. This campaign provided 46,740 square feet of renovated and new space across three campus locations featuring an Expanded Early Childhood Learning Center, a Greenhouse, a new Upper Elementary wing and six new innovation spaces. In addition, \$1,000,000 from this campaign was used to create a Teacher Innovation Fund. This fund provides grants to teachers, across every division, that desire to more deeply engage their students with professional

development, new teaching tools, enhanced curriculum and/or programming elements. To date, 12 Teacher Innovation Fund grants (\$90,000) have been administered to teachers and administrators across the divisions.

**Strengths:**

1. Creative and custom approaches to engage community in philanthropy.
2. 24-hour #WhatIfCHCA giving program.
3. Personalized outreach and shared gratitude for generosity.
4. Successful integration of fellowship and fundraising engagement events.

**Challenges:**

1. Educating families that tuition doesn't cover the full cost to educate students creating a budget gap and needs to be fulfilled through the Eagle Annual Fund.
2. For those that are charitably minded and already educated, many prefer to give to areas of tangible, passionate interest.
3. Many voices asking for support throughout the school without first priority given to the Eagle Annual Fund.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Continue meaningful engagement with each constituent groups connecting them with the school in ways that inspire them to give passionate to the school.
2. Refine major gift approach, program and staffing.
3. Expand alumni engagement, communication and commitment to strategically build legacy.

**Addenda:**

1. Development Office Calendar of Activities
2. #WhatIfCHCA 24-hour program results
3. History of Giving
4. Campaign – Light the Way Progress Report with Teacher Innovation Grants
5. Eagles Eye Magazine
6. Annual Report
7. Alumni E-newsletter
8. Gift Acceptance Guidelines
9. NAIS Benchmarks for Participation of Annual Fund

**Submitted by:**

Linda Baker, Edyth B. Lindner Elementary Teacher  
Julie Carnes, Donor and Alumni Relations/Special Events  
Anne Venters, Director of Development

#### 4. School Community: Constituent Relations

##### a. School Climate

The overall school climate is joyful, energetic, and positive as teachers and administrators work to provide unique and extraordinary learning experiences that help students see God's world and their role in it. Recently students, parents, grandparents, alumni and faculty were asked to provide a one-word response to the question, "What is CHCA to you?" Their responses: CHCA is MORE... "it is a home, a family, and a blessing!" Day in and day out, dedication emanates from every classroom and corridor, which carries with it both stress and reward. In the end, this CHCA education develops students' God-given strengths and enables our faculty to innovate, all in a nurturing Christ-centered environment.

Within the last few years, CHCA has implemented a restructuring of divisions to customize the learning approaches within age/grade categories (see addenda for layout). Curricular programs are focused on the following areas: Early Childhood Learning (ages 2-4), Lower School (grades K-6), and Upper School (grades 7-12). Four lead principals work hard to ensure students receive the greatest possible learning experience. Innovative learning labs and classrooms have been introduced to give all teachers an even greater opportunity for deeply engaged learning success.

Recently, there have been notable programming and facility changes that have greatly enhanced both the CHCA school culture and environment. These initiatives were in the midst of implementation when the 2017 Standard School Community Survey was administered:

- Enhancements on the Armleder Campus (PK3 – Grade 6): integration of Franklin Covey's *The Leader in Me* program within every classroom and grade. This program teaches 21<sup>st</sup> century leadership and life skills to students and creates a culture of student empowerment. This community (teachers, students, and parents) have embraced this program with positive outcomes already underway.
- Enhancements on the North Campus: Early childhood learning facilities and programming methodology for Preschool 2 – 4 years, upper elementary facilities for grades 4, 5, and 6, expanded programming for grades 7 and 8 as part of the upper school and the addition of the environmental sciences center and collaboration spaces to promote problem-solving, research, and collaboration skills.

Additionally, task forces were launched in fall of 2017 by the Head of School (HOS) to capture the faculty and staff experience. A staff survey conducted by the HOS office and the results launched three task force initiatives. The task forces welcome any employees with interest ensuring that a broad range of perspectives and division representation embody these groups. The task force areas include: Cultural, Strategic, and Professional Development. The task force most relevant to the School Climate report is the Cultural Task Force. This group was focused on ways to enhance the working environment for faculty and staff across the divisions. One major accomplishment already enjoyed was the staff retreat. An offsite, overnight staff retreat was held August 2018 and attended by nearly 200 staff members (full and part-time employees).



The attendees completed a survey sharing their retreat experience with an overwhelming 94% giving the experience a 4- or 5-star rating. This gathering provided a great sense of “commUNITY” and prepared us to welcome students and parents to the new school year.

When analyzing the constituent groups with regard to school climate, the 2017 Standard School Community Survey identified several key areas regarding image and attitude consistent across constituent groups. This report will highlight the three most distinctive.

General attitude about the school recognizes CHCA as a “**caring environment**” by its faculty, administration, and parents (f=97% and a=95%; p=91%). Moreover, significant differences from ISACS benchmarks are also evident in this general attitude where ISACS=90%. Opportunities for families to connect with faculty, students, and other families throughout the school year are often provided in efforts to promote community throughout. From back-to-school introductory parties, newly launched parent ambassador program for all new families, and parent fellowship gatherings to parent-led Bible groups and at-home student gatherings, CHCA values relational opportunities to encourage engagement cross the community.

Attitudes about the “**school’s commitment to moral values and character development**” were also highly favorable across constituent groups (a=91%; p=89%; f=89%). Christ-centeredness remains at the heart of CHCA as it uniquely combines faith, learning, and service in efforts to discover student passions for God’s world. We believe that every student has been gifted to make a difference in the world and want them to witness and experience this while at CHCA. That is where community service is a huge factor in our student programming at every age and within every division. While community service performance remains high among CHCA’s constituent groups (a=91%; f=83%; p=81%; s=73%), it is significantly higher than the ISACS benchmark (a=67%; f=65%; p=68% and s=63%). This unique characteristic of community service/outreach achievement is also supported by the 2017 graduating class’ total number of community service hours. CHCA teachers and student alike have developmental opportunities to think deeply about their faith as they lead, plan, and participate in organizations including classroom outreach, student-to-student encouragement, group Bible studies, Student Organized Service (S.O.S), and Intersession.

Another notable highly rated area is CHCA’s **innovative atmosphere** providing teachers across curricular interests with tools and environment to more deeply engage students in their learning: at (a=89%; f=83%; p=90%; and s=84%), we’re significantly higher than the ISACS benchmark ((a=79%; f=74%; p=78%; and s=78%). From outdoor learning spaces like the “Jim Brunk Trail for Environmental Study” and the Armleder Eyewitness News Team to the Entrepreneurial Studies program, Innovation and Collaboration spaces, and the Environmental Sciences Center, teachers and students alike have great opportunities for hands-on learning experiences across all programs. This offers students across learning styles, gifts and interests the opportunity to discover, be challenged, and grow in their leadership, problem solving, and creative skills. Additionally, with implementation of the Teacher Innovation Fund, over \$90,000 has been approved to support teacher-initiated programs to help accomplish curriculum benchmarks and engaged students more deeply in their learning experiences.

Community at CHCA can be witnessed between divisions, between students and their mentors, and between families. This community loves the opportunity to gather in fellowship to support and encouragement one another, serve together, tackle challenges, and improve circumstances. This school climate promotes community and learning excellence!

**Strengths:**

1. CHCA provides a caring environment, evidenced by Constituent Survey responses.
2. School spirit is overwhelmingly positive, as evidenced by Constituent Survey responses (with student responses well above ISACS benchmark).
3. The CHCA community sees character development as a strength of our school.
4. CHCA encourages innovative in the classroom.

**Challenges:**

1. Diverse enrollment goals and expectations have not been met.
2. Addressing student and parent concerns of bullying and perceptions of inconsistent discipline remains a challenge.
3. Even when taking proactive steps to ensure the safety of the school, addressing parents' concerns about school security can be challenging given the rise of violence in schools.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Innovative and collaborative learning approaches thrive at every division ensuring success, fueled in part by the Teacher Innovation Fund.
2. School leadership has appointed a diversity committee with upcoming Diversity Summit to recommend strategies to invite greater diversity in hiring and student enrollment.
3. Bullying challenges are handled by each principal leader setting the approach, training, and disciplinary measures age appropriately.
4. Facility-based safety concerns have been of great interest over the last few years. Each campus now has locked entrances with new procedures for visitors. Additionally, new safety cameras have been installed both inside and outside the campus locations with a secret centralized security viewing site for school leadership to access as needed.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. CHCA Family Handbooks
3. Teacher Innovation Fund Awards
4. Teacher Innovation Fund Webpage
5. Cultural Task Force Retreat Agenda and summary survey results

**Submitted by:**

Ivette Crichton, Blake Lindner Early Childhood Learning Center Teacher  
Anne Venters, Director of Development

### **b. Alumni Body**

Stewardship is a core value that CHCA holds at the center of its mission for its students, faculty, staff, parents and alumni. The Development Department at CHCA has taken this foundational ideal and channeled it into our community to better serve our alumni, as well as allow our alumni to serve the CHCA community in their own capacity. It is evident by our survey results that while we have given alumni a variety of opportunities to be seen, heard, served, and involved, we still have room for growth in making their voice and position feel strongly valued and prioritized.

As a result of our vast and vibrant community we are able to offer many opportunities for alumni to come together in community whether that be through Homecoming events, both in-person and Facebook Live campus tours, business networking happy hour, or our annual Alumni Showcase. The return on that investment with Alumni attendance has only grown in recent years and continues to as 52% of young alumni and 65% of older alumni feel the opportunities offered have been adequate (A1e) while 62% of young alumni and 48% of old alumni surveyed have even come back to campus within the past year (A13). The focus of our Alumni department has developed in the stewardship of our communication with alumni. Our active reach has grown exponentially, as seen in our addendum below, through our presence on Instagram and Facebook solely focused on our alumni. Though we continue with the most prominent form of communication being email, we have experienced major growth within our social media accounts being used and favored by 19% of young alumni, 23% of old alumni (A9a).

#### **Strengths:**

1. Multiple social media outlets to connect with the alumni community.
2. Regular events designed to serve and connect alumni with each other as well as the larger CHCA community.
3. Student-to-alumni outreach through lower school class notes that are sent out (for key holidays like Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter), classroom pen-pals, classroom Skype visits, college care packages, and community competitions and raffles.

#### **Challenges:**

1. Location. Having alumni all over the U.S. and abroad presents a challenge to incite a strong sense of connectivity within the alumni community as they cannot attend events.
2. Updating contact information. As widely as we have expanded our communication outlets to suit alumni growth, we find that there are still many that fall through the cracks, whether it be by emails being forwarded to junk mail or lack of awareness of our social media platforms.
3. Alumni staff. We are currently working with a part-time alumni relations position and that makes it difficult to expand our reach in a timely fashion as well as have the manpower to make events seem seamless and build those opportunities beyond what they currently are.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Our goal is to always make sure that alumni know that they are welcome and valued wherever life may have taken them.
2. We plan to continue to grow our live streams and social-media-based outreach in order to expand our reach to ensure complete communication and inclusivity. Hopefully as we grow so will our department, our budget, and our opportunities to invest in our community on a greater scale. We are optimistic about the future of our alumni community and believe we are only seeing the tip of the iceberg with the return on that investment.
3. Our plan is to refocus our Alumni Board with a few very specific items so that the job will be more inviting and draw more involvement from current alumni.
4. We want to make sure our Alumni feel wanted beyond simply being included and that is something we can manage by spending more time channeling the alumni voice into our communication.
5. One of our major priorities is to draw alumni back to the school when their children are school-aged. This means making sure what we offer is communicated clearly and effectively in a voice that communicated directly to them.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. Annual Report Alumni Letter
3. CHCA Alumni Instagram Page
4. CHCA Alumni Facebook Page
5. Alumni Magazine

**Submitted By:**

Sarah Robinson, Alumni Relations Coordinator, CHCA Alumna

### **c. Parent Body**

Since CHCA was founded, parents have been an integral part of the school's community. Parents serve throughout the school as volunteers at the front desks and in classrooms to chaperones on service events and Change Our World service week; from committee members to board members. Major school events like the Homecoming Festival, After-Prom, and Market Place A.D. could not happen without significant parental involvement. Parents at CHCA have always been generous with their time and talents. Over 700 volunteers are recognized each year at a Volunteer Thank You Breakfast hosted by the Development Office. The recent constituent survey reveals that over 80% of our parents are willing to donate their time in the next twelve months. This both contributes to and reflects parents' belief that the school is a caring community as demonstrated in the survey with 91.3% of parents responding positively to that question. In addition to developing the feeling of community through volunteering, parents experience the community feel of CHCA through events like the Homecoming Festival, Celebration Auction, New Family Tailgate, weekly prayer groups, Bible studies, coffees with the principals or counselors, or Parent-Teacher Fellowship.

Parents are extremely pleased with the Fine Arts department (92.4% responding positively; 14% above ISACS), the Community Service program (81% responding positively; 13% above ISACS) and Student Support (73% responding positively; 22% above ISACS). In addition, 83.3% of parents responded positively about academics overall. This aligns with parents' knowledge about, and their belief in, the achievement of the school's mission to learn, lead, and serve. It also contributes to the 87% positive response of parents when asked about the overall quality of the school, 2% higher than the ISACS average.

Parents expressed concern over school security (only 54% positive response; 6% below ISACS) and food service (43.2% positive response; 11.3% below ISACS). Student safety and security are at the forefront of every parent's mind and of every school's faculty and administration. In keeping with these concerns, significant security improvements have already been made to all buildings. The Constituency Survey was completed before the security updates were instituted. School-provided food service is another widespread concern among all constituencies. With the country's growing interest in healthy and fresh foods, CHCA is working to meet this demand while still providing affordable lunches to a relatively small student population who are not required to purchase lunch at school. Since the constituency survey does not divide parents' responses by building nor does it determine if the dissatisfaction is with price, quality, or both, additional data will need to be collected.

### **Strengths:**

1. Parent involvement in the school is key to not just the success of the school and its events, but also to their feeling that the school is a caring community. Volunteerism is encouraged, volunteers are equipped and affirmed, and community is built between parents and between parents and staff through parent involvement.
2. Parents are extremely pleased with CHCA's community service program (SOS), its fine arts program, its student support services, and overall academics. 80% would

recommend the school to other families and 82% expect to continue to recommend and support.

**Challenges:**

1. Parents are displeased with the current food service offerings.
2. Only 62.3% of parents responded positively (17% below ISACS) to what they perceive as the school's concern for student body diversity.
3. School security is a concern with only 54% of the parents responding positively.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Conduct further research to determine parents' specific concerns with food service.
2. Create a parent-staff committee to define what parents are looking for in diversity and then develop a plan to increase diversity at CHCA.
3. Continue to implement the security plan that is in place and to research best practices in school security and then clearly communicate to parents CHCA's security measures.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. New Family Info Webpage
3. Parent Activities Webpage
4. Parent-Teacher Fellowship Minutes

**Submitted by:**

Elaine Marsh, EBL K-3 Assistant Principal, Parent of Alumni  
Jody Petersen, Upper School 7-12 Teacher, Current Parent, and Parent of Alumni  
Jenny Sanchez, President of Parent-Teacher Fellowship

#### **d. Student Body**

One of the core values of CHCA is to provide a “vibrant sense of community.” An evaluation of how we do as an institution in achieving this goal as it relates to our current student body reveals overall that we are doing well, though there are a few areas in which we can improve. Evidence for this evaluation emerges from our community survey and brief in-person interviews with students.

Overall, the school’s ability to provide a vibrant community is seen in the fact that 71.1% of students would recommend CHCA as a school, indicating the majority of our students feel a sense of belonging (compare the ISACS benchmark at 69%) (Q12a). The survey also reveals almost 84% of our students view the school spirit positively (see Q1a results), which exceeds the ISACS benchmark of 80.5%. Furthermore, the majority of students believe that equal opportunities exist between girls and boys within the community to be successful (Q1b), with 86.1% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. This does, however, fall just short of the ISACS benchmark, at 89.1% (see below). Relatedly, 72.7% of students positively assess the school’s promotion of extra-curricular activities through which they can develop the sense of community, which exceeds the ISACS benchmark of 70.1% (Q6d). The student body also largely agrees that CHCA promotes a racially, culturally, and socio-economically diverse community (Q1f), with 72.2% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing this sentiment, which also meets the ISACS benchmark (72%). One surprising finding from the survey is that only 66.1% of students feel well known by the teachers (Q1k), below the ISACS benchmark at 74% and also below the anecdotal evidence this committee found in talking with students. This also contrasts a bit with the students’ view of the school’s caring community. When asked if the school has a caring community environment (Q1o), 78% of students agreed or strongly agreed, almost meeting the ISACS benchmark of 80.5%.

Other areas where students’ perspectives are worth considering as it relates to a vibrant community include topics such as social/emotional development and moral/spiritual development. In other words, do students feel a sense of support and community in these areas? It appears that, by and large, the answer is yes, but there is room for improvement (see below). For example, 47.9% of students positively evaluate the school’s social/emotional development (slightly below the ISACS benchmark of 55.1%) (Q4a), while 55.9% of students positively evaluate the character/ethical/spiritual development the school provides (compare the ISACS benchmark of 59.7%) (Q4b).

These data are confirmed through interviews with students. One current senior at CHCA indicated that she thought our school had a vibrant community based on two factors: 1) the size of the student body allows for deeper relationships between students with one another and with faculty, and 2) the school offers numerous events and programs for building relationships. This student did acknowledge that her senior year has been the year when she most felt a sense of community around her, and that this was largely student-led. Furthermore, she mentioned a few examples where the community has supported each other in times of crises, caring for each other in the midst of family transitions and challenges as well as in the context of mental health problems. Her assessment, given her experience, is that the school has



cultivated an ethos in which students feel support from each other and from teachers. One of her recommendations was for teachers and administrators to grow in creating a spiritually vibrant community. She acknowledged that overall CHCA does a good job of creating a vibrant spiritual community, and hoped this recommendation would be seen as a way to improve a strength of the community. Her specific recommendations included creating space for students to wrestle with their faith and to offer more opportunities for students who desire to grow in their faith. For both of these groups of students, she recommended that faculty and administration talk more openly about their own faith journeys to encourage students and connect students with faculty in deeper and more meaningful ways.

**Strengths:**

1. CHCA's supportive and welcoming community is a strength.
2. CHCA's small size and relatively small classes allow students opportunities to be known.
3. CHCA encourages ample opportunities for students to become connected socially.

**Challenges:**

1. Support systems for mental health of students at the institutional level.
2. In spite of intentional efforts to help students feel connected, students still respond below ISACS benchmark to the question, "The student feels well known by the school." The question of whether this stems from peer-to-peer issues, or to what degree this refers to faculty-to-student relationships, and at which age levels, is difficult to discern and to remedy.
2. Maintaining and supporting diversity in student enrollment is an ongoing challenge.
3. Encouraging faculty and administration to share their faith journeys and creating intentional space for such sharing.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. We plan to seek ways to increase our diversity.
2. We plan to encourage faculty and administration to share their faith journeys in chapels, in class, and through specific training (perhaps utilizing the faculty retreat to discuss this need and train faculty in how to do this effectively)
3. We plan to continue to build on workshops (e.g., Back2Back training) to equip teachers in meeting the mental health needs across all divisions.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. Interview Questions for Students
3. Back2Back Training on Trauma
4. CHCA Non-discrimination Statement

**Submitted by:**

William C. Pohl IV, PhD, Upper School 7-12 Teacher, CHCA Alumnus

## 5. School Community: Local Community

### Overview:

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy has a substantial presence and engagement within and throughout the local Cincinnati community and among all four of our campuses. This engagement comes in many forms among our students, faculty, staff, and parent community, such as events, partnerships, outreach/service, sponsorship support, mentorship, support of curricular and extra-curricular programming, facility usage, and summer programming. And because we have campuses both in the northeast suburbs and in downtown urban Cincinnati, because our school families hail from a wide variety of locales in the region and because our students visit, serve, and interact with people all over the city, CHCA's connection to the greater Cincinnati community extends far north to south, and east to west. A quantitative survey completed in 2014 among targeted non-CHCA respondents in top 10 zip codes in our community revealed 100% of respondents had heard of CHCA and 100% of respondents ranked their perceptions as positive or neutral.

CHCA works hard to build and maintain bridges with our local neighbors. We hold annual events and festivals to which we invite our neighbors. One such event is our Annual Homecoming Festival. In order to be good neighbors, we proactively communicate about the event and potential traffic and noise to all local neighbors, giving each one an invitation to join our community for dinner and the festivities. In the fall of 2017, we held a "Light the Night" community-wide event to celebrate the opening of several new learning spaces, inviting local police and fire personnel, politicians, city workers, media, and businesses to join in on the festivities and to thank them for bearing with us during an extended time of construction at our North Campus locations. We also regularly welcome the community to our various Fine Arts events and theatrical shows, Open Houses, and sporting events via community calendars, social media, press releases, and signage. 2018 saw our first annual Veterans Day Community concert, with active reach out to veterans within our city.

CHCA also partners and collaborates with various mission-fit organizations to provide expanded opportunities for our students and parents. One example of this is through our SummerFlight Summer Camp experiences. We host several partner organizations, as well as we open the SummerFlight experience to both CHCA and non-CHCA students. These are advertised through local media, social media, and word-of-mouth. We also partner with local churches to bring in speakers for chapels in all grades throughout the year. Teachers also regularly invite speakers from local business and/or non-profit organizations to complement a lesson and/or unit.

The 2018-2019 school year brought several partnerships and opportunities to CHCA, such as Back2Back ministries trauma informed community training for parents, *Perspectives Christian Studies* courses, and Social Media training for parents, to name a few.

CHCA also opens our facilities to various local groups and organizations. For the past four years, the WCPO Scripps Regional Spelling Bee has been hosted in the Lindner Theater at CHCA's Upper School Campus. This event welcomes local students and families from all over

Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. CHCA's Martha S. Lindner campus is also home to a local church, Revive City Church on Sundays. Other public schools, dance studios, theater troupes, club sports teams, and churches have used our stadium, theater, gyms, classrooms, and grounds for a variety of activities and athletic events. Each year, CHCA holds the city's largest school arts festival, ArtBeat, welcoming well over 2,000 guests to MSL Campus. On April 4-5, 2019, CHCA is hosting a Food Symposium, leveraging thought leadership in the local and national sustainable living community in order to educate and elevate interest and awareness of sustainable and organic living. CHCA's entrepreneurial program has been pivotal in extending this event into the local (and even national) community. The event will bridge partnerships with local businesses, co-ops, farms, restaurants, etc., whose focuses are on sustainability and minimal carbon footprinting. It will help foster a culture in which we can focus on sustainable living and food integrity, and promote a message of stewardship and integrity for God's earth. Sustainability studies a focus at CHCA that has had a substantial impact on the local community. The CHCA Sustainable Garden, located between Founders' Campus and EBL serves as an Upper School SOS initiative that has provided hundreds of pounds of food to a local food pantry annually. Our Leaning Eagle student-run coffee bar supports local coffee and dairy suppliers. And our on-site Greenhouse not only hosts several schools each year to aid them in their aquaponics programming, our efforts there also provide education and support to local areas of need, including food desserts within our own city.

School families at CHCA represent several community businesses. Of course, school families also frequent local restaurants and businesses. In turn, many of those businesses support CHCA with paid sponsorships and participation in various CHCA events. For the 2018-2019 school year, CHCA launched the Purple Pages, a local business directory that features local family and sponsoring businesses in a searchable electronic directory available at someone's fingertips. CHCA also hosts a Small Business Owners' Roundtable. The CHCA Business Owners Roundtable is designed to discuss issues business owners may need help with, connect with other CHCA business owners who face similar issues, help with problem solving, networking, source of possible business referrals and support. There is wisdom in many counselors. Participants come from various types of organizations and industries.

CHCA welcomes mentors from local business throughout our community to reinforce the learning experience throughout several of our curricular and extra-curricular programming. CHCA's robotics teams in Grades 4-12 each host mentors who help them with various aspects of their season preparations, and many host mentors sponsor the teams. Grades 4-6 bring in mentors in the spring to work with students during Operation Impact Week. Not only do outside mentors come in, but students also work that week to create solutions to problems within our local community, thus creating an impact there.

We believe students and society mutually benefit from volunteering and outreach. Through interacting with non-profits within our community (and even throughout the world), our students learn about themselves, develop new skills, build relationships, and gain a deeper cross-cultural understanding and appreciation. While service to the community at large is woven into the culture of our school, it is also built into the school's curriculum and graduation

requirements. CHCA requires 120 volunteer hours with non-profit agencies. However, students at CHCA typically graduate with an average of 200+ service hours. Student Organized Service (SOS) exists in our Upper School to train and encourage student leaders to mobilize their peers by providing vibrant volunteer community service opportunities. Our goal is that all students find connections to use their skills, time, and talents to serve others in our community. Our SOS program reaches into our internal community as well. Serving lower school students and their families through various outreaches. SOS members develop meaningful relationships throughout the local community that result in improved lives.

At CHCA, we think you're never too young to start thinking about other people and how you can make a difference in our world. Therefore, we make it possible for students at each grade level to participate in a variety of activities that help them look beyond their own needs and see the needs of others. Outreach happens in a variety of ways across all of campuses:

- **In class** Many classrooms and homerooms take on class service projects during the year, even at the earliest grades. For example, Grade 1 students annual serve meals to the local firehouse, Grade 2 students serve at our local Hands Against Hunger, students and faculty advisors serve at local and global social service agencies, animal shelters, assisted living facilities, schools, and more.)
- **After school and field trips** (Many of our students have club activities which have an outreach component; frequently athletic teams and Fine Arts performing groups integrate service into group activities that serve our local community)

Service components also exists in student groups such as Student Government and NJHS in grades 7 and 8, where students are asked to commit to an additional 15 hours of service within our local community.

The dozens of communities and organizations touched by CHCA are spread far and wide across our city and the globe and among all campus locations. Armleder, in addition to classroom service projects, the school at large has a strong presence in downtown Cincinnati, regularly touching our local urban community through various outreach, events, and mentorships.

CHCA also sends students out into the community via several Intersession opportunities, specifically through service and internships. Each year for one week, students in Grades 7-8, and for two weeks students in Grades 9-12 have multiple opportunities to participate in local staff-led service opportunities and/or internship opportunities. One such example is the two-week Intersession outreach, called Serve Cincinnati Schools, where over 50 students serve in urban schools helping students with their work, aiding teachers, tutoring, etc.

At the heart of CHCA's promise to families is our commitment to fully prepare students for lives of significant impact and influence. The Beacon Scholarships are designed to recognize incoming Upper School student leaders who embody this promise and are already making an impact on the community. We intentionally seek out students who will make a positive impact during their years enrolled with us.

CHCA also makes use of Cincinnati's many cultural and educational venues via Intercession and field trips taken throughout the school year. Students and teachers from all four campuses routinely visit attractions including the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Public Library, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Music Hall, Contemporary Arts Center, Wright Patterson Air Force Base, The Nature Center, other local museums, landmarks, and more.

At CHCA, we are devoted to developing the whole person, and instilling a lifelong passion for learning, leading, and serving. What sets CHCA apart from other institutions is that along with this vision is a culture that extends full engagement beyond the walls of CHCA—a community who thrives to have an impact in the city in which we live. Moreover, the community at large recognizes the good work our students are doing as shown in press coverage and through unsolicited feedback. We wish to continue to expand that impact each year.

**Strengths:**

1. Service to the local community across wide geographic area. (Northern Suburbs to Urban downtown Cincinnati)
2. Mission-fit partnerships among various business, non-profits, schools, and other organizations within our local community.
3. Year-round accessibility of CHCA facilities and events to the local community.
4. Instilling within students the importance and impact of service and connection to one's local community.

**Challenges:**

1. Increase service opportunities available to families at the youngest grades, or school-wide opportunities (formerly Serve-A-Thon). While many classrooms adopt a cause or service project, there is opportunity for expand impact and local serving opportunities for families in the younger grades.
2. While the younger grades do yearlong and/or season-focused service projects that typically have a global impact (i.e. Operation Christmas Child, collecting shoes for children in S.A.), there is an opportunity to focus on local causes to help students further grow in their understanding of the impact of their service here to the local community.
3. Engage local alumni in expanding CHCA's footprint within our community.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Explore establishing a more formal local service model for our youngest grades.
2. Develop a strategic plan to engage local alumni influencers who are currently disengaged to speak, share their expertise, etc.
3. Continue establishing relationships with local business and mission-fit organizations.
4. Further leverage local thought leaders and business connections to reinforce project-based learning, classroom discussions, service, future opportunities for students, and other mission-fit opportunities.
5. Expand a regular presence of SOS into Grades 7-8, so that when they reach the 9-12 campus, they are already engaged in SOS.

6. Given last external perception survey was completed in 2014, administer a new one to understand perceptions of CHCA among the local community and benchmark against the data from the previous.

**Addenda:**

1. 2014 Non-CHCA Family Survey Results
2. Homecoming Neighborhood Flier
3. Light the Night Community Invitation
4. Light the Night Formal Letter Invitation from Head of School
5. Veteran's Day Concert Press Release
6. SummerFlight Summer Camp Website Link
7. Summer Programs Partners
8. ArtBeat Press Release 2018
9. Food Symposium Poster/Save the Date 2019
10. CHCA Sustainable Garden Feature Article
11. Celebration 2019 Catalogue
12. Purple Pages Webpage
13. List of local organizations and agencies served by SOS
14. Armleder Community Partnerships
15. Intersession Webpage
16. Local News Story – Outreach, Homebuilding Project
17. Community Testimonials - Unsolicited Social Media Feedback

**Submitted by:**

Jennifer Murphy, CHCA Marketing Communication Director and current CHCA parent  
Kelley Ballish, CHCA faculty member and current CHCA parent  
Tina Yelton, current CHCA parent and local business owner  
Jon Snyder, current CHCA parent, CHCA alumnus '95, and CHCA board member  
Jim Jung, CHCA staff member and current CHCA parent  
Adam Cool, current CHCA faculty member, CHCA alumnus '05, current CHCA parent

## 6. School Community: Equity and Justice

### Overview:

At CHCA we are continually striving to be a more just and equitable school community. As a school that is deeply rooted in a theological framework based on Christian tradition and beliefs, we believe that every person carries the divine image and therefore must be loved, valued, and respected, and that the diversity in our community is reflective of the nature of the Creator. This is reflected in two of our Core Values. 1) "We believe in the Value of Each Person: Demonstrating biblical equality, we will embrace each individual as a distinct creation of God, ensure an emotionally, socially and physically safe and nurturing environment and intentionally enroll a student body, faculty, and staff that reflect the socioeconomic and racial make-up of the community in which we live." 2) "We believe in the Whole Person: Recognizing all are gifted by God in unique ways, we believe in developing all forms of those spiritual, intellectual, artistic, and athletic gifts in each student to their fullest potential." Furthermore, the CHCA Board of Trustees approved the Statement on Diversity within the CHCA School Community in October of 2009: "Diversity among CHCA constituents was a central concept set forth by the founding Board of Trustees. As a philosophic cornerstone, diversity is to be expressed through several significant characteristics of our school families, including socio-economic standing, church membership and denominations within the Christian community, ethnicity, academic ability of the students, and the spiritual development and spiritual maturity of the students." So our student body, faculty, and staff reflect the diversity not only of the Greater Cincinnati area but of the global community.

Diversity at CHCA includes socio-economic diversity. In the 2018-19 school year 13% of North Campus students and 97% of Armleder students received need-based tuition assistance. The total for both campuses combined was 22%. Need based tuition assistance demonstrates one way the school commits to a socio-economically diverse student body. Lindner Scholarships awarded to Armleder grade 6 students enrolling at MSL Upper School are equal to 100% of a family's financial need, as determined by an independent outside agency. So, families with more resources would receive a smaller scholarship amount than families with fewer resources, but both would have 100% of their demonstrated "need" met. Teachers and administrators are unaware of which students receive financial assistance. Financial aid status is confidential and not published in any academic student record which disallows any bias in the standards of behavior and performance amongst students who do/do not receive financial assistance.

Another aspect of diversity is ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity. Data from student enrollment for 2018-19 show the racial/ethnic minorities percentages in the Early Childhood Program at 11%, the Lower School at 14%, the Upper School at 23% and Armleder School at 85%. This yields an overall percentage of 30% campus-wide. Students from 14 different countries represent international cultural diversity, with 32 students on F1 visas attending the Upper School as part of the International Student Program. We are working as an Upper School community to find ways to better integrate our international students into our broader school community, building bridges with domestic students.



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We provide opportunities for faculty, staff, students and parents to participate in training related to diversity and multicultural education by working to create an environment that breaks down barriers and opens windows to all human experience. Attending local and national conferences on diversity topics has been a priority for our administration and staff. Currently, parents and staff are engaged in evening sessions called Equity Builders (facilitated by a Diversity & Equity Consultant). Training content will be on leadership, restorative practices, and equity group experiences designed to engage and empower new leaders or those that are new to diversity and racial equity implementation. This format will gradually and thoroughly introduce opportunities for engagement, understanding the need for building a culture of equity, and enhance the leadership skills of teachers/staff members who desire to step into this role of leading diversity and equity groups. CHCA administrative staff worked with colleagues from the Council on Educational Standards & Accountability (CESA) to host the 2019 Christian Schools Diversity Symposium on our school campus. Teachers and staff intentionally use curricula, classroom, building activities, themes, and campus-wide events to address ethnic and racial diversity and multicultural issues. Our Student Organized Service program in the Upper School and classroom service-learning experiences in our lower schools provide opportunities for real life community engagement, opening our students' eyes to the larger world of human diversity and justice. Examples of staff training include our staff retreat before school commences in which faculty, staff, and administration participate in discussion groups and activities to foster authentic relationships and acceptance, and to break down barriers between staff members. Curricular literature units include in grade 7: *The Outsiders*, and *The Giver*, as well as Holocaust literature; grade 8: *Warriors Don't Cry*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*; grade 9: *Things Fall Apart*, *The Chosen*, *Cry The Beloved Country*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*; grade 10: *The House on Mango Street*, Rodriguez' *The Hunger for Memory*; Grade 11: *Fools Crow* or texts out of a *Native American Literature* anthology; AP English 11: *Beloved*, *Native Son*, and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*; American literature in 11<sup>th</sup> grade looks at the work of the Harlem Renaissance; in Grade 12: *The Joy Luck Club*.

As a Christian school, CHCA makes every effort to display images that are reflective of the diverse community. Students experience God's heart for the nations through the school mission of learn, lead, and serve. The school holidays follow the Christian calendar, also recognizing national, cultural holidays and celebrations. The school breaks for Christmas and Easter and devotes a week before Easter as Spiritual Life Emphasis Week (SLEW). During SLEW, each school has special chapels and guest speakers as we reflect on Christ's journey to the cross. National holidays occur on the school calendar, with appropriate celebrations such as Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents Day, and Women's History Month. In addition, the school recognizes national and world leaders associated within content area studies. Announcements, school wide signage, and literature call attention to diversity days such as Hispanic Heritage and Black History Month, and others. Both elementary schools celebrate International Week to build an understanding of different cultures. Teachers and students create displays in the hallways to teach others the things they have learned about the country or culture and bring attention to different cultural celebrations. Music and art classes provide lessons in which students explore multicultural experiences. Students and parents from other countries share information about and sample food from other countries.

Everybody Counts is another program in the elementary schools that helps students learn the importance of empathy, acceptance, and inclusion. Through simulations, Everybody Counts teaches students about physical and mental limitations and barriers that people face daily. Upper School students in grades 7 and 8 have an opportunity to travel to Monterrey, Mexico with Back2Back Ministries as part of Intersession: Change our World Week and to other culturally and socio-economically diverse communities within the U.S. In the 9-12 program, Intersessions give two-week opportunities to extend the classroom beyond the walls of the school locally, domestically, and internationally. CHCA has a commitment to global education through intentional curriculum work, inclusive and diverse learning environments, as well as shared cultural celebrations. It is the school's mission to reflect God's Kingdom throughout each of the four campuses.

In its educational practices, CHCA has not only encouraged but fostered an academically diverse student body. While our school has many academically elite students, we also have students at every academic level with various learning styles and learning differences. CHCA desires to be a "family school" where parents with children of different academic abilities can all enroll and be successful. Besides differentiation in the classroom and multiple levels of course rigor in the Upper School (college prep, Honors and VT, and AP), a strong Student Support program in the Lower and Upper Schools come alongside students to aid their learning and growth. The new Take Flight program works extensively with students with dyslexia and will help us carry out our mission more effectively with an even broader population than we could have previously served.

In addition to contracting with Equity Builders to foster a stronger dialogue and awareness of diversity, CHCA's Human Resources Department actively looks for and implements new ways to recruit persons of color to our faculty and staff. This expanded effort has been supported through seminars, publications, broader job postings, updating language of our recruitment to be more inclusive, and recruiting at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Further, as mentioned above, in April of this year CHCA will be hosting a Diversity Symposium through the Council on Educational Standards and Accountability, which will cover the following topics: Coordinating Diversity at Your School (Attraction, Training, and Retention); Internal Audit (Policies, Practices, and Programming); Supporting Minority Families at Your School; Cultural Competency; and Supporting Your Minority Faculty and Staff.

**Strengths:**

1. The CHCA community celebrates diversity through instruction, community wide celebrations, and out-of-classroom immersive experiences.
2. CHCA represents diversity by accepting and supporting students from all socio-economic, religious, and denominational backgrounds, including students with different nationalities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, race, and academic abilities.
3. CHCA has intentionally increased the study and community discussion of equity and justice through Student Organized Service, chapels, teacher in-service, professional development, and community groups.

**Challenges:**

1. Too few culturally and racially diverse applicants for faculty and staff openings.
2. Lower percentage of diversity on the North Campus.
3. While we are working toward diversity and equity on campuses, there is a perception that the school isn't committed to diversity. See Q1f (27.3% of Armleder grade 4-6 parents strongly disagree that we are committed to a racially, culturally, and economically diverse environment; 45% feel positive).

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Continue the progress we have made by increasing training and dialogue with faculty, staff, students, and parents regarding diversity and multicultural issues.
2. Work on increasing staff diversity. (Diversity of faculty is a significant issue raised by our Armleder parents.)
3. Continue to find ways to integrate our international students with our domestic students in our community.

**Addenda:**

1. CHCA Mission, Vision, Core Values
2. CHCA Diversity Webpage
3. CHCA Constituent Survey
4. CHCA Non-Discrimination Policy
5. ISACS Appendix K: Statistics on Tuition Assistance and Financial Aid
6. Course Syllabuses
7. CESA Diversity Symposium Flier 2019
8. CESA Diversity Symposium Agenda 2019
9. EquityBuilders Program Description
10. Equal Opportunity Employer Statement, from the Employee Handbook

**Submitted by:**

Bea Clements, Armleder School Faculty  
Rebekah Cool, MSL Upper School Faculty  
Sarah Ferguson, Human Resources Manager  
Andrew Hartman, Founders' Campus Faculty  
Karen Hordinski, MSL Upper School Outreach Coordinator  
Dean Nicholas, MSL Upper School Principal  
Cammie Montgomery, Armleder School Principal  
Rhian Solomon '19, graduated MSL Upper School student

## 7. Leadership and Operations: Governance

### Overview:

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy was formed as a traditional independent school in terms of governance and administration. The school's religious yet non-denominational status permits Christian leaders to engage as Board and Committee Members from across the community, representing a variety of church and worship experiences and traditions. The CHCA Board of Trustees serves in an oversight capacity, with a primary goal of ensuring the mission and core values of the school are evident and vibrantly productive in daily school practices and results. The Board also actively supports and participates in giving ongoing feedback to the Head of School.

Membership of the Board is comprised of 14-20 men and women, depending upon the cyclical nature of members resigning or rotating off the Board. Approximately three new board members are elected each year to keep a balanced rotation of new and experienced board members. At least one-half of newly elected board members must be parents of currently enrolled students at CHCA. Board members are not compensated for their service.

Board members are elected after they complete an extensive selection process. First, qualified potential candidates self-nominate and/or are nominated by parents or other vested school stakeholders. Nominated candidates fill out a standard Personal Information Form or PIF (self-disclosure form regarding an individual's background, philosophy and skill set), which aids in determining their compatibility with both the mission of the school as well as the skill set sought by the Board (as determined by an annual Needs Assessment Survey created by the sitting Board, Addendum B). The Board Nominating Committee conducts a preliminary round of interviews with candidates who have completed and submitted the PIF. The full Board conducts a second round of interviews with each candidate, and the final slate of Board candidates is then sent to the CHCA parent association (members of the CHCA parent community who are in good standing, meaning they have signed a Statement of Faith and are current in tuition and other fees and accounts) for affirmation. If a two-thirds majority of votes are cast in favor of the candidates, the candidates are considered elected to the Board and are eligible to serve for two consecutive three-year terms.

Prior to joining the Board, each new member is given an extensive orientation covering the history of the school, the school and Board policies, the Board committee structure, constitution and bylaws, operational guidelines, the financial condition of the school, and the overall expectations of Board members. Board members are expected to actively serve on at least one committee of the Board and to attend every Board meeting, missing no more than three in the course of a year. Each year, board members will engage in a self-evaluation process, which is then reviewed by the Executive Committee for needed adjustments.

The Board meets approximately eight times per year, plus twice with the parent association. Additionally, the Board engages in an annual all-day retreat, which primarily consist of strategic planning for the subsequent three to five years. The Board President sets the agenda after conferring with the Executive Committee and the Head of School. Each Board meeting consists of prayer, policy work, proposed innovations or improvements, approving committee actions and reviewing the financial status of the school. The Head of School and Chief Financial Officer attend each Board meeting.

A majority of Board activity is through involvement with board committees. The primary board committees include Finance, Education, Athletics, Governance, Buildings and Grounds, our Armleder Campus, and Advancement. Ad hoc committees are added from time to time. Board committees, in conjunction with the administration, set objectives for the year (see addendum) which are approved by the Executive Committee at the beginning of each school year. Committees are comprised of board members, administrative staff, and parents as needed to fulfill the objectives of each committee. Committees meet monthly before each board meeting and the minutes of the meetings are often included in the pre-read that goes out prior to each board meeting.

The Governance Committee engages in an annual review of current policy and considers all new policies recommended by the Board or the school administration. This Governance Committee frequently reviews the Board and school by-laws, the Board Policy Manual, and school handbooks (student, faculty, and parent) to ensure complete compliance with the law, consistency internally with school policies, and adherence to current best practices.

**Strengths:**

1. CHCA has a continuously committed, appropriate, and highly engaged Board of Trustees.
2. CHCA is buttressed by well-articulated foundational documents and policies.
3. Board members represent diverse experiences that more than adequately inform CHCA decision-making.
4. There is a clearly articulated and effective process for recruiting and vetting potential Board members.

**Challenges:**

1. Board term sequencing is such that there are back to back years that a high number of board members term limit off the Board leaving the years following rather thin on experience.
2. There is sometimes a lack of clarity on what makes for Board effectiveness due to a limited amount of consultation on those matters.
3. While there does tend to be a fairly diverse representation in terms of gender, racial diversity has been weak.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Create a new Board tenure sequencing strategy to balance out experience levels.
2. Engage a Board Governance Consultant to ensure best practices for Board effectiveness.
3. Strategic focus on board member diversity.

**Addenda:**

1. Board Member Roster
2. Board of Trustees Webpage
3. Board Meeting Agendas
4. State Charter for Non-Public School in Ohio
5. Strategic Plan (In Progress)
6. Committee Charters
7. 2017 Constituent Survey

**Submitted by:**

Randy Brunk, Head of School, Committee Chair and Alumni Parent  
Brian Van Jura, Board President and Parent  
Mike Wallace, Chief Financial Officer and Alumni Parent  
Andy Espenshade, Board Member and Parent  
Amy Connor, Board Member and Parent

## **8. Leadership and Operations: Administration**

### **Overview:**

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy's operational functions are led by the Head of School and his administrative team, which covers all aspects of school life.

The Head of School ensures adherence to all school policies and performs the day-to-day management functions of the school. He/she also serves to keep the Board informed regarding school matters and presents critical school performance measures to facilitate proper board oversight of school function and health.

The current Head of School, Randy Brunk, has been at CHCA for 16 years in that position. Prior to coming to CHCA, Mr. Brunk spent six years as the Head of School in Illinois and prior to that eight years in Virginia as a math teacher, Middle School Principal, Director of Development, Business Manager, and Assistant Head of School. Prior to his now 30 years in education, Mr. Brunk received his MS in Educational Leadership from Regent University in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Mr. Brunk heads an Executive Team consisting of school building leadership and central office assistance. The school building leaders include a principal and an assistant principal responsible for the ECLC and Lower Elementary Program. Another principal serves our Upper Elementary Program. We have an Upper School Principal who presides over that program with assistance from an onsite grades 7-8 Assistant Principal, an Operations Manager, and a Dean of Students. Our fourth principal serves the students, staff, and families at our Armleder School.

Our academic leadership team is joined and supported by a Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, who also functions as a Director of Curriculum. Programming in the Fine Arts and Athletics are supported through a Fine Arts Director and an Athletic Director respectively. Our Director of Advancement oversees communications, marketing, fundraising and admissions. Finally, all business functions are overseen by a CFO who also oversees much of CHCA's operations. All of the above leadership meets with the Head of School bi-weekly to ensure quality academic programming, adequate resources, and a supportive culture for staff and students.

All employees of CHCA report to one of the above members of the Executive Team, who are responsible for the hiring of staff within their respective departments. Any final employee candidate, who will be dealing directly with students, meets with the Head of School to assure they understand and desire to serve the mission of the school.

Compensation for the Head of School is established by the Board and is reviewed annually. The Board evaluates the Head of School annually. The Head of School determines the salaries of Executive Team in the spring of each year. Approximately every other year, the Head of School provides a formal evaluation of the members of his/her Executive Team, in addition to ongoing evaluative feedback.



Consensus on major decisions is sought from the Executive Team when appropriate. Mr. Brunk manages using a distributive leadership model, giving each member of his Executive Team the authority to make decisions within policy guidelines. Mr. Brunk operates an open-door policy with his Executive Team in the event they desire guidance prior to making a decision or setting direction within their department. Members of the Executive Team frequently, formally and informally, survey parents to ensure constituent concerns are addressed prior to making changes or enacting new programs. Lastly, Mr. Brunk hosts quarterly meetings with staff members who desire to give input to decision making in three key components of school life: (1) the Cultural Task Force discusses ways to better the culture of the school for primarily staff, but also students; (2) the Professional Task Force discusses ways to better the professional life for employees; and (3) the Strategic Task Force discussed trends in education and what that mean for CHCA. These task forces provide valuable feedback to the decision making process at CHCA.

On a more formal basis, the school engages in a three-five year strategic planning process to set direction for the school. These strategic processes sometimes result in a capital funding campaign, the most recent of which was *Light the Way*, which was completed in 2016. The administration develops the bulk of the potential strategic direction, and then submits that body of work to the Board during a strategic planning phase. During intervening years, the Board takes a deeper dive on various aspects of school function at an annual Board Retreat. These retreats also function as a platform for continual refinement and assessment of programming as it relates to the mission of the school.

**Strengths:**

1. Strong executive/administrative team that likes and supports each other professionally as well as personally
2. Supportive Board that allows executive/administrative team to lead
3. Hiring process that attracts a quality staff
4. Financial support to encourage innovative learning

**Challenges:**

1. Considering the distance between buildings, there is less than the desired amount of collaboration.
2. There is less than optimal time to ensure alignment between the Board vision/goals and administrative team's goals/vision.
3. Blocking out administrative time for planning, implementing and managing new initiatives

**Recommendations:**

1. Creating specific times during the school year for Board/administrative teams to get time together to talk strategy
2. More formal and informal administrative team collaboration time

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**Addenda:**

1. Biography of the Head of School
2. Faculty Meeting Agendas
3. Organizational Chart
4. Administrative level job descriptions

**Submitted by:**

Randy Brunk, Committee Chair, Head of School and Alumni Parent  
Dr. Dean Nicholas, Upper School Principal and Parent  
Joyce Smith, Student Support and Alumni Parent  
Pamela Bailey, Administrative Assistant

## 9. Leadership and Operations: Personnel

### Overview:

The personnel at CHCA are vital in meeting the school's mission of educating students in a Christian environment where excellence in academics, athletics, fine arts, enrichment opportunities, and extra-curricular activities are offered. CHCA has continued to attract experienced faculty with masters and doctoral degrees, even during the current almost-full-employment national economic climate. The personnel hiring process is a thorough one, ensuring that the most qualified applicant is hired. We use a state-of-the-art, user-friendly application software that allows applicants to easily apply from any device, to set notifications of new openings, and to return easily to amend or update their applications. We have permanent postings for both faculty and administrative positions that allow interested applicants to apply anytime, thus creating an applicant bank from which hiring managers can choose when openings do occur.

Current data from school year 2018-19 show CHCA employs 121 classroom teachers in four buildings, pre-school through grade 12, including 17 specials teachers designated as art, music, enrichment, world language (elementary) and technology, 8 student support services teachers; 3 library media specialists, and numerous educational aides. This number of teaching faculty allows for the average classroom size of 17. Teachers are assigned to their area of licensure commensurate with their professional credentials. Faculty and staff are qualified, adequate in number, and appropriately assigned.

CHCA demonstrates its commitment to the professional development of its faculty and supports their professional work in the following ways: (1) Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) and its operational handbook; (2) new teacher mentoring program; (3) Resident Educator Mentor program for those defined by Ohio Teacher Licensure regulations as Resident Educator licensed teachers; (4) a menu of professional development opportunities and spiritual growth opportunities; (5) a graduate tuition reimbursement program for the pursuit of graduate degrees; (6) CHCA has launched a Teacher Innovation Fund initiative, which encourages teachers to submit innovative teaching ideas in their academic areas, and thereby receive funding for accepted programs that enhance the learning experience at our school.

Each teacher at CHCA meets the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) Operating Standards requirement that all teachers and building principals hold Ohio licenses or "non-tax" certificates appropriate for their work assignment. CHCA's LPDC facilitates the renewal of teaching licenses by coordinating with ODE and approving teachers' continuing education credits and individual professional development plans necessary for renewal of teaching licenses.

Teacher performance is assessed within each building through the principal's ongoing teacher evaluation process. Teachers are compensated fairly according to an salary chart (updated annually) that recognizes their educational degrees and total years of service in their field, guided by a compensation policy that charts the average of 85% of local public and private schools. Also, stipends are available to faculty for additional responsibilities above and beyond

their contractual obligations. Further, faculty may apply for the Martha S. Lindner Endowment for Annual Faculty Incentives, which annually awards monies over and above their salary to teachers, using such criteria as total family income, number of dependents, and theological integration practices. Finally, full-time employees who are diagnosed with serious illnesses are eligible to apply for extra paid sick days through a Sick Bank, which is administered by representative employees from each area of the school and which contains ample days donated by current employees according to a written policy.

The administrative and support staff have specific areas of responsibilities referred to in CHCA's organizational chart. Department heads ensure that their staff are performing their duties according to CHCA's standards and mission statement. Periodic evaluations are done in order to further the quality of the work performed and to maintain good communication between staff and department heads.

The sense of community that already exists among our personnel was greatly enhanced this year through the all-staff overnight retreat that was held prior to the start of school. Most employees found the retreat to be a resounding success, allowing people from different programs and grade levels the opportunity to become better acquainted.

The school has undertaken a number of enhanced safety measures that the school to protect both students and staff. Training has been provided to all teachers on how to react in case of a school violence incident. All visitors to the school must now check in at kiosks that require driver's licenses and ID stickers that all must wear while on the premises. Finally, the school has further enhanced the safety of all by requiring that all volunteers be fingerprinted and cleared by our in-house equipment sanctioned by the state of Ohio.

Personnel policies are clearly defined and detailed in the Employee Handbook. The HR Department provides a Summary of Benefits for both faculty and administrative personnel to all new employees and as requested by current employees. The Handbook is easily accessed by all personnel through an icon located on all school desktop screens, and on the shared hard drive available to all employees. CHCA adheres to ISACS "Principles of Good Practice in Employment." Due Process is addressed in the Employee Handbook (pp. 6, 7-8, 9-10, 16, 22-23, 32-33). All exempt employees sign a one-year "Employment Agreement," which includes provisions for salary, term, Christian mediation, termination, and non-renewal. All other employees are considered "at-will" employees under Ohio law and are given yearly notification of their pay rate.

**Strengths:**

1. A complete mentoring program for newly hired faculty helps them acclimate quickly to the policies, procedures, and culture of the school.
2. An enhanced Orientation Day has been added each year to help acclimate new teachers.
3. An annual Wellness Program, which includes optional health risk assessments once a year coupled with an incentive exercise program.

4. Stipends, innovation grants, and sick bank paid days provide opportunities for added income to employees.
5. New safety measures that protect personnel and all other constituents.

**Challenges:**

1. Increased diversity among our faculty and staff – several new measures are being taken in this area.
2. Faculty perception of a disparity of professional development funding and opportunities across divisions.
3. The current teacher observation/evaluation system is cumbersome to complete and inadequate for providing teachers feedback for professional growth.
4. A metric that determines compensation of the non-faculty staff based on a comparison with other similar private schools.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Develop new strategies for building relationships with minority candidates to build a stronger pipeline of diverse faculty and staff hires.
2. Explore and develop an updated format for teacher observation and evaluations, incorporating more efficient administrator walk-through tools and peer observation formats.
3. Explore the creation of a faculty-directed professional development committee with ample budget for more equitable professional development opportunities.
4. Continue to build on the success of all-school events like the August all-staff retreat, diversity discussion groups, and task forces that create a more unified CHCA culture and encourages positive working relationships across departments and buildings.
5. Work on benchmarking of non-faculty staff compensation.
6. Continue to promote opportunities like graduate tuition reimbursement, teacher innovation grants, and teacher leadership opportunities to retain high-performing faculty and staff.

**Addenda:**

1. Faculty and Staff Directory 2018-19
2. LPDC Operational Handbook
3. Mentoring Handbook
4. Tuition Reimbursement Policy
5. Praxis Evaluation
6. Listing of Stipend Responsibilities
7. MSL Endowment for Annual Faculty Incentives
8. Organizational Chart
9. Job Descriptions (see faculty profiles)
10. Employee Handbook
11. Summary of Benefits (included in Employee Handbook)
12. Sample Employment Contract
13. Teacher Innovation Fund Grant Awards

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**Submitted by:**

Sarah Ferguson, Human Resources Manager

Randy Brunk, Head of School

Mike Wallace, COO/CFO

Kris Gilbert, Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning

Elaine Marsh, Assistant Principal for Preschool and Lower Elementary

Deborah DeGroft, Senior Accountant and Alumni Parent

Jill Blaxton, Board Member

## **10. Leadership and Operations: Business Operations**

### **a. Business Management and Operations**

CHCA's Business Office has six full-time employees. One individual serves as both Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Chief Operating Officer (COO) and manages the Business Office; he reports directly to the Head of School. The CFO/COO attends each of the official meetings of the Board of Trustees, the Finance Committee, and Executive Committee of the Board to present the financial statements and report on any upcoming financial commitments or banking initiatives.

The CFO/COO and Business Office staff frequently network with other schools to compare and benchmark processes, staffing, and software applications.

The Business Office has successfully implemented paperless work functions over the past few years that have had significant impact across the school community. The Business Office introduced a registration program called UltraCamp for the purpose of registering and paying online for camps, events, Intersession courses, and athletic teams to name a few. This has eliminated the manual collection of paper forms, tracking, and collecting payments while allowing parents to log into their accounts, access all of their registrations, and see scheduled payments. The Business Office can then review rosters and the payment status for each event.

Additionally, the Business Office implemented a paperless environment for billing and payables processes. Implementing a cloud-based, paperless automated workflow data management system has doubled as a communication tool and a document management system surrounding the financial documentation and supplementing the accounting system with our larger Blackbaud database.

CHCA expanded paperless processing by adding a facilities reservation system (FRS), as well as a transportation resource reservation system (TRS). The results are modern, high-functioning, low-cost tools with improved accountability, user visibility and engagement, streamlined processes, better communication, and efficiency that translate into lower operating and payroll costs.

### **b. Financial Affairs**

The Business Office, the Board of Trustees, and the Finance Committee oversee the financial operations of the school. The Business Office manages the annual budget which is reviewed and approved by the Board. In constructing the budget, the Business Office works with each campus and administrative department (Advancement, Admissions, Athletics, Business Office, Informational Technology, Building and Grounds, Guidance, Academics) to gather their individual budget requests and capital requirements. Once the costs are determined, the revenue is calculated based on enrollment projections, annual giving contribution projections, endowment earnings, and state funding estimates. Each budget manager is provided with the most current status of their budget which includes their actual spending with their



encumbrances on a weekly basis. This is an effective tool to help them manage their budgets by providing current information and spending detail.

Internally prepared financial statements are presented to the Finance Committee and Board each month ensuring fulfillment of our core value of fiscal responsibility. Outside auditors perform an annual audit for the financial statements and the 403b plan. The audit firm meets annually with the Finance Committee and Board to review the audit process, review the financial statements, management reports, and any changes in the not-for-profit business sector. The audit results are published in an Annual Report sent to parents, alumni, and other friends of CHCA which assures constituents that the school's finances are well managed and secure. The Business Office also works with the outside auditors to stay in compliance with FASB's not-for-profit financial reporting standards which have changes effective for this year and the following year.

The school's insurance provider annually reviews the insurance policies to assure that the coverage is appropriate with the changing needs of the school. Legal ramifications that could necessitate changes in current policies are considered at this time to protect the school of any potential legal risk.

The Business Office works directly with the Advancement Office to track pledges, contributions, changes in endowments, scholarship distributions from the endowments and discuss any potential uncollectible pledges for write-off at year end. The Business Office communicates with the Admissions Department to stay abreast of the enrollment fluctuations, financial aid requests, and scholarship awards.

Currently the school has two term notes totaling \$9.7 million. Approximately \$6.8 million was a bond payable that converted to a term note in 2016 and \$2.9 million that was a construction draw note that was converted to a term note in 2017.

### **c. School Plant and Facilities**

CHCA has been blessed with extensive and attractive school facilities. Since the school broke ground in 1987 there has been significant construction done at various intervals via different capital campaigns to lead us to what the school looks like today. There are four campuses and six support buildings totaling 334,479 square feet.

The Edyth B. Lindner Campus includes the Blake Lindner Thompson Early Childhood Learning Center (PK2-PK4) and the Lower School (KPrep-3) is 68,000 square feet with enrollment of 314 students. The Founders' Campus (Upper E 4-6 and Upper School 7-8), recently expanded from 79,000 to the current 89,000 square feet, has an enrollment of 411 students. A multipurpose athletic field was completed in 2018 and was funded entirely by donations. The Maintenance House is located behind the Founders' Campus.

The Martha S. Lindner Campus (Upper School 9-12) is 91,000 square feet with an enrollment of 427 students. The recent capital campaign renovated areas on the 2nd floor to create a state-

of-the-art innovation rooms, and the International Student Program was moved to a larger area and re-designed to enhance the experience for staff and students. The library was transformed to a collaboration space for students. This area includes a quiet study area, ideal rooms for collaboration, and other study areas with charging stations. The newly constructed greenhouse is 5,760 square feet with a classroom. This campus also has the Athletic Building (7,500 square feet), tennis center (1,425 square feet includes restrooms, concessions, and six tennis courts). Additionally, at this campus is a baseball field and a football/soccer stadium with an eight-lane track.

Just south of this campus is the Beshear Family Welcome Center which houses the Admissions, Advancement, and the Head of School offices (4,948 square feet). This building was thoughtfully configured to make each family's experience personal, thorough, and enjoyable. Directly behind this building is the Johnson Business Center which houses the Business Office, Human Resources, an office for the Facilities/Grounds Director and the Data Management Group (1,632 square feet).

In August 2000, the school purchased and renovated a six-story, 63,000 square-foot historic building in downtown Cincinnati. This campus is the Otto Armleder Memorial Education Campus (PK3/4-Grade 6) with an enrollment of 133 students. Two buildings adjacent to the Otto Armleder School building are currently owned by the school. The building at 918 Race Street is currently up for sale and the building at 119 9<sup>th</sup> Street is mostly being used for storage. In 2018 a soccer field was installed at this location and funded by donations.

In 2001, CHCA purchased 20 acres of ground approximately three miles north of the Martha S. Lindner Campus to serve as practice fields for athletic teams. There is one house remaining on this property that currently serves as prop storage for the Fine Arts Department. In 2013, an open shelter was added to this location to accommodate teams in inclement weather.

All of the CHCA buildings are in excellent condition and conform to local and state public safety and health regulations.

The school is continually looking for ways to reduce costs, maintain, and improve the condition of the facilities. Projecting forward to future hiring in this area, management realized they were facing a low supply of capable staff at a cost that the school felt was reasonable. In December 2018, the school transitioned all of the custodial/building maintenance and grounds to TDG (an independent contractor) to provide all of the custodial, preventative/proactive maintenance management, and centralized purchasing of facilities costs. Prior to this full transition to TDG the school had instituted a work order and workflow process to support on-demand maintenance requests.

A Facility Fee charged to each family with their annual tuition invoice was instituted in 2010 and has continued to increase to help fund the capital improvements necessary to keep the school's facilities in excellent condition.

CHCA uses an independent contractor for its food service. Health and safety guidelines are strictly followed related to all provisions of the food service. The school provides modern kitchen facilities, food storage equipment, and cafeteria point-of-sale devices.

Transportation to and from school is provided by local school districts for students living within a 10-mile radius of the school. Approximately 80% of the students do not utilize busing. Chartered bus companies or school vehicles (72-passenger buses) transport students to sporting events, practices, field trips, and other off-campus school events. The school owns three eight-passenger vans which are used to transport students. The drivers of the vans involved with transporting students must pass specialized licensure and adhere to the school's policies with regard to behavior and compliance with state laws.

Security was added to exterior doors that can only be opened with a key fob that is assigned to the employee. The keypad was also programmed to include a silent alarm in the event of a forced intrusion. Cameras were added in the entry areas of each campus so that entry or activity can be monitored. Buzzers are used to let visitors in the building followed by a visitor sign in requiring a driver's license. Panic buttons are located at the receptionist desks of each campus; these buttons set off an alarm for immediate lockdown as well as call to the police.

The Upper School has contracted with a K-9 drug prevention program that visits the campus unannounced every few weeks. The K-9 dogs are trained to identify drugs, drug paraphernalia, and weapons. They are given access to classrooms, lockers, vehicles, and all areas of the building and grounds.

**Strengths:**

1. The Business Office staff has extensive experience at the school and the department has not experienced high turnover.
2. The school's facilities and grounds are attractive, modern, and well-maintained, supporting an exceptional environment for the entire school community.
3. Security continues to be a top priority of the administration with continual monitoring of ways to enhance the current systems and processes.
4. There have been several significant conversions to paperless processes that have been successful and well received in the registration process for families.
5. The auditors have issued management reports that have had no reportable comments or internal control concerns. This is a reflection of the attention to excellence and detail of the Business Office, as well as to the careful focus of the Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee to the short- and long-term financial health of the school.

**Challenges:**

1. Focused planning and projections need to be a priority in order to determine the appropriate timing of capital replacement of equipment, building components, flooring, parking, and roofing.
2. Storage continues to be a challenge as the school grows. Several ideas are being reviewed to come up with a remedy.

3. Continuous monitoring of ways to grow the endowments that support the academic programs, facilities, financial aid, and compensation in order to meet the current and future needs of the school.
4. Maintaining an onboarding process for new hires that will streamline the human resources processes. Enhance the access of current staff to their information so they can make changes to their tax information, addresses, etc.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Enact a timeline for building enhancements and expansions.
2. Utilize the information that now will be recorded and tracked on capital items to make sound decisions on when to replace capital items.
3. Review proposed solutions to remedy the storage problem.
4. Work with the Advancement Department to brainstorm ways to grow or to add new endowments that will support the ongoing programs at the school.
5. Support Human Resources in the current work with ADP in completing the work of onboarding new employees that has already begun.

**Addenda:**

1. Emergency Operations Plans for Each Building
2. Sample of Maintenance Schedule
3. Board Policy Statement on Federal Compliance (p. 21 of Employee Handbook)
4. Health inspection documentation
5. 2018-2019 Financial Audit

**Submitted by:**

Michael Wallace, CFO/COO, Committee Chair  
Ben Beshear, Board Member, CHCA Alumnus, and Parent  
Mark Bishop, Facilities Director  
Beth Cox, Business Office and Parent  
Deborah DeGroft, Business Office and Alumni Parent  
Eileen Hall, Business Office  
Jason Null, MIS Solutions Vice President and Parent  
Eric Taylor, Athletic Director  
Heather Wilkowski, Assistant Principal, Upper School 7-12

## 11. Leadership and Operations: Technology Services

### Overview:

Following a comprehensive technology audit in 2015, CHCA took several important steps to advance technology and innovation as major priorities. First, CHCA hired a full-time Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning. This district-level administrative position combines Academics, Ed Tech, and Innovation under a single umbrella using the TPACK Framework as an organizational model. Working from a curriculum and instruction emphasis, the Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning is not a branch of the IT department; instead, he works with parents, students, teachers, and administrators, to bring cohesive direction to technology implementation and usage, from purchasing new equipment, to instructional coaching in tech implementation and best practices for teachers, and education and technology purchasing assistance for families and students.

CHCA outsourced IT services to MIS Solutions, LLC in 2016. MIS works with CHCA to maintain the school's backbone infrastructure, domain servers, and maintenance of school-purchased devices and software. MIS Solutions also maintains the school's web filtering, firewalls, and network monitoring. The company provides a dedicated three-person support team for CHCA. To support the CHCA-dedicated MIS Support Team, MIS Solutions has another 17 support personnel ranging from Helpdesk, PC Support, Server Support, and Networking to assist with additional items. MIS has worked with CHCA to continue to improve their technology. New fiber was laid between the Edyth B. Linder, Founders, and Martha S. Lindner Campuses. The new fiber is rated for speeds above 10GB. This has improved the connectivity of the network and made the use of wireless throughout the campuses a much better experience.

Currently, MIS is working with the administration at CHCA's Armleder Campus to improve their wireless network by adding an additional 12 access points and upgrading the current 12 to newer models. CHCA has also continued to add new switches and added additional wireless throughout the buildings to handle the growing wireless demand brought on by the BYOD initiatives. CHCA has also added secondary internet connections to both the CHCA North Campus and Armleder Campus to ensure that CHCA can deliver internet to all campuses in case of an ISP outage on the primary connection. The new failover system is automated and happens without support intervention. CHCA and MIS continue to improve equipment, policies, and procedures and look forward to tackling our future technology needs.

To manage digital learning and provide consistency across grade levels in posting academic information, the Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning led the effort to adopt a new learning management system (LMS). Following a formal search process that focused on ease-of-use and intuitive access for students and parents, the school adopted the Canvas LMS in 2016, now used for hosting course content and posting assignments and daily grade progress in grades 4-12. Moreover, the school continues to expand the Bring Your Own Device program that launched in 2012; all students at grades 4-12 now have access to electronic productivity devices during the school day, whether school-provided day loaners or school-approved BYOD devices from home.

CHCA also undertook major renovations at all three North Campus locations as part of the “Light the Way” capital campaign, including construction of seven innovation spaces at the Founders’ Campus and MSL Upper School.

All innovation spaces are multi-use areas for teachers and students to explore project-based or problem-based possibilities for learning that might be more difficult in the confines of a regular classroom—whether through video production projects, 3D printing, role-play and gaming, or virtual reality explorations in the Van Jura zSpace lab (Founders’) or Drosos zSpace lab (MSL). The Stone Space at Founders’ Campus is home to the junior high robotics program, while the Borcharding Space at MSL houses our state-of-the art print shop.

The Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning facilitates use of CHCA’s new innovation spaces and oversees the \$1.2 million Teacher Innovation Fund. The Light the Way-funded TIF grant program, launched in 2017, provides monetary and instructional support for teachers who present innovative ideas for their classrooms or action research proposals. As of this self-study, the Teacher Innovation Fund has awarded over \$90,000 in grants to teachers, each of whose projects have had immediate impact on classrooms and the quality of learning.

The school website and student information system (SIS) are maintained by two full-time employees in our data management group, functioning as an arm of the Business Office. Along with maintaining these critical services for the school, they also do a great deal to organize the shared folders on the server. Along with providing data, managing queries, and updating information on CHCA’s varied constituencies, they also work closely with our IT service as updates are needed to the servers and SIS, as well as the principals, the registrar, and the Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning among others to make sure student and family information is as easy to access as possible. The legacy school-hosted Blackbaud SIS products present a growing challenge for us as we continually update our varied systems in a wireless, 21<sup>st</sup> century culture in need of quick access to data, interoperability, and integration with other systems. The data management team is our eyes and ears as we watch for the sunset of Blackbaud’s legacy Education Edge product and our pending search for an updated SIS that we know is coming in the next few years.

Overall, we are encouraged by the direction of our technology focus at CHCA and the impact that recent changes are having. The 2017 Constituent Survey showed significantly higher approval ratings of current parents and current students over the responses of young alumni (those who would have graduated during some of our more difficult years with regard to laptop availability and WiFi access). Even as the survey was issued a few days following a major lightning strike that hit our domain server, the higher approval rating among those groups is encouraging. At the same time, we would like to see responses of “Very Good” or “Excellent” among our faculty and staff improve even more to match or exceed the norm for ISACS schools. Moreover, we recognize the great gap between parent perceptions of technology in the classroom (very enthusiastic in the survey) and teachers’ greater reservations about technology in the classroom as indicated by the survey results.

**Strengths:**

1. The new wireless infrastructure is solid, maintaining a 10G connection speed for North Campus internet traffic.
2. New initiatives, like the addition of a Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning and the Teacher Innovation Fund, provide new possibilities and needed direction for implementation of technology, best practices in technology integration, and the direct funding of innovative approaches to learning at all grade levels.
3. Outsourcing IT services to MIS Solutions has allowed for greater resourcing around true IT problems and emergencies with rapid response times, as well as targeted implementation and management of a state-of-the-art internet backbone.
4. In spite of recent challenges, perceptions of technology use and availability at CHCA seem to be improving, as indicated by the Constituent Survey results.
5. The widening acceptance of the Bring Your Own Device program by the Upper School grades has alleviated tremendous technology spending costs, and with the day loaner device program, has allowed every student in Upper School to have access to a productivity device.

**Challenges:**

1. Time and personnel are limited to provide additional training in technology usage that teachers are asking for across all buildings. The issue of technology training, in best practices as well as in limiting distractions to learning, is likely an underlying factor in faculty survey responses regarding technology implementation as a priority.
2. The Blackbaud SIS, with its lack of interoperability as well as its imminent sunsetting, presents a growing challenge.
3. The Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning is saddled with back-end Canvas LMS management tasks as well as growing curriculum and administrative responsibilities that make it difficult to be in all four buildings at once. Help is needed.
4. Teachers face growing difficulty in managing the potential for distraction in the classroom with BYOD.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Explore the hiring of assistants as part of the Department of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning to help manage back-end tasks as well as directing other functions, in order to make more time and space for the director to facilitate training and oversee full implementation of the TPACK approach to technology in the curriculum.
2. Work to implement a device management option for the teachers in our BYOD environment that work alongside (and do not interfere with) our existing filtering protocols, but allow teachers to have greater control over tech usage in their classrooms.
3. Explore Student Information System options and develop a formal plan for migrating to a new SIS within the next several years.
4. Assist the Head of School in launching a teacher-led Professional Development committee that helps direct professional development in technology and identify professional development needs.



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5. Assess the recent successes of the Teacher Innovation Fund and explore ways to expand grant opportunities to teachers with available funding.
6. Work with IT and leadership at EBL and Armleder to implement a 1:1 iPad/tablet program as we work to build student skill going into the Upper Elementary grades.

**Submitted by:**

Kris Gilbert, Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning  
Jason Null, Vice President, MIS Solutions and Parent

**Addenda:**

1. Technology Organization Chart
2. Job Description for Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning
3. Document Retention Table
4. CHCA Technology Responsible Use Policy
5. CHCA BYOD Brochure
6. BYOD Recommended Specifications "Shopping List"
7. CHCA Technology and BYOD Webpage
8. Service Level Agreement
9. 2015 Technology Audit Summary
10. Software Adoption and Update Policy Description
11. Hardware and Software Inventories
12. PCI Compliance Policy
13. CHCA Network and Server Diagram
14. 2015 Technology Audit Summary
15. TPACK framework for technology and curriculum integration
16. CHCA Teacher Innovation Fund Website

## **12. School Program Overview**

### **a. Early Childhood and Learning Center and Armleder Pre-School and Edyth B. Lindner Lower School K-3**

#### **Overview:**

The CHCA Edyth B. Lindner Lower Elementary School serves preschool children (starting at age 2) through grade 3 children and predicates its work on the school's stated vision, mission, and core values. (Although the preschool is named the CHCA Blake Lindner Thompson Early Childhood Learning Center, it is housed in the elementary building.) Developing the whole person and unleashing a lifelong passion for learning, leading, and serving is the major emphasis as faculty, staff, administrators, and parents work together to fully prepare our students for all that lies ahead for them at CHCA and beyond. Key words in the school's mission are "Christ-centered" and "academic excellence." These words inform all of the program areas from preschool through grade 3. In addition, the importance of the school's values are articulated and fostered in the academic disciplines during the school day and in all of the extra-curricular activities. The ISACS Constituent Survey notes that parents and faculty believe the school's mission is largely achieved.

The elementary building was built in 1992. It has gone through several expansions since that time to support enrollment and the needs of the grade levels. The latest expansion and restructure occurred in 2017. Grade 4 moved up to CHCA's Founders' Campus, which allowed for additional classroom space plus a separate "welcome center," art studio, Exploration Station and Piazza (large motor/activity space) for the preschoolers. This restructure enabled the reconfiguration of the elementary grade level classes. Although preschool enrollment is increasing, elementary enrollment has remained steady for the past several years. Currently there are four preschool classes, four sections of kindergarten, three sections of grade 1 and four sections of grades 2 and 3.

The faculty at the Lower Elementary consists of an exceptional group of dedicated and enthusiastic educators. Between the preschool and elementary, there are 23 full time and 7 part time faculty members. Forty percent of the Lower Elementary and Early Childhood Staff have advanced degrees in education. In addition to the exceptional teaching faculty, the Lower Elementary employs two full time administrators, four administrative assistants (two full time and two part time), one full time nurse, and 14 part time classroom aides. All do their part to help create a positive, warm, nurturing environment of learning where all students can reach their highest levels of success. This success is evidenced by the ISACS Constituent Survey, which shows overall parent satisfaction of student academic achievement and social-emotional growth as well as a positive school spirit. Parents note that students feel known and cared for by their teachers and staff. Currently, the faculty and staff are not as racially or culturally diverse as we would like it to be.

Currently, the faculty is studying the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner and are exploring innovative practices to meet those needs. Our preschool is predicated on the Reggio-Inspired

principles of Early Childhood Education while our elementary uses a thematic approach. To bridge the gap between these two philosophies and provide a smoother transition between the preschool and elementary, we are exploring the incorporation of more project-based learning opportunities for our elementary students. Project-based learning is a key factor in the Reggio-Inspired approach. In the Lower Elementary, it will give more focus to student construction of knowledge through research, problem-solving activities, collaboration, reflection, and hands-on applications. The goal is for students to have more ownership and choice in their learning and less teacher directed and rote learning experiences.

In addition to academic and social-emotional focus, the development of a strong spiritual life is an important part of the school's mission. All faculty and staff work hard to empower our students to live a life modeled after that of Jesus Christ. In essence, faculty and staff provide for academic learning but also model and teach about the "mind of Christ" in the classroom, in chapel services, in prayer groups, and in service to others. Students are encouraged to learn, lead and serve following the model of Christ inside and outside of the classroom.

Service learning is a key part of the programming in preschool through grade 3 and helps our young learners become less inward focused and more outward focused. The goal is to have students know and understand they are part of a bigger world. Each grade level is required to participate in two to four service-learning projects each year, which coincide with their developmental levels of understanding. Through these types of projects, leadership qualities begin to emerge and develop.

The Lower Elementary School is committed to meeting the needs of all of our learners. Currently there is one full time and one part time Student Support staff and one full time Take Flight instructor. In addition, there is one full time Enrichment Coordinator, one full time Science Enhancement Coordinator and one full time Accelerated Math Teacher. The Student Support staff work with small groups of students but also help classroom teachers find key strategies and materials for those who learn differently. The Take Flight instructor works with small groups of students but also provides further support by working directly in the classroom with her students. She also coordinates additional support with the student support teachers as needed.

At the other end of the spectrum, enrichment and enhancement courses are provided at all grade levels, K-prep through grade 3. Lego-Robotics/STEAM classes introduce students to real world engineering challenges in grades 1 to 3 and Science Enhancement classes in our state-of-the-art Science Lab and outdoor learning spaces provide enriching experiences for all grade levels. Reading and math enrichment are provided for all grade levels and accelerated math classes are provided for the advanced math students at grades 2 and 3.

The curriculum at the Lower Elementary has been well-researched and intentionally designed to meet the needs of a diverse learning community. Based on national standards, Ohio Learning Standards (with reflection on the Common Core Standards) and ISTE Standards in Technology, it is infused with best practices regarding child development theory and recent neuroscience

information. A Christian worldview, as is developmentally appropriate and applicable, is integrated into each area of the program. Teachers use divisional curriculum maps, grade level benchmarks and course syllabi as instructional guidelines. In curriculum implementation, teaching faculty enumerate and refine the curriculum and use the Understanding by Design (UBD) model from Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. This model begins with the end in mind. Teachers start planning from the point of what students should know, be able to do and value by the time a unit is complete. From there, teachers work backward to plan the instructional strategies and learning activities and materials that will support the desired outcomes. All learning is connected to “big ideas” and “essential questions” for the interdisciplinary, thematic units which are filled with experiential and hands-on learning that will occur in class. This allows the students to continually connect new learning to prior knowledge and skills. Time is built in for both teacher and student reflection in each unit. A variety of assessments, both formative and summative, are carefully designed to show a true understanding of concepts learned. With the incorporation of project-based learning, the UBD units will need to be adjusted to allow for student interest and direction. The ISACS Constituent Survey indicates satisfaction in overall academic achievement.

Technology is an important part of the elementary program. Each classroom kindergarten through grade 3 is equipped with at least two classroom computers. Each grade level also has access to an iPad cart. Each class K-prep through grade 3, has opportunity to work in the Computer Lab with the lab teacher to extend classroom projects and learn new uses of technology. The goal for technology use is to be a “value-add” to the education of the students. In addition, we are working toward students using technology to produce instead of merely being “consumers.” We continue to grow in this area and need to provide more technology professional development opportunities for our teachers.

CHCA Lower Elementary’s commitment to quality academics is reflected our standardized test scores. (We administer the ERB to students in grades 1 through 3.) Our scores compare very favorably, if not above, both local and national scores of Christian and/or other independent private and public schools. Our kindergarten students take the CPAA assessments from ERB. Teachers spend time analyzing test data the beginning and end of each school year to help inform instruction and understand students' strengths and weaknesses.

To help develop the “whole child,” the Lower Elementary offers a full complement of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, some during the school day and some after school. There is a plethora of activities in athletics and fine arts. Private music lessons are offered during the school day. All students are encouraged to participate in activities in their area of interest, ability or just for fun.

Parents are viewed as partners in the education of their children in the Lower Elementary. At every level, they are invited to be involved in the life of the school. They are often seen volunteering, assisting teachers in the classroom, planning parties or fundraisers, offering office support, or participating in other groups including the Board of Trustees. The ISACS Constituency Survey confirms parent involvement in the school.

**Strengths:**

1. The ISACS Constituency Survey recorded strong positive responses from parents in almost all areas at CHCA's Lower Elementary, suggesting a high level of satisfaction with the range of academic programs and services, Christian/caring environment, facilities, faculty, student development, activity offerings and fulfillment of the mission of the school.
2. A strong, experienced faculty, support staff, and administrators who are committed to helping each child reach the highest levels of success.
3. Both boys and girls have an equal opportunity for success.
4. The school supports academic achievement in a caring, nurturing environment.

**Challenges:**

1. The Lower Elementary has a low percentage of racially and culturally diverse faculty, staff and students.
2. Provide a smoother transition for our students between our preschool and lower elementary by bringing some of the Reggio-Inspired principles into the Lower Elementary.
3. Faculty ownership of and input into how professional development funds are allocated and used each year.
4. Parents and faculty rated food service as an area that needs improvement.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Ensure teachers, staff and administrators are part of upcoming diversity focus groups and workshops. Work toward having a Diversity Coordinator on staff who will keep diversity at the forefront of our thinking and help us make progress in this area.
2. Bring the Reggio-Inspired principle of project-based learning into the Lower Elementary. Dedicate time and funding for teachers to learn more about this approach and its value and use in the elementary school setting. Investigating workshops, webinars, books they can use or attend. Provide time for teachers to observe others who using this approach in our school and in area schools.
3. Ensure teachers have some voice in how professional development funds are used and allocated. Our Head of School's Professional Development Group will share recommendations for all the principals.
4. Survey parents and staff to glean suggestions for what improvements need to be made in the food service area. Investigate other schools who have successfully overcome this issue to see what they have done and how they have made it affordable and workable for all.

**Addenda:**

1. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks Booklet
2. Course Syllabuses
3. Lower School Curriculum Maps

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4. Sample UbD Units
5. ERB Testing Scores
6. Preschool Christian Studies Standards and Benchmarks
7. ODE Early Learning Content and Development Standards
8. myCHCA Early Learning Webpage
9. Lower School Webpage
10. *Beyond Lower School* Extracurriculars Webpage
11. Take Flight Information Sheet
12. EBL K-3 Student & Family Handbook
13. Lower School PK-3 Daily Schedule, Edith B. Lindner Campus

**Submitted by:**

Sandy Breitholle, Principal, CHCA Lower Elementary and Blake Lindner Thompson Early Childhood Learning Center

## **b. Founders' Campus Lower School (Upper Elementary) 4-6**

### **Overview:**

In its sixth year of existence (2018-19) CHCA's Upper Elementary School, consisting of 245 students in grades four through six, finds itself at the center of student engagement as an important and well-respected part of the CHCA Pre-K-12 program. The Upper Elementary School is committed to providing a distinctly Christian, college-preparatory, and innovative education for students who find themselves in the unique and challenging period of pre- and early adolescence. Moreover, this community also provides ample opportunities for social interaction and experiences to learn, practice, and/or refine known or emerging talents and skills. CHCA Upper Elementary realizes the great importance of peer relationships and family partnerships for children at this age as well as the exploration of interests and talents that can last a lifetime. With this mind, our programming at Upper Elementary puts emphasis into the use of technology and engineering as part of our core curriculum and extra-curricular programming. The Upper Elementary School has defined its curricular core to include language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and Christian studies. Supplementing our core curriculum are foreign language, technology and Design Thinking, and fine arts in the forms of vocal and instrumental music and artistic design. Our school supports students' spiritual growth by offering a variety of opportunities in addition to the central strategy of theological integration. Christian Studies classes, mentioned above as one of the six core subject areas, meet multiple times a week in grades 5 and 6 for 40-50 minutes per class and each day in grade 4 for 30-60 minutes. Chapel meets once per week and includes a teacher-led worship band. Our chapel is focused around a monthly theme that is led by staff, parents, and/or outside spiritual leaders from local churches. The topics covered in chapel are then integrated and reinforced in our classroom instruction in all grade levels and subject areas. In addition, we lead our students in a multitude of leadership and outreach opportunities that connect with current events and humanitarian needs. Upon entering the Upper School 7/8, our students are expected to be excellent readers and writers, having a solid foundation in numeracy, and practical 21<sup>st</sup> century technological and engineering skills while being poised and prepared to lead and serve with a Christian worldview.

At the Upper Elementary School, we value small class size and innovative learning environments to meet the needs of diverse learners. Diverse learning styles and needs are supported with our two innovative learning spaces and classroom furniture and design that allows for student individuality. At the Upper Elementary School, a strong emphasis is placed on building a positive, friendly, and supportive learning environment. This mission is highlighted with our E.A.G.L.E.S program for student character and accountability.

In addition, we have a variety of other incentives in place for helping our students learn and grow to the best of their God-given ability. Our staff works cooperatively and tirelessly to create the best possible learning environment for each student. Emphasis is placed on building strong rapport among colleagues, students, and families in achieving our goals. As we are committed to developing students that have the skills and mindset to lead in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, all students are assigned a personal laptop to be used throughout the day and are engaged in daily



cooperative learning experiences. The Upper Elementary program includes the introduction of Canvas, our learning management system, in fourth grade with increased student engagement and autonomy in the system as they progress through grades 5 and 6. In addition, special emphasis has been placed on S.T.E.A.M and cooperative learning with time built into the grade 4 schedule to allow for additional team-teaching and innovative enriching opportunities.

A faculty of 30 people (including Student Support Services, a nurse, and a counselor), 16 are full-time, 12 are shared between buildings, and one part-time Student Support Aide is dedicated to professional development, collaboration, and maintaining a vibrant professional learning community. Of the 30, three are men and 27 are women, 23% of whom hold a master's degree or higher. The daily schedule provides a maximum amount of time to core courses in a specific and strategic manner, including a daily block schedule for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts and Social Studies. After the school day officially ends, teachers, coaches, and parents continue to provide students with a myriad of organized activities. The school provides interscholastic sports and robotics during fall, winter, spring, and summer seasons.

For those interested in other enrichment opportunities, we offer clubs and classes in math and fine arts for students in grades 4 to 6. Sports and clubs offered at the Upper Elementary School for female students include volleyball, cheerleading, golf, basketball, track, lacrosse, First League Lego Robotics, and jump rope club. Sports and clubs offered for male students at Upper Elementary include football, golf, basketball, track, lacrosse, First League Lego Robotics, and jump rope club. Our students also have the opportunity to participate in several fine arts teams and clubs including dance, the school play, Genesis Jazz (6<sup>th</sup> grade), Premier Pops (6<sup>th</sup> grade), and ArtBeat. Furthermore, the Upper Elementary School has a "no cut" policy, meaning that any student who desires to play will be placed on a team.

Additionally, CHCA offers summer enrichment opportunities as part of CHCA's SummerFlight program designed to provide opportunities in academics, athletics, technology, fine-arts, and other interest-based activities. Also, the school provides several socials throughout the year including Fall Social, Movie Social, Roller Skating Social, Men-It-To-Win-It Father-Son Social, Mother-Daughter Tea Social, and Sixth Grade Amazing Race with Parents Social. This long list of opportunities and activities, the high percentage of participation by students, and the "no cut" policy underscore our school's commitment to the social, emotional, spiritual, and physical development of each individual child along with promoting a strong and highly-engaged school community. At Upper Elementary School, we offer after school care for students with working parents. This is led by a faculty member with assistance from high school students interested in working with our youth. During after school care, the students are permitted to complete homework and interact socially within a structured environment.

Finally, all our programs described above are housed in an outstanding physical structure and are infused with state-of-the-art technology. Large, inviting, well-lit classrooms provide ample room for instruction and cooperative learning. Facilities at the school include a library and Media Center with twenty-five computer stations, and a variety of updated media presentation

devices in each classroom, a gymnasium, two art rooms, two instrumental music rooms, one vocal music room, a cafeteria serving hot cooked meals, and two innovative spaces.

**Strengths:**

1. Our facilities allow for high levels of engagement both in and out of the classroom. With modern classrooms, cutting edge technology, unique and impressive recess equipment, we stand above the competition in offering our families the very best.
2. CHCA's Upper Elementary focuses on innovative teaching practices and tools that support the development of critical 21<sup>st</sup> century skills for our students. With one-to-one personal devices and the use of a learning management system, our students are immersed in technology throughout the day. In addition, we have placed a high emphasis on S.T.E.A.M, coding, robotics, and cooperative learning. These skills will make our students highly competitive in the world they will be entering in near future.
3. Upper Elementary's focus on building culture is fostering a safe, inviting environment for students to thrive at CHCA. We believe that learning should be engaging, challenging, and fun. Supported by our E.A.G.L.E.S program for student character and accountability, we strive to make our school a challenging yet nurturing environment for learning and growing.
4. Our staff supports one another in sharing ideas, helping one another, and communicating these values with our families. We value professional development and trying new and innovative methods for making a difference for our students.
5. The Upper Elementary School is especially strong in supporting our students to participate in extra-curricular activities. Clubs, athletics, outreach, and fine arts are valued equally at our school. We believe in developing the whole child. With that mindset, academics are but only one facet of that development. We believe that for our students to truly make an impact in the world, they must be about more than grades and tests. Students are celebrated for participating in any and all extra-curricular opportunities in our school.

**Challenges:** A review of the Constituent Survey conducted in 2017 in addition to personal reflection of the needs of the Upper Elementary School reveal three areas for growth.

1. Sharing staff between programs creates tremendous challenges for Upper Elementary. As mentioned above, Upper Elementary is currently sharing 40% of its staff with other buildings. These buildings are on different schedules and the Edyth B. Lindner School is not connected to the Upper Elementary School. This presents a significant problem when trying to implement new courses and creative scheduling opportunities. Moreover, the number of part-time staff at Upper Elementary limits programming options.
2. The second challenge facing Upper Elementary is keeping up with the cost of supplying one-to-one devices for our students. The current practice is to replace devices for one grade level per year while the other grade level devices are under warranty. While in

theory this practice should work, the cost to replace a grade level worth of devices is substantial and limits other opportunities to enhance curriculum and instruction. A look at moving to cheaper, more disposable devices is being discussed along with the possibility of adopting a rent-to-own policy. At this time, we are only in the discussion phase of these plans.

3. The third area for growth facing the Upper Elementary School involves counseling. We are seeing an increased need for social-emotional and academic support for students throughout the country. This need has not escaped the walls of CHCA. We currently have one part-time counselor serving grades K-8. Our counselor is housed in the Upper Elementary Building working four days a week. It is our goal at Upper Elementary to meet the needs of each student and to support our teachers in the classroom in meeting these needs. With that in mind, it is difficult to accomplish this goal without a full-time expert trained in counseling and/or child psychology for intermediate-aged children within the building each day.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Increase opportunities for students to learn and apply concepts in coding.
2. Provide a course for students to learn study and test-taking skills that will assist them in our school and beyond.
3. Continue to provide opportunities for teachers to team-teach and incorporate S.T.E.A.M concepts in their lessons.
4. Assess and improve our current plan for one-to-one student devices in order to keep up with rising costs and device efficiency.

**Addenda:**

1. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks Booklet
2. Course Syllabuses
3. Lower School Curriculum Maps
4. ERB Testing Scores
5. CHCA Lower School Webpage
6. *Beyond the Lower School* Extra-curriculars (from the CHCA Website)
7. Take Flight Program Information Sheet
8. Lower School 4-6 (Upper Elementary) Student & Family Handbook
9. Lower School 4-6 Daily Schedule, Founders' Campus

**Submitted by:**

Steve Sideris, CHCA Upper Elementary Principal Grades 4-6

[c. Otto Armleder Memorial Education Center, PK-6](#)

**Overview:**

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy's Otto Armleder Memorial Education Center was conceived in the hearts and minds of the Board of Trustees as a potential demonstration of CHCA's core values of outreach and diversity. After being awarded \$7.3 million from the Otto Armleder Memorial Trust, the historically significant Crosley building in downtown Cincinnati was purchased and renovated to best serve elementary children. The school opened in August 2000 with approximately 90 students in grades pre-kindergarten through grade four. Armleder currently serves close to 135 students in grade PK-6.

Otto Armleder school's purpose is to offer students of under-resourced families a Christ-centered college preparatory program that develops leadership, a foundation for life-long learning, and skills for success. Significant tuition assistance allows many families the opportunity to pursue academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment that would otherwise be unavailable to them. Armleder participates in the Ohio Department of Education voucher program, Ed Choice. Students in failing local public schools are eligible for Ohio Ed Choice scholarships to attend Armleder. Due to the increase of students qualifying for Ed Choice, 30% in 2012 to 71% in 2018 all students in grades three -six must take the required state Language Arts, Math, and Science assessments. Ed Choice program requires annual assessments, income and residential verification from the parent as well as attendance, tuition, and handbook submitted annually from the school. A state funded support for early childhood education, Step Up to Quality, is also required. Armleder has applied for the star rating, which will make Armleder preschool families eligible to receive funds for tuition based on Federal Poverty Guidelines.

The faculty and staff of Armleder are an exceptional group of energetic, highly motivated professionals, dedicated to the high-quality Christian education of students. Each day theology is integrated in a way that balances both knowledge and application. Christian theological principles are integrated into all curricular areas, assisting in the development of a student's Christian world view. Weekly chapels provide the opportunity for students to hear inspiring and spiritual messages from members of both the school and local communities. Upper school students lead the music and message monthly, and other speakers include staff, parents, youth pastors, and missionaries. Armleder has done exceptional work with developing a more positive leadership culture school wide with a focus on developing lifelong learners and leaders. The commitment to Christian education and to the students is exemplified in how the staff gives freely of themselves: leading clubs, offering after school tutoring free of charge and ensuring students have their immediate needs met. Due to a collegial and positive atmosphere, as well as the calling teachers believe to be on their lives to be a part of this school, Armleder has been able to attract and retain excellent teachers. However, Armleder has experienced turnover in faculty in past years with part time positions. Competitive full time offers, increased salary and higher hourly wages noted as reasons for staff and faculty transitions.

Early literacy foundations are key to every students' reading success. Armleder's teaching faculty in kindergarten through second grade have Orton Gilliam Training and use the strategies to build young readers' phonemic awareness and development. Students who need additional support outside the classroom receive support services from a Cincinnati Public School Title I teacher in the support services classroom. The Title I teacher works with students one-on-one or in small groups to intervene and assist students to learn foundational skills they may be lacking, particularly supporting students in designated grade levels in reading and/or math. Instructional aides and volunteers work with individual students or with small groups to help students in areas that may need additional support or to provide enrichment for those needing additional challenge. Speech and Language Therapist screens kindergarten, new, and students of concern in grades kindergarten through six. Each of these support services work collaboratively with the classroom teacher to meet the needs of Armleder's diverse student body.

One positive result of strong academics and effective instruction is demonstrated through students' assessment scores. In the fall of 2012, the Educational Records Bureau Comprehensive Testing 4<sup>th</sup> edition replaced the school's use of the Stanford Achievement Test through spring 2018; using the ERB CTP-4 online test beginning in 2016 for grades 1-6. Students performed at or above the national average in reading and math national norms.

Armleder has also worked over the last six years to provide adequate technology infrastructure, essential for online testing as well as digital instruction. As the requirement for state testing increased due to higher enrollment participation, Ed Choice recipients were preparing for and taking the two different achievement tests. Beginning 2016 and ending in the 2018 school year, students in preschool were assessed with the ERB online assessments, the CPAA. Preschool in alignment with Step Up To Quality also began to use the state of Ohio Early Learning Assessments in 2016. Preschool is using the state approved Creative curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold Assessments. Kindergarten screens using Ohio K Ready. As of 2018-2019, students in grades kindergarten to grade six are administered the MAP three times a year to assist in determining progress, interventions and enrichment needs.

As Armleder continues to implement the school's continuous improvement model, *Leader In Me*, the staff focus for the 2018-2019 school year is Aligning Academics. The Lighthouse Leadership Action Team designed an Academic Leadership Action Team. The Academic Leadership Team oversees assessments and makes recommendations as well as assist with implementation and analysis of the grade level assessments. Armleder believes students should have the opportunity to develop leadership skills and explore areas of interest in and outside the regular classroom, so the school offers various programs and extra-curricular opportunities to students. The S.T.A.R. program (Students/Staff that Always Respect) assists the school in modeling and developing godly character traits in the staff and students as all learn to cooperate with one another, resolve conflicts in a positive manner, and build relationships.

Armleder hosts several student leadership teams that meet before, during and after school to develop their interest inside and outside of the classroom. Armleder students also take part in extra-curricular activities and field trips with north campus students thanks to the school's bus

transportation between downtown and Symmes township buildings. Due to the school's proximity to a number of cultural, civic and educational institutions in downtown Cincinnati, the students at Otto Armleder have exceptional opportunities for enrichment. Field trips, projects and collaborative initiatives with community and organizations such as the Cincinnati Squash Academy, Cincinnati ballet, Cincinnati Christian University and museums, to name a few offer Armleder students unprecedented exposures to cultural and intellectual experiences that enhance their learning. Downtown council Ambassadors program, OLLI UC adult learning, and the Findley Market Opening Day Parade are a few opportunities to support programming for visibility in the city.

The Constituent Survey shows high satisfaction with the Armleder overall academic program, but responses from parents of students in low satisfaction for foreign language. Food service continues to be a low satisfaction. Retention of families is a challenge when students with solid academic preparation received at Armleder are lured by scholarships into a top public high school or other independent schools. Armleder's transition to a PK-6 program aligned with the shift in local public schools to K-6 model as well. Armleder students transition sooner to the north campus, which also has an impact on Ed choice recipients.

Armleder has developed partnerships and relationships in the community through backpack donation with school supplies, gift cards for uniforms, Thanksgiving and Christmas donations to families in need demonstrate the heart of generosity. Since 2013, Armleder's Faculty and Staff have led the school in 100% participation each year in annual giving campaign. The Parent community as also joined the school's record for 100% participation since 2014. The 2019 Armleder Playground Campaign completed in one full week through the generosity of 51 donors and 100 employee volunteers from the Motz Group.

**Strengths:**

1. The school supports academic achievement. Teachers and staff work to meet the needs of each student through high expectations for competency with differentiation, which creates an environment where students feel well known and successful. (see Constituents Survey Q1jko)
2. School has a commitment to gender, academic, racial and economic diversity. Diversity is celebrated school wide. Equity and inclusion efforts allows staff to address student-learning styles and close educational gaps. Multicultural education is integrated in class instruction through books, materials, images.
3. Armleder supports 21<sup>st</sup> century learning with a commitment to (one to one) technology in grades K-6. Students' Reading, Math, Science and Social Studies curriculum have online resource components and integrates Science Technology Engineering Arts and Math.
4. Leadership development and the integration of principles in all aspect of the school experience. Students from preschool – grade 6 learn about leadership principles and have opportunities for classroom and school wide leadership.
5. Armleder is beacon for generosity in tuition assistance to families, stakeholder commitment to annual giving and developing community partnerships to advance programming needs.

**Challenges:**

1. Social-emotional support as well as academic intervention concerns demonstrate a need for student intervention support. (see Constituency Survey Q4, Q5df)
2. Improve the nutritious quality of the foodservice meals and options. (see Constituency Survey Q8e)
3. Intentionally recruit diverse candidates in gender and racial for faculty and staff.
4. Parent engagement - Continuous improvement with full participation in mandatory parent conferences, reading and responding to school communications, timely submittal of required documents and forms, maintaining good standing with business office, and volunteer time and talents.
5. Track enrollment trends with efforts on retention in upper grades. Encourage student and family engagement through extracurricular activities like fine arts, athletics, robotics, community service/outreach. Enrollment shifts after third grade. Intentionally create opportunities to increase in cross campus connections and supports for north campus transition.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Continue to reinforce leadership development in a positive responsive culture, through PD and leadership opportunities for students, staff, and parents.
2. Assess and improve school security in all facets of our practice, all doors, playground, communications, arrival and dismissal. (see Constituency survey Q7d)
3. Achieve Five Star Rating Preschool Step Up to Quality by State of Ohio. The rating will enable parents in poverty to access state funded scholarship for tuition. The star rating offers Early Childhood grants each biennium and the school would be eligible for grant funding based on Federal guidelines.
4. Assess and improve our technology infrastructure.
5. Partner with mental health services for PD and stakeholder support.

**Addenda:**

1. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks
2. Course Syllabuses, Armleder K-6
3. Armleder Curriculum Maps
4. ERB and Standardized Testing Summaries
5. myArmleder School Webpage
6. *Beyond the Armleder School Day* Extracurriculars Webpage
7. Armleder PK Student & Family Handbook
8. Armleder K-6 Student & Family Handbook
9. PK-6 Daily Schedule, Armleder Campus

**Submitted by:**

Cammie Montgomery, Armleder Principal



#### **d. Upper School 7-12**

##### **Overview**

The Upper School provides students in grades 7-12 an education that is academically excellent in a Christ-centered environment. The school creates an environment that is rigorous and challenging, yet at the same time caring and nurturing, unleashing a passion in students to learn, lead, and serve. We have developed a strong reputation as an excellent academy that delivers a high academic value. At the core of this excellence is an exceptional, dedicated faculty. Our faculty is comprised of creative and innovative educators who are also extremely relational and connected to their students. As we have grown our programs and course offerings (and added new innovation spaces and a greenhouse), we continue to prepare students for higher education and life beyond academia. And because of the confessional nature of our institution, we continue to ground our students in a historic Christian education that prepares them spiritually and ethically to face a complex and ever-changing world. Our teachers work to theologically integrate our curriculum across all subject areas in authentic ways.

In 2016 we began a new structure at CHCA by combining the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades of the Middle School with the 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades in the Martha S. Lindner High School to become the new Upper School 7-12. This Upper School spanned parts of two campuses: sections of the Founders Campus and all of the MSL Campus. The impetus of this shift was twofold. First, as we began to offer high school credit for high-school-level classes in mathematics and world languages taken at the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels, it seemed appropriate to put those classes under the supervision of the high school principal. Second, we desired to build greater cohesion from 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade in order to help retention between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade as students transition between buildings. We did this through a number of venues: 1) creating 7-12 academic departments to align curricular scope and sequence better, 2) adding junior levels of key programming from the high school to build a sense of connectedness (Intersession, Entrepreneurship, SOS, Robotics), and 3) extending the ethos of a student-centered culture and environment from the high school down to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade level by creating a sense of student ownership of the culture and giving students a modicum of choice and freedom in their school day.

In an attempt to be more fully “college prep” we have created a schedule that gives students more free time in their day to manage. Shifting in the MSL building from a 7-bell to an 8-bell day, we created Personal Responsibility Time (PRT) for students rather than our former 24-minute lunch bells. Now in the middle of every student’s day, they have a 48-minute PRT (bell 4, 5, or 6) to eat, seek help, spend time in the gym, or socialize with friends. The flexibility of the schedule gives students down time and the ability to manage their workload. At the grade 7-8 level, students have 40 minutes of Student Directed Learning (SDL) Monday through Thursday to do homework, meet with a teacher, or collaborate with classmates. This is a stepping stone toward PRT at the MSL.

A core value of CHCA which is clearly demonstrated in the Upper School is that we value and seek to develop the whole person. We believe that God has made each student uniquely, with

gifts and talents that are to be developed fully to the glory of God. So whether in the athletic arena, in the music program, robotics, theater, art room, or the dance studio, we seek to provide a level of excellence for all our students. Not only do our students learn to master techniques and skills that allow them to succeed, but these extra-curricular areas develop habits of discipline, character, perseverance, and collaboration. Our faculty, coaches, and volunteers who serve in these capacities create communities within the greater CHCA community that support and develop our students, giving them a sense of belonging, connectedness, and school spirit.

We have attempted to make our Upper School more diverse. One of the avenues for this has been our growing International Program. This past year we had 32 international students on F-1 visas from six different countries. Our comprehensive program seeks to help them transition to the United States generally and CHCA specifically by helping them culturally, academically, and socially. This has added a wonderful complexity to our community. Our international students have had success at CHCA and at the college level and we are working to help integrate them more fully in to the social fabric of the community. While our overall number of diverse students has grown over the years, the number of African American students has not increased. We are striving to have a greater level of diversity within our faculty and staff but we need to grow in this area as an institution.

A major facet of the Upper School ethos is the emphasis on service. At the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade level, all students participate in a week-long Intercession each fall dedicated completely to service learning from the school to the community to missions domestically and internationally. At the MSL campus, all students are required to complete 120 hours of service as a graduation requirement and each year, the senior class average is over double the requirement. This past year it was an average of 280 hours per senior. Students lead their classmates in service through the organization Student Organized Service (SOS) and the SOS leadership board picks a service-learning focus for the Upper School community each year. Service has been a hallmark of our school since its founding.

The greatest challenge facing the Upper School is overcoming the issue of geography. While the Founders Campus and the MSL Campus are relatively close in proximity, it still requires driving down a sidewalk-less street to get back and forth. Making the faculty, staff, and students feel part of a connected whole is a great challenge. Administrators and some teachers move back and forth between buildings but creating more connections is paramount to our success. We have had much discussion around strategies to overcome this. We need to enact solutions in the coming years.

**Strengths:**

1. A professional, dedicated, committed, faith-filled faculty that authentically engages students.

2. Strong academic programming that has a high standard of excellence throughout, employing a variety of methodologies and innovative approaches that prepares our students for academia and beyond.
3. A high value of the whole person which creates excellent opportunities in athletics, fine arts, service, and other extra-curricular activities.
4. A student-centered community where students have choice and buy into the greater Upper School culture, supporting teams, classmates, and events, demonstrating a high level of school spirit and pride.

**Challenges:**

1. As we move into the fifth year of the Upper School, find solutions to bridge the campuses and create a more unified Upper School *esprit de corps*, giving faculty/staff and grade 7-12 students a greater sense of connectedness.
2. Continue to create a more diverse community racially, ethnically, socio-economically, and internationally, both in our student body and faculty, and support a culture that celebrates that diversity.
3. Help faculty grow in creating a spirit of innovation which pushes new boundaries in learning and reimagining the classroom/school of the future.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Create a new schedule that aligns the Founders' and MSL campuses to enhance movement and collaboration between buildings.
2. Add diversity to the stated responsibility of an individual to help us institutionally move forward in this area.
3. Encourage teachers to use Teacher Innovation Grant monies to experiment in the classroom and bring a greater level of innovation thinking to our students.

**Addenda:**

1. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks
2. Upper School 7-12 Course of Study
3. ERB Testing Summaries, Grades 7-8
4. Academic Results Upper School Statistics Webpage
5. CHCA Upper School Webpage
6. Beyond the Upper School Day Extra-curriculars Webpage
7. CHCA's Approach to Upper School, White Paper
8. Upper School Student and Family Handbook

**Submitted by:**

Dr. Dean Nicholas, Upper School Principal

### 13. Program: Mathematics

#### Overview:

In a time when statistics seem to support a growing concern in the mathematical ability of American students and there are questions about the effectiveness of math programs and teaching practices, CHCA's Math Department exemplifies excellence in mathematical achievement. Student scores on standardized tests, parental support and approval, and a caring, professional, and experienced faculty demonstrate this excellence. The faculty strives to engage students in meaningful mathematical experiences such as critical thinking, creating interdisciplinary connections and speaking the language of mathematics. The success of the CHCA mathematics program directly reflects and affirms the Christ-centered vision of the school's mission, not only for excellence in education, but in developing the principles, integrity, and confidence needed to equip tomorrow's leaders.

The approach to the Lower School mathematics program reinforces the belief that God's creation operates in a precise, orderly, and sometimes mysterious manner. Mathematical instruction is supported by the use of various methodologies and pedagogy, and educational materials which are aligned with best practice, providing for each student's mathematical maturation and learning style. Experienced teachers, along with parental involvement, contribute to the success of the program.

At each grade level, the curriculum reflects a sequential progression coinciding with developmental stages. The math curriculum benchmarks inform math instruction beginning at the kindergarten level and carry through grade 6. The CHCA *Statement of Curriculum* articulates the standards that run throughout: counting and cardinality, operations and algebraic thinking, number and operations in fractions and base ten, measurement and data analysis, geometry, ratios and proportional relationships, expressions and equations, statistics and probability. The Lower School has adopted a Singapore Math text entitled, *Math in Focus*.

The math curriculum and instructional strategies set the expectation that each student becomes an active, reflective participant. Students are encouraged to recognize connections between topics and understand the application of the material being presented. Teachers offer a consistent academic challenge to all students through a variety of approaches. Teachers lead all students to identify and develop their God-given strengths. Students actively engage in critical thinking through constructing and applying ideas in mathematics by problem solving, cooperative learning groups, individual explorations, and projects. Students use technology extensively as a tool for learning. These methodologies allow for differentiation and mastery of grade level concepts.

Math teachers collaborate across grade levels and between campuses, utilize professional development settings, and engage in ongoing dialogue with colleagues from all campuses. Dialogue with grade-level teachers and administration is substantive and productive for both horizontal and vertical articulation. Interdisciplinary collaborative efforts facilitate the incorporation of technology and science into the math curriculum.

**a. Edyth B. Lindner Lower School K-3 Mathematics**

Throughout CHCA Lower School, students have opportunities for both enrichment and support in mathematics. Activities take place both inside and outside the classroom. At EBL, students meeting the selection criteria join the daily accelerated math class in grades 2-3. Some K-4 students participate in weekly math enrichment, again selected using established criteria. This opportunity is in addition to the regular math class and is a pull-out program.

**b. Lower School 4-6 Mathematics**

At CHCA Upper Elementary school, students are placed appropriately using established criteria in either standard College-Prep or Honors math classes in grades 4 and 5. In grade 6, an additional accelerated math class, Advanced Math, is offered in addition to Honors and College-Prep courses.

**c. Armleder PK-6 Mathematics**

At CHCA Armleder, students are in grade-level appropriate classes. Students do not participate in pull-out classes, either accelerated or enrichment. Students are given opportunities to express interest in various enrichment activities, like robotics, and are allowed to participate in those activities at the end of the day per a schedule.

**d. Upper School 7-12 Mathematics**

The CHCA Upper School math curriculum aligns with Ohio's Learning Standards for Mathematics. The CHCA Upper School math curriculum is organized to make three levels of acceleration: on grade-level, single acceleration (Honors), and double acceleration (VT/Vertical Team is Pre-AP) available for our students at each grade level. Students who are on grade-level begin their Upper School mathematics instruction with Math 7, and continue to Pre-Algebra before beginning the high school course sequence. Students are required to take four years of high school mathematics courses to graduate. Algebra 1 marks the beginning of this four-year requirement. All students take a sequence of Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2. Some start the sequence as early as grade 7 while others start in grade 9. After Algebra 2, students have multiple course options. Some students pursue a sequence that extends through Calculus, while other students choose additional exposure to algebraic concepts, statistics, or business-related concepts. See the MSL Upper School Course of Study and teacher syllabi for course descriptions and details of each mathematics course. Students have the opportunity for enrichment and competitive mathematics throughout their upper school experience by participating in after-school extra-curricular activities such as Math Counts, Mu Alpha Theta, and STEM Robotics. (See addenda for Course Syllabi and List of Math Competitions)

Understanding that Upper School students are in a transitional phase, teachers strive to differentiate math instruction in numerous ways. As a department, we recognize that every student learns at his or her own pace, and we desire to provide every student with the support he or she needs in order to experience success in the mathematics classroom. The curriculum addresses the enrichment and remedial needs of each student through a variety of levels of classes, including normative grade level as well as advanced course offerings. Teachers use a

variety of instructional methods to introduce, develop, and extend students' mathematical understanding. Students engage in whole-class instruction, work in pairs, and participate in cooperative group collaboration in the mathematics classroom. Teachers particularly help each student move from a concrete mathematical approach to a conceptual understanding of mathematics. By this, we refer to a student's ability to engage in abstract thinking. Not only do teachers help students perform a mathematical process; they also stress the importance of articulating a conceptual understanding both verbally and in writing. We intentionally develop self-advocacy in every student by encouraging them to seek out solutions and support. Technology tools and resources also help prepare the students to move forward with confidence into more advanced mathematics curricula. Through the use of technology, such as graphing calculators, Geogebra, and Desmos, students make discoveries and connections with previously learned material.

Throughout all campuses, the teachers assess students' progress in a variety of forms: classroom assessments that may be formative or summative, traditional paper and pencil, performance, and standardized (or norm referenced) tests. Classroom assessments give evidence of student understanding through both verbal and written articulation. Students may work independently on a traditional assessment that measures their recall of information, their application of concepts, and/or transference to applicable situations. Students may show their understanding through a performance task, which may be an individual assessment or group cooperative problem solving calling upon shared knowledge. Students undergo norm referenced, standardized testing in math each year which provides the school and parents information on student performance in comparison with students from across the nation and individual student progress year over year. Students will take such standardized tests as AIR, MAP, ERB, CPAA, PSAT, and PLAN throughout their educational career at CHCA. Assessment results inform instructional decisions. In practice, placement decisions seem to be a challenge at all levels.

We struggle to place each child in the most developmentally appropriate environment, based on the child's subject mastery, standardized test scores, and the sometimes over- or under-involvement of the child's parents. Offering enrichment math classes beginning in second grade makes future placement difficult when these students enter the Upper Elementary school. A student that is deemed to have advanced skills in grade 2, 3, or 4 may fit that description based on mastery of computational skills and parent support at home. However, as all of the students mature and our courses focus more on abstract thinking instead of computation, we are finding that some students are inappropriately placed. Communicating this to parents is especially problematic. To alleviate this problem, we are discussing the possibility of creating/adding more data points to our selection criteria for math placement in the Lower School. Going forward, we feel that we can give teachers more support in placing students by doing a better job in sequencing curriculum of classes, frequently assessing students, and providing clear plans for the mathematics course journey each student will be taking.

The 2017-2018 Constituent Self-Study Survey yielded positive results for the mathematics program. Overall, parents, students, faculty, administrators and Board members expressed positive feelings toward the program with detailed results below.

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- Current parents expressed 80% approval, compared to the ISACS benchmark of 77%
- Faculty expressed 85% approval, compared to the ISACS benchmark of 81%
- Students were the lowest approval rating, expressing a rating of 64%, compared to the ISACS benchmark of 72%
- Administrative staff expressed 88% approval, compared to the ISACS benchmark of 79%
- Trustee approval was the highest at 100%, compared to the ISACS benchmark of 78%
- Young Alumni expressed 73% approval, meeting the benchmark of 73%
- Parents of Alumni expressed 75% approval, meeting the benchmark of 75%

**Strengths:**

1. Both ample and current instructional materials that represent alignment to the Common Core/Ohio State Standards in Mathematics curriculum and best pedagogy. Instructional practice and learning materials encourage all students to use written and verbal mathematical communication skills and provide students wide-ranging examples of how mathematical reasoning applies to real-world situations.
2. All faculty members are dedicated to the development of each student's mathematical proficiency using research-based best practices.
3. Healthy balance of allowing teacher professionalism and the ability to plan to their strengths.
4. Opportunity for enrichment and acceleration for individual students both inside and outside the classroom.
5. Students consistently use technology to enhance mathematical instruction and understanding as well as connect their learning to science through STEM/STEAM.
6. Survey results indicate an overall level of satisfaction with the math program.

**Challenges:**

1. Communication of philosophy and vision of the math program to all families. Often parents are unaware of research and best practice in mathematics. We need to be more effective in our communication so that our families have a clear understanding of our program and methods.
2. Placement of students across campuses and grade levels is an ongoing challenge.
3. Aligning curriculum/collaboration across campuses to eliminate holes in our programming.
4. Meeting the needs of our lowest performing students in math. Using Student Support to fill gaps in knowledge and increase self-confidence in mathematics.
5. Acclimating new students to the program, placing them appropriately, and communicating with their parents.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Develop a parent education program to familiarize families with the goals of the math curriculum and placement process.
2. Utilize curriculum council representatives in math for more frequent review of curriculum to ensure alignment across grade levels and buildings.



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3. With priority being placed on K-6 students, put more emphasis on the availability of student support services, defining what those services include, and ensuring enough support is in place.
4. Define a clear, transparent process for placement of all students, current and incoming. Be able to articulate this to parents, along with an expectation of appropriate parental involvement in the classroom.

**Addenda:**

1. Ohio Learning Standards (from the Ohio Department of Education Website)
2. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks: Mathematics Section
3. Course Syllabuses
4. Curriculum Maps, K-6
5. 2017 Constituent Survey
6. Math Competitions and Activities

**Submitted by:**

Elizabeth Briggs, M.Ed., Armleder School Upper Elementary Mathematics Teacher, Armleder Mathematics Department Chair and Committee Co-Chair

Heather Snell, Upper School Mathematics teacher, Upper School Mathematics Department Chair and Committee Co-Chair

Nancy Anderson, Grade 3 Teacher, Lower School Mathematics Committee Chair

Linda Bollman, Upper School Mathematics Teacher

LaGina Burton, Armleder School Grade 2 Teacher

Ryan Cropper, Upper School Mathematics Teacher

Courtney Deller, Lower School Accelerated Mathematics Teacher

Zach Ewen, Upper School Mathematics Teacher

Sarah Fitzstephens, Upper School Mathematics Teacher

Kathie Johnson, Lower School Kindergarten Teacher

Suzanne Kloster, Lower School Grade 1 Teacher

Teri Parker, Upper School Mathematics Teacher

Doug Parsley, Upper School Science Teacher

Brandon Porter, Upper School Mathematics Teacher

Gaye Salisbury, Upper Elementary Grade 6 Mathematics Teacher

Laura Schuchardt, Armleder School Kindergarten Teacher

Amy Sauve, Upper Elementary Grade 5 Mathematics Teacher

Julie Williams, Upper Elementary Grade 4 Mathematics Teacher

## **14. Program: Social Studies**

### **Overview**

#### **a. Edyth B. Lindner Elementary School K-3**

The Edyth B. Lindner Lower Elementary School Social Studies Program introduces students to the world, its people, and its history. It encourages opportunities to study and respond to past, present, and future social issues as Christian world citizens who respect differing cultures. The social studies curriculum provides foundational skills and concepts within the social sciences including history, government, economics, geography, theological integration, and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Instruction integrates Biblical principles as students begin to define their identities and understand their roles as Christians in a democratic society and a global community. These principles are also applied to real-life situations that occur in the classroom. Teachers strive for Christ-centeredness as they model Christ's love, patience, and kindness. They encourage students to evaluate and develop their roles and responsibilities as Christian citizens and leaders in today's world. Units of study teach various past and present cultures to help them appreciate and understand all of God's people.

The CHCA Statement of Curriculum articulates the organization of the curriculum. Teachers design units of study using interdisciplinary themes which tap into a wide variety of resources. The Curriculum is further articulated by topics and skills in the online divisional curriculum maps, grade level benchmarks, and course syllabi that serve as instructional guides. The backwards design model, Understanding by Design (UbD), provides a framework for creating thematic units that reference "big ideas" and "essential questions."

Extra-curricular activities such as International Week, Marketplace AD, Learning Fair, community and global outreach programs, and a variety of speakers, carry out social studies content and themes beyond the classroom during the school year. Our strong interdisciplinary links carry history, economics, government, geography, cultures and societies content into the language arts, math, science, and other studies. Students are then immersed in these topics of study and are engaged in cross-disciplinary activities heightening their understanding and involvement. This interdisciplinary approach provides students with real life learning opportunities to explore. Students develop an awareness of and respect for diverse cultures, while teachers plant the seeds for global awareness of humanitarian and political issues in the next generation as students study geography and cultures. In every aspect of our curriculum, teachers work together to support our mission to help students acquire an awareness and understanding of the world, its people, and history. (See online Edyth B. Lindner Lower Elementary School Curriculum Map, PK-3).

Students engage in cultural studies through a variety of art projects in each grade level. Music instruction is designed to integrate with the current social studies topics. Spanish instruction beginning in pre-school introduces students from their early years to Hispanic language and culture. During Physical Education, students learn dances and games that originate from other cultures. During technology instruction in the computer lab, students explore more deeply classroom units of study on the geography, culture, and current events of countries around the

world and our own country. Our librarian partners with classroom teachers to provide information on units of study and adds to our collection of books and media.

A positive aspect of the Social Studies program is the interactive opportunities that allow children to demonstrate their knowledge through a variety of experiences. Teachers evaluate and assess student understanding with rubrics in order to guide students and validate their assessments. These rubrics function as a template for student success to ensure assessments/instruction meet different learning styles of students. While some pencil-paper tests are required, Understanding by Design puts these into context, providing a framework that allows flexibility for the teacher to assess student comprehension and measure student understanding using continuing portfolios, projects, observations, and other multi-sensory methods.

Students benefit from instruction in social studies that includes educational technology resources. Students interact with maps, research the world's cultures, and experience some of the benefits of world travel from their classrooms and computer lab. Technology in social studies provides ready access to primary sources of relevant, current, and historical information, giving contextual relevance and accuracy to student learning. Students find current information using the internet, educational websites, and educational apps. Teachers, then, instruct students in critical thinking strategies to evaluate these sources available to them. Students make connections between social studies topics and current events, which help them see the relevance of what they are studying, not only to their own lives, but also to the bigger picture of the global community.

#### **b. Lower School 4-6 Social Studies**

The Upper Elementary Social Studies Department strives to develop each learner's understanding of the world and the patterns of human and environmental interaction that have made it what it is today. Students explore the patterns of human and environmental interaction through history, geography, political science, economics, and sociology with Christian perspectives infused throughout. Students apply biblical principles to examine past and present, local, state, national, and global events and explore cause and effect relationships. These principles are also applied to real-life situations. Teachers encourage students to evaluate and develop their roles and responsibilities as Christian citizens and leaders in today's world.

The CHCA Statement of Curriculum articulates the organization of the curriculum. This document provides the foundation in content and process knowledge for Upper Elementary students at each developmental stage. Understanding by Design (UbD) provides a framework for creating thematic units that reference "big ideas" and essential questions. Grade 4 social studies focuses on world geography. Students learn about continents and countries under the framework of the five themes of geography including location, place, region, human-environmental interaction, and movement. They also focus on Biblical and historical timelines and world political systems. Grade 5 Social Studies focuses on the major themes of early U.S. History from pre-colonization to the Westward Expansion period. World Studies 6 lays the

foundation for World History studies, beginning with the birth of ancient civilizations and moving into the Medieval Period in Europe and Northern Africa. Grades 5 and 6 Social Studies content is also integrated with Language Arts to maximize the emphasis on reading and writing skill development.

Through a variety of methods, Upper Elementary instructors use Social Studies content as a tool for shaping students' reading, writing, discussion, and critical thinking skills necessary for success in future CHCA programs. Using ever-increasing technological resources, UE students carefully guide students in learning more advanced textual analysis and Socratic seminar discussion by grade 6.

Instructors design curriculum around the overarching "essential questions," which opens new possibilities for collaboration with teachers from other disciplines. Through grade-level team meetings and department meetings, instructors seek feedback from one another. Our Social Studies curriculum is well articulated in the *CHCA Statement of Curriculum* showing benchmarks students achieve by the close of grade 6. Teachers assess students in a variety of ways, including formative and summative assessments. The curriculum provides challenge and support to learners by offering a variety of choices and assessments tailored to each student's individual needs. Social studies teachers maintain the unique Christ-centered atmosphere at CHCA, believing first and foremost that we lead the pursuit of academic excellence best when we serve students as we would serve Christ.

### **c. Armleder PK-6 Social Studies**

The Armleder Social Studies Department strives to develop each learner's understanding of the world and the patterns of human and environmental interaction that have made it what it is today. Students explore the patterns of human and environmental interaction through history, geography, political science, economics, and sociology with Christian perspectives infused throughout. Students apply biblical principles to examine past and present, local, state, national, and global events and explore cause and effect relationships. These principles are also applied to real-life situations. Teachers encourage students to evaluate and develop their roles and responsibilities as Christian citizens and leaders in today's world. The CHCA Statement of Curriculum articulates the organization of the curriculum. This document provides the foundation in content and process knowledge for students at each developmental stage. The focus moves from broader studies in the lower elementary (communities and cultures) to more specific studies in the upper grades (World Geography, American and World History). The upper elementary program ensures a spiraling of concepts and a clear outline of topics covered at each grade level to align with the Ohio Department of Education New Learning Standards in Social Studies and on other national standards documents.

Armleder School's Social Studies Program includes spiraling of thematic units of study such as the following: in lower elementary grades Family Life, Relationships, and U.S. Geographic Regions; in upper elementary grades World Geography, Early U.S. History, and Ancient Civilizations. Students in upper elementary use textbooks as resources. Additionally, students use varied sources such as computers, maps, timelines, Internet-based encyclopedias, and

authentic experiences to enrich the curriculum. Students experience varied strategies of instruction to achieve mastery, which include, but are not limited to: small groups, large groups, one-to-one, role playing, projects, speakers, field trips, technology and presentations.

At Armleder School the faculty approval (75%) and parent approval at (71%) is within the ISACS benchmark. While parent approval rating is within the guidelines of the ISACS benchmarks, it is significantly below the parent approval ratings for lower school.

#### **d. Upper School 7-12**

The CHCA Upper School Social Studies Department strives to develop student awareness and understanding of the world, its peoples, and its history and to develop in students the ability to investigate ways the past may influence the present and the future. Within a Christian perspective, students explore patterns of human and environmental interaction through studies in history, geography, sociology, political science, economics, and current events. Additionally, students examine the interconnectedness of these disciplines. Through multiple research techniques and mediums, CHCA students collect primary and secondary source data and then analyze, synthesize, and present this data in a variety of modes, including formal and written presentations. The social studies curriculum integrates teaching students to analyze historic and current events and the actions of national leaders for their congruence with biblical principles and evidence of Christian stewardship. Students develop an appreciation for personal heritage and cultural differences as they evaluate their roles and responsibilities as stewards of God's creation. Students grow in their ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, global society. Teachers work with students through group instruction and on an individual basis to help each student achieve academic success.

The CHCA Upper School Social Studies department includes seven full-time teachers with almost one hundred years of combined experience. This veteran group works well together to develop the program and support each other. These teachers seek out professional development opportunities, use a wide variety of instructional methods and assessment tools, and remain current in their field. All seven teachers present interdisciplinary units which make use of novels, art, music, and technology to teach content. We also insure theological integration of Christian values to our classroom environments. The department is structured to include a Department Chair who is responsible for budgeting, ordering, course development, and communication.

The department has expanded its course offerings since the last ISACS site visit to include "Art of War," "Race, Justice and Community," "Honors US History," and "Honors Western Civilization." The school mission of academic excellence is clearly implemented in the social studies department with four Advanced Placement course offerings: Micro-Economics, US Government and Politics, European History, and United States History. Course offerings also include a finance unit in Economics that meets Ohio state standards for financial literacy.

Course offerings also include Business Entrepreneurship, a hands-on opportunity wherein students work at one of the student-run businesses in a management position. Students handle daily tasks associated with customer service, food preparation, and specific responsibilities. In addition to working in a daily capacity at the business, students enrolled in Business Entrepreneurship will complete curriculum-based assignments tiered toward specific levels. Level one students (first year) will complete a business plan proposal in seven parts and will present the proposal in seven parts. Level two students (second year) will complete quarterly summations of market trends and look for data specific insights with regard to daily and weekly sales. Business Entrepreneurship is also available for honors credit to qualifying students.

Social studies faculty continue to develop program offerings and instruction that focus on the school's mission and core values, academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment that prepares students to be responsible and informed citizens, serving the Lord, their families and their communities.

### **Strengths:**

1. The curriculum and benchmarks provide all students an introduction to concepts at the early grades, followed by in-depth exploration of concepts in later grades at age-appropriate levels.
2. Experiential learning creates a lower school social studies program that makes history come alive and encourages students to develop deeper understanding of concepts through classroom simulations and dramas, field trips, learning fairs, as well as utilizing numerous parent resources in social studies.
3. Technology is frequently used in the classroom in lower school grades by teachers and students to enhance the social studies curriculum and add excitement to the learning process.
4. The parent community's high level of satisfaction with social studies attests to the high quality of instruction within this subject area. (See Constituent Survey data).
5. The vast content expertise and experience of the upper school social studies faculty allows for rich instruction and depth of exploration in all upper school grades, building on the foundation provided in the Lower School program.

### **Challenges:**

1. Gauging alignment of social studies curriculum considering current CHCA standards and benchmarks against the newly-adopted 2019 Ohio Learning Standards in Social Studies and includes theological and technological integration given changes in curriculum and staff.
2. Addressing content coverage and overlap, particularly in the Upper School grades. The current social studies scope and sequence in the Upper Elementary and early Upper School programs creates a great deal of overlap and redundancy in content covered by Upper School, inasmuch as the content arrangement was built for the old middle school division structure that no longer exists.

3. While instructional technology is readily available, we do need more training in its best uses, helping teachers to balance the use of technology with the needs of each learner.
4. The need to widen topics of study beyond a Eurocentric focus and into more globally diverse areas of study is evident in the social studies program overall, as well as consistent integration of fuller social studies topics like economics into the curriculum at the lower grades.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Meet to review the current scope and sequence in social studies and provide further recommendations for better aligning the curriculum between divisions, and in light of new state standards in social studies.
2. Review content elements and themes (global studies, economics) and target grade levels where a wider diversity of social studies topics can be introduced and explored.
3. Explore professional development opportunities in social studies in order to fill gap areas or priority areas of instruction in social studies, including economics themes in lower school grades, and in theological integration into social studies units.
4. Explore additional training opportunities for faculty in technology integration and technology best practices for lower grade levels.
5. At the Lower School level, explore partnerships with outside organizations like the Junior Achievement program, in order to reinforce instruction of economics at age appropriate levels.
6. Explore ways to implement project-based learning and continue training and professional development in this area in all divisions.

**Addenda:**

1. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks – Social Studies
2. Course Syllabuses
3. Social Studies Curriculum Maps, K-6
4. Course of Study, 7-12
5. 2017 Constituent Survey

**Submitted by:**

Drew Baker, Upper School 7-12 Social Studies Department Chair

E. Sheri Ellis, Armleder School grades 4-6 Social Studies and Christian Studies Teacher

Cindy Hassman, Armleder School 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher

Rachel Lupia, Edyth B. Lindner Lower Elementary School, Grade 1 Teacher, Committee Chair

Jon Paris, Edyth B. Lindner Lower Elementary School, Grade 3 Teacher



## **15. Program: Christian Studies**

### **Overview:**

The Christian Studies program at CHCA is designed to encourage students' growth in understanding, articulating, and expressing a vibrant faith that will yield a life lived in imitation and service to Christ. To this end, the curriculum stresses the importance of a holistic approach which: (i) creates an environment in which students listen to God speak through the words of Scripture; (ii) encourages a love of learning and the exercise of reason to gain wisdom from the historic and diverse voices and traditions of the Church; (iii) facilitates the integration of faith learning throughout all academic subjects; and (iv) seeks to develop a distinctly Christian worldview that understands the importance of serving Christ within a broken and needy world. Creating opportunities for daily transformation through the "head, heart, and hands" of students are at the center of our commitment. Consequently, taking an academic approach to Christian Studies within the classroom, particularly in the Upper School 7-12 program, is balanced with a school-wide emphasis on outreach, service, missions, and time regularly set aside for corporate worship and reflection through chapels, from pre-school through graduation.

More students are entering the school with minimal or nonexistent faith background or knowledge. While this is a challenge in the lower grades, it is a particularly difficult challenge at the upper grades as more time and energy is needed to establish, at minimum, a baseline of Christian faith understanding.

#### **a. Edyth B. Lindner Elementary School K-3**

In the Lower School, grades K-3, students are nurtured in their faith in an age-appropriate manner through theme and content integration into all subjects. This integration often occurs with monthly themes and teachers help students see those themes and connections in each content study. There is a strong focus on Bible memorization and the use of biblical principles to teach character development. Students are taught commonly accepted major biblical characters, their traits and virtues, and skills to embody those same characteristics as followers of Christ. In grade 3, students participate in the Walk Through the Bible program. Every third year, students experience a journey into the first-century world of Jesus through an immersive experience called Marketplace A.D. A hallmark through these years is the teachers' love and care for each student and how it serves as a powerful example of the message made manifest.

#### **b. Lower School 4-6 Christian Studies**

Grade 4 builds on the K-3 foundation through a more in-depth study of broad aspects of the life of Jesus and also tools necessary to build a more personal connection with God. As students move into grades 5 and 6, they are integrated into classes with specialized faculty. The focus in these grades shifts to a closer study of biblical texts and the forming a Christian worldview. Students in grades 5 and 6 survey the Old Testament and study the Gospels and the life of Jesus in the New Testament.

Students are learning about leaders in the Bible, their character traits and qualities, biblical stories from the Old Testament, God's provision for His people, Christian holidays, the wonders of the Bible, divisions and books of the Bible, how to study the Bible, prayer, the New Testament stories of Jesus, his birth, miracles, death and resurrection, and the plan of salvation. Students study Jesus' disciples and followers, and how they are used to encourage the teachings of Jesus. Christian Studies themes and content are integrated into all subjects and align with monthly themes in content study.

#### **c. Armleder PK-6 Christian Studies**

The Lower School grades at the Armleder School follow the same themes and progression as the EBL K-3 program. In the Armleder Upper Elementary, students learn how to relate the Bible and one's own life examples demonstrating God's loving, generous, forgiving, and creative nature. Students have an appreciation for the diversity found within the church universal, and to help students form a worldview with Christ's teaching as its foundation. Students start with Bible overview and tools in Grade 4 and move into the character of God, man's relationship with God, salvation, the character of the Holy Spirit, Kingdom of God and finishing out with the role and responsibility of the believer and biblical doctrine.

#### **d. Upper School 7-12 Christian Studies**

Upper School Christian Studies provides students the opportunity to develop faith in more sophisticated ways. Grade 7 Christian Studies finishes the survey of the Bible covering Acts through the book of Revelation. Students explore in age-appropriate ways the nature of faith, discussing the fundamentals of Paul's theology and its contemporary implications. Grade 8 Christian Studies class "Faith and Reason" explores the nature of reason and the role of critical thinking in the life of a Christian. Students practice the application of critical thinking skills. This class has been instrumental in the transition to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes and beyond as students are more prepared for deeper level critical thinking.

Core courses begin with the freshman course, Old and New Covenants, which gives a foundational understanding of the Old Testament contextually within the Ancient Near East. This study from Creation to Christ provides students with a foundational understanding of the nature and character of God, the unity of the Bible, and the skills to read and interpret texts well. Sophomore year provides a detailed historical survey of the New Testament beyond the Gospels. This course then moves through the history of the church from its inception to present day, focusing on major turning points and significant figures. Junior year combines theology and praxis, introducing Christian thought and spirituality using the quadrilateral approach of Scripture, reason, experience, and tradition. Students are challenged to own their faith more deeply, by exploring key issues that are often obstacles to faith development, practicing enduring spiritual disciplines, and engaging contemporary culture. Senior year offers students the ability to pursue greater depth within a specific focus of interest with electives ranging from Eastern World Religions, Western World Religions, Ecclesiology, Bioethics, Ethics and Justice, Faith in Film and Fiction, Nature of Scripture, Origins, Israel and the Modern World, and an in-depth discipleship-oriented class called Resilient Faith.

The Christian Studies classes continue to be a highlight of a student's experience not just anecdotally, but also supported by both the Wellington Engagement Index and Constituent Survey. One major contributing factor is the high relational level of each teacher. Students see each of their Christian Studies teachers as someone who cares for their faith development and is willing to help them navigate through their spiritual journey in ways specific to their needs, both cognitively and emotionally.

**Strengths:**

1. A major strength continues to be the relational and trustworthy nature of each of the Christian Studies faculty. This provides students with a safe “laboratory” of sorts in which they can dialogue and process their ideas of faith in a non-judgmental environment.
2. The doctrinal/devotional and academic/rational point of view balanced in each class.
3. The flow of curriculum from both a developmental and curricular nature. In lower grades, foundations are set in an age appropriate manner, and in upper grades, movement occurs from in-depth biblical exegesis to interpretation of those theological ideas, enabling students to own their faith.

**Challenges:**

1. A more balanced, coordinated, and scaffolded Christian Studies curriculum in grades K-6 is needed to eliminate redundancy.
2. Equip new teachers to implement theological integration into their curricula.
3. Address the dearth of biblical and theological background for incoming students and its impact on our curriculum.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Creation of a scaffolded Bible curriculum that could serve as a guide for grades K-6 that would assist more specifically what is studied and focused on at each grade level.
2. Training and development of new faculty towards theological integration within their subject matter.
3. In light of the shifting constituencies, reconsider the contours of the Christian Studies curriculum.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 CHCA Constituent Survey
2. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks: Christian Studies
3. Christian Studies Course Syllabuses
4. Course of Study, 7-12

**Submitted by:**

Kevin Salkil, Upper School Christian Studies Dept. Chair  
Jared Treadway, Upper School Christian Studies Faculty

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Peter Dongell, PhD, Upper School Christian Studies Faculty  
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Laura Anderson, Lower School Faculty  
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Gary Hartoin, Upper School Christian Studies Faculty  
Cindy Hassman, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher, Armleder  
Terra Meade, Lower School Faculty

## 16. English Language Arts

### Overview

CHCA's mission of Christ-Centered academic excellence recognizes that language is a gift from God. All divisions K-12 seek to prepare students intellectually and spiritually for future academic study and to instill in students an enthusiasm for language, literature, and lifelong learning. Students in kindergarten through grade 12 engage with increasingly complex texts in a variety of genres. The text selection seeks to affirm the diversity of human experiences, cultures, and values. From learning the alphabet to producing papers of significant length, all students produce written text in a variety of rhetorical modes. With an emphasis on using increasingly sophisticated sources, students produce written research, ultimately constructing evidence-based persuasive claims. Students gain fluency in oral communication by practicing speaking and listening skills in settings ranging from informal classroom discussions to Socratic seminars. Divisional curriculum guides and course syllabi direct instruction.

#### a. Edyth B. Lindner Lower School K-3 Language Arts

The EBL Lower Elementary School Language Arts program (K-3) provides a strong academic foundation which helps to prepare students for future success. Teachers use a balanced literacy approach to instruct young readers and writers. Comprehension strategies and decoding skills are taught concurrently as students' progress from learning to read to reading to learn. The use of varied and quality thematic literature and informational texts aligns with the school's ethical and biblical values. Ongoing formative and summative assessments ensure that students are receiving the reading instruction they need. Teachers introduce students to a variety of ways of expressing their thoughts and ideas through writing, including narratives, persuasive pieces, and informational articles. The students demonstrate growth in grammar, mechanics, and written expression as they progress from kindergarten to grade 3. The Language Arts program also emphasizes listening and speaking, as students are given opportunities to communicate and collaborate with their peers during class discussions, projects, and presentations. Kindergarten and grade 1 students take the CPAA test to inform student instruction while students in grades 1 to 3 take the ERB tests. The results of the 2017 Constituent Survey indicate that 92.4% of parents and 85.7 % of faculty rated the EBL Lower Elementary School Language Arts program excellent or very good.

#### b. Lower School 4-6 Language Arts

The Language Arts program at the Upper Elementary School focuses on guiding students in grades 4-6 in the practice of communicating fully and clearly through written and verbal expression. Students learn to develop a voice through various written pursuits including, but not limited to, summaries, essays, personal memoirs, biographies, and research papers. In addition to written expression, students are exposed to opportunities that expand their excellence in verbal expression with an aim to develop conversation skills through the wax museum recitation, literature circles, and Socratic seminars. Other components of the 4-6 program include a focus on correct English grammatical expression in both written and verbal formats. Students are also held to a high standard of reading as is evidenced by amount of reading time, accountability to reading challenges and goals, and their ability to respond

appropriately to a variety of genres. Across all areas of language arts curriculum, teachers differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all learners through things like small group instruction and one-on-one conferences. Students in grades 4, 5, and 6 take the ERB tests. The results of the recent Constituent Survey indicate that 84.9% of parents and 82.8 % of faculty rated the Upper Elementary English/Language Arts program excellent or very good.

#### **c. Armleder PK-6 Language Arts**

Armleder School's Language Arts program challenges and engages students. Teachers use grade level trade books, *Orton Gillingham*, the *Shurley Curriculum*, and a variety of other materials to teach reading and writing. Students receive developmentally appropriate individual, small group, and whole class instruction in reading, writing, and oral language skills through coordinated, thematic units of study presented in a Christ-centered learning environment. For additional support, the Title I teacher works with students at designated grades in reading and writing small groups throughout the year. Skill proficiency is assessed at regular intervals through classroom assessments and standardized tests (*MAP* and *Scholastic Reading Inventory*) to ensure mastery. These assessments are given in the fall, winter, and the spring. Other assessments teachers utilize to determine student mastery are the *Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System* and the *Ohio State AIR* test. The Constituent Survey shows an overall positive response to Armleder's Language Arts Program with parent approval at 77.8% (PK-3) and 90.0% (4-6), and faculty approval at 100% (PK-3) and 83.3% (4-6).

#### **d. Upper School 7-12 Language Arts**

The Upper School English Language Arts program in grades 7 and 8 is broken into two main courses: English Composition and Literature. Each grade level has one English Composition teacher and one Literature teacher. Common planning time amongst the teachers allows for collaboration. In English Composition, students work toward developing general skills and strategies of the writing process by composing in varied sentence structures; composing in various genres of writing, including narrative, expository, and persuasive; mastering the grammatical, mechanical, and usage conventions of composition; gathering and using information effectively for research purposes; and enhancing vocabulary usage through definition and etymological study and application. Students practice speaking, listening, and participation skills as members of the English Composition courses. In Literature, students strengthen both their understanding and their application of the reading process, recognizing recurring themes and scriptural applications to fiction and nonfiction texts. Literature is designed with two primary goals: first, that students become more confident and proficient in reading; second, that students develop a rich, rewarding reading life. With a blend of whole-class novel study, independent reading, studies of short stories and poetry, students focus on developing literary skills that good readers implement in order to make meaning of any text. In grade 8, a small group of students is recommended for the advanced, Vertical Track English Composition course, which is accelerated beyond that of a typical classroom. In all courses, formative and summative assessments drive instruction, allowing for all students to show content mastery while teachers meet the needs of all learners. Students in grades 7 and 8 take the ERB CTP-5 test.

The CHCA Upper School grades 9-12 strives to develop students who are highly skilled in reading, writing, listening, and discussion. The Language Arts curriculum integrates biblical principles enabling students to understand how themes in literature are congruent with or divergent from biblical truth. Teachers encourage students to develop a lifelong love of learning through a recognition of the range of human experiences, cultures, and values. Although many diverse texts are taught each year, each grade emphasizes one of the following voices: African and African-American, Latino, Native-American, Asian, and Asian-American. Teaching strategies include opportunities for students to exercise leadership, to work independently and collaboratively, to develop higher order thinking skills, to be evaluated with meaningful assessments, and to foster future learning. The curriculum affords a wide range of opportunities for students to engage in research, to apply technology to tasks, and to integrate print and electronic sources. The curriculum acknowledges and exceeds the Common Core Standards. The English Department offers students the opportunity to select the course best suited to their individual needs by meeting each year to make individualized scheduling recommendations for each student. At each grade level, course choices of college prep or honors courses are available in addition to AP classes offered during junior and senior years. While creative writing and journalism are offered as electives, all students are required to take Speech. All sophomore and junior students take the PSAT test and all juniors also take the ACT test. Students achieve a high rate of success on the AP exams. For the past three years, the AP English Language & Composition exam had a pass rate average of 98.9% and the AP English Literature & Composition exam had a pass rate average of 95.3%. According to the results of the 2017 Constituent Survey, Upper School English Language Arts (grades 7-12) enjoys one of the most favorable ratings of all the school programs with positive responses from 86.5% of parents and 94.5% of faculty, well above ISACS benchmarks.

**Strengths:**

1. The English Language Arts program at CHCA is deeply committed to theological integration at every level. While the Lower School reading program promotes a Christian worldview, uses high-quality literary and informational texts, and produces students with strong reading comprehension skills, Upper School instruction builds on that foundation, exploring the major themes of longing and hope, creation, the fall, redemption, and vocation, the curriculum affords the students myriads of opportunities of sharpening critical thinking skills within a theological framework.
2. The department's strong commitment to writing instruction produces students who are adept at composition in a variety of modes, and the department's extensive approach to reading immerses students in a culture of reading increasingly complex texts at each stage of development.
3. The reading program at CHCA enriches the perspective of the student body and develops an appreciation for diversity and produces students skilled in research and written analysis of text.



**Challenges:**

1. At the Armleder Campus, the lack of student support assistance makes it difficult to help remediate skill gaps for students who are performing below proficiency in reading and writing.
2. In the Lower School, implementing project-based learning approaches in ELA across all classes and grade levels has been a challenge.
3. In grades 7-8, the recent reduction in Language Arts instructional time is impacting the academic progress in Language Arts compared with CHCA students in the previous paradigm. Literature teachers only see their students every other day, which creates difficulty in sustaining meaningful conversations about the content of texts and the craft of engaging with a text. Since the Literature course alternates with elective courses, some students equate Literature with an elective class rather than an essential academic class.
4. In grades 9-12, it is a growing challenge to balance instructional flexibility with academic rigor when working with students who are ever more over-scheduled and highly stressed while seeking to increase their engagement.
5. Overall, more dedicated time is needed for faculty collaboration between grade levels and divisions.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. The Lower School faculty will become more familiar with and adept at using the project-based learning approach through book studies, peer coaching, visits to schools, and other professional development initiatives.
2. At Armleder, where MAP testing is in use, utilize Response to Intervention strategies, such as the MAP Skills resources, to provide support for students who are performing below proficient in reading and writing.
3. Increase communication between the 7-8 and 9-12 faculty as we adjust to the Upper School structure.
4. Continue to reevaluate the curriculum—especially the reading and writing requirements—to meet the needs of current students.
5. Increase communication between the all divisions to enhance student learning and transitions.

**Addenda:**

1. CHCA Visions, Standards, and Benchmarks – English Language Arts
2. English Language Arts Curriculum Maps, K-6
3. Course syllabuses – English Language Arts
4. Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy
5. Bader Reading and Language Assessment Inventory (Lower Elementary)
6. Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (Lower Elementary, Armleder School: kits/results in the classroom)
7. Dolch Word List (Lower Elementary: kits in the classroom)
8. ERB scores (Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, Upper School 7-8)
9. CPAA scores (Lower Elementary)

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10. AP Test Scores (Upper School 11-12)
11. AIR-Ohio State Assessments (Armleder School)

**Submitted by:**

Michelle Barron, Upper School MSL 9-12 English Teacher, Committee Chair  
Kimberly Kane, EBL Kindergarten Teacher  
Pam Dinkelacker, EBL Grade 2 Teacher  
Susan Simmons, EBL K-3 Enrichment Coordinator  
Amy Geiger, Upper Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts  
April Sanderson, Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts  
Regan Vollette, Upper Elementary Math and Science Teacher  
Erin Conn, Upper School 7-8 English Teacher, Parent, and Alumna  
Erin Hart, Upper Schools 7-8 English Teacher  
Jennifer Kassen, Upper School 7<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies  
Christy Achaempong, Armleder Language Arts Teacher  
Sarah Grace, McCollough Armleder Language Arts Teacher  
Bonnie Pritchard, Upper School MSL Teacher  
Aaron Turvey, Upper School MSL Teacher  
Sandy Breitholle, EBL Principal

## **17. Program: Science**

### **Overview:**

The science faculty at Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy strive to develop a preschool through grade 12 program that cultivates the skills of discovery, creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving throughout our coursework. The early grades of our program strive to provide a foundation for students to understand that science is a method of inquiry founded on the underlying order of the natural world and the design of its Creator. The curriculum vision statement for science says in part: “Students explore the various disciplines of science through organized progression utilizing hands-on activities, technology, laboratory investigations, and engineering design challenges.” Outside of the classroom, students can reinforce their science content by being involved in a growing robust robotics program that encompasses grades 4-12. Students grow in their scientific literacy using a combination of scientific investigation and biblical foundation. As students progress into grades 4 through 6, they begin to “become responsible, independent, questioning, creative and organized learners” as they transition and develop a mastery in their scientific knowledge. As students progress higher through their science education, they understand the related nature of science with mathematics, technology, written language, and consumer and career interests.

In grades 7 through 12, students are encouraged to become inquisitive, knowledgeable, and creative critical thinkers and problem solvers, wherein science provides the foundation upon which students can engage their world and explore the design of its Creator. Students in Upper School grades 7-10 experience a well-developed curriculum that builds each year in content and specific scientific skills. Teachers provide a learning environment that promotes student inquiry and exploration so that students of all ability levels who are equipped with diverse gifts may be prepared for upper level science courses, including vertical-tracked courses, Advanced Placement courses, and other science electives, in grades 11 through 12. Throughout all grade levels, the science faculty utilize laboratory facilities, outdoor classrooms, gardens, a greenhouse, field trips and science outreach programs to investigate various disciplines in science and further cultivate our students’ critical thinking skills. The science faculty work in a collaborative spirit to share their interests and strengths in the pursuit of developing a curriculum that builds from grade level to grade level. Throughout science lessons and coursework, faculty utilize a wide variety of instructional strategies to promote scientific understanding, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

#### **a. EBL Lower School K-3 Science**

The scope of the program emphasizes scientific processes and the development of critical thinking skills. The most important goal of the program is to capitalize on students’ natural curiosity and excitement about learning, while building a firm foundation in scientific concepts and investigative strategies. Students explore the various disciplines of science through an organized progression of classroom instruction, hands on-activities, science outreach programs, investigations, field trips, and weekly lab experiences. Teachers work to engage students in active learning, both individually and cooperatively. Students also learn to be good stewards of

their environment and appreciate God's creation through our outdoor education curriculum. This program is grounded in environmental science principles and at its core seeks to develop responsible and conscientious citizens.

All students KPrep-3 participate in the Science Enhancement Program, designed and taught by an on-site science facilitator in partnership with the classroom teachers. This program enhances the scientific investigation of specific science topics via hands-on laboratory experimentation coupled with kid-friendly yet technically advanced presentations. Students participate in a variety of assessments such as science journals, sorting and classifying, drawings, lab reports, observations, and both formative and summative assessments.

#### **b. Lower School 4-6 Science**

The Upper Elementary grades 4-6 science program meets the needs of preadolescent students as they grow from concrete to abstract thinking. Students apply the skills and knowledge acquired in the Lower Elementary as they move toward increasingly sophisticated thinking, preparing for the ideas and concepts presented in the Upper School. In grade 4, students receive five hours of science instruction weekly for half of each quarter, which allows for thorough discussion and investigation. Emphasis is placed on creating highly engaging and cooperative scientific investigations. In grades 5-6, students engage in 50 minutes of science daily, taught by science certified instructors. For the 2018-19 school year, the science department adopted new and updated curriculum at all grade levels aligned with Next Generation Science Standards, eliminating the redundancy of topics of instruction. The Upper Elementary science program is designed so that students engage in logical and scientific thinking in the context of a Christian worldview. Students apply scientific information to societal issues while developing the following skills: working collaboratively; testing hypotheses against controls; evaluating evidence; utilizing technology; gathering, organizing, and analyzing data; and presentation of ideas to peers. Activities and investigations are active, hands-on, and inquiry based, challenging students to deeper levels of thinking about phenomenon and personal responsibility. The implementation of Engineering Design activities challenges our students to use their science knowledge base in order to design solutions to real world issues. Students use science lab notebooks daily as an artifact to show the progression of their thinking and to take ownership of their learning. In addition to formative assessments and activities, students participate in evaluation by performance assessments where rubrics clearly list evaluation criteria and levels of performance possible.

Beginning in grade 4, the Upper Elementary School offers the opportunity for our students to join our Robotics teams. We offer at least one team per grade level and are led by parent/staff volunteer coaches. The teams are supervised by a staff program coordinator. Our teams complete in First Lego League regional and state competitions. As we continue to focus on S.T.E.A.M instructional methods, we have placed emphasis on coding and using technology for presentation of ideas. These concepts are introduced in Technology and Design Thinking class and are reinforced in all our science classes throughout grades 4-6.

### **c. Armleder K-6 Science**

Otto Armleder School continues to have a dynamic science program in which students can explore science concepts, apply the scientific method, as well as incorporate math, technology, and the engineering design process. Student engagement at all levels reinforces science concepts through hands-on experiments, science journals, group and individual projects, and digital explorations. Armleder has undergone multiple restructurings since the last ISACS report was completed, including transitioning away from grades 7-8 as well as a model with a science resource facilitator, leaving the responsibility solely to the classroom teachers.

In the Lower Elementary (grades K-3), students use *Interactive Science* by Pearson. Each grade level curriculum is designed to lead and facilitate student exploration of concrete and abstract science concepts. These students receive their science instruction from the grade level teachers. The amount of time varies based on the specific grade level classroom and current unit.

In Upper Elementary (grades 4-6), students use a variety of print, digital, and hands-on resources to investigate and learn about grade appropriate science topics. All students attend science class one hour per day for the whole school year. Students in grade 4 continue to use *Interactive Science* by Pearson as their primary text and workbook. Students in grades 5 and 6 use *Science: A Closer Look* by Macmillan/McGraw-Hill. However, the department is in the process of evaluating other textbooks that will better align with updates made to the Next Generation Science Standards and Ohio's Learning Standards for Science.

Armleder students benefit from a variety of enrichment programs in the classroom and through additional scholastic opportunities. Students in grades 3-6 attend a weekly STEAM class, which focuses on reinforcing scholastic concepts and exposing students to number of careers in STEAM fields. Students use the Engineering Design Process to complete group and individual projects on topics such as coding, robotics, architecture, environmental engineering, structural engineering, and electrical engineering. Students also participate in the DesignLAB: Learn and Build Program through the Architectural Foundation of Cincinnati. This program pairs grade levels with an industry professional culminating in a scale-model display competition. Students in Upper Elementary also participate in Minorities in Math, Science, and Engineering (M2SE) where they compete in events such as Academic Quiz Bowl, LEGO Robotics, and Science Fairs.

### **d. Upper School 7-12 Science**

Through an organized progression of courses aligned with Ohio's Learning Standards for Science, Next Generation Science Standards and College Board standards, students of all abilities and learning styles develop a solid foundation of scientific understanding. In the 2019-2020 school year, grade 4 through 8 will align with the Next Generation Science Standards and build a stronger scope and sequence between the CHCA Lower School science department and the CHCA Upper School science department.

The faculty work together to design curriculum, mindful of the students' developmental readiness, that fosters an ever-increasing recognition and appreciation for the interdisciplinary nature and overarching relevance of science and its integration with mathematics, technology, language arts, global concerns and societal issues. As students progress through grades 7 through 10, they cover life science, chemistry, and physical science and develop the lab skills that accompany these concentrations. The content and laboratory techniques mastered in grades 7 through 10 are instrumental to the upper level science courses and electives that students complete in grades 11 and 12. These courses include college-preparatory, honors-, Vertical Track and Advance Placement physics, environmental science, biology, and chemistry. Along with accelerated courses, students can also engage in new electives like Environmental Science, Engineer Your World, and two semesters of college-level Organic Chemistry. These upper level courses allow students to be introduced to content and laboratory skills that they would otherwise be introduced to in post-secondary education and allows our students to be exposed to possible career fields and subjects of interest. Due to the restructuring of the upper school science department, we can offer grade 9 Biology VT to a few of our highly accelerated 8<sup>th</sup> grade science students. One impact of offering a wider variety of electives is more students are completing more than the required three science courses (biology, chemistry, and physics) by the completion of high school. For the 2018 graduating class, ≥50% of the class exceeded the three required science courses by completing four or even five science courses.

Along with the restructuring of our department and course offerings, the upper school science department has seen an increase in faculty and facilities. Over 75% of the faculty holds advance degrees and all members of the department regularly attend professional development and workshops that allow us to bring new ideas and opportunities to our students. Along with our expert faculty, the CHCA campus has recently built a state-of-the-art greenhouse. This space, which includes 2,000 square feet of classroom space and a 4,000 square foot greenhouse, allows students to engage different aquaponics systems or work with faculty on different research projects. Available to all teachers and students at CHCA, the greenhouse is utilized by all of our environmental science students so that they are able to both learn about different environmental and agricultural concepts and practice implementing them. The greenhouse space also allows for students to develop and implement student-led research projects. Some of these projects are student-designed and others are research projects and grants with government agencies and private businesses that give our students firsthand experience at data collection and research development. Along with the greenhouse, both the 7-8 building and the 9-12 building have added innovations spaces that allow for faculty and students to gain space to develop some long-term projects. These spaces can also be used by the different CHCA robotics teams (both 7-8 and 9-12) to plan, design and execute different components of the robot.

Constituent Survey responses follow:

- CHCA science parent excellent/very good responses at 80% compared to ISACS 77% benchmark.

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- CHCA science faculty excellent/very good responses at 83% compared to ISACS 81% benchmark.
- CHCA science student excellent/very good responses at 65% compared to ISACS 73% benchmark.
- Responses by students are significantly lower than the ISACS benchmark.

**Strengths:**

1. The Lower School Science Enhancement Program is a fully integrated part of the classroom instruction. It is designed to nurture the natural curiosity of the students by promoting scientific inquiry, utilizing a Science Enhancement Facilitator who implements a variety of hands-on and coordinates guest speakers to enrich the classroom content once per week.
2. Cross-campus curriculum and instruction are aligned to developmental standards in the Next Generation Science Standards, integrating Engineering Design with emphasis on innovation and STEAM. Emphasis is placed on community learning, integration of technology, design process skills, and presentation of scientific information.
3. Having built different labs and innovations spaces that allow our students to have dedicated centers to explore a variety of science and other curricular subjects, our physical resources and use of technology differentiate us from our competition.
4. Increased number of science electives and students engaging in independent-study or student-led research at the 9-12 building. The electives are for students both in college preparatory courses and in advance science courses. The new electives include two different semesters of college-level organic chemistry, Engineering your World, and a Greenhouse Operations and Plant Biology course.
5. Another differentiator for CHCA is our Beak Squad Robotics Program. Our robotics program is open to all students in grades 4-12. Students in grades 5-6 at Armleder, in mixed grade level teams, participate in competitions through Minorities in Math, Science, and Engineering (M2SE) and the University of Cincinnati College of Engineering. Our Upper School program is internationally ranked with teams competing against the best in the world.

**Challenges:**

1. Providing sufficient professional development for Lower Elementary teachers to increase their ability to design and implement the science curriculum in the regular classroom, especially in Engineering and Design.
2. Scheduling time for vertical communication and collaboration between science teachers across different buildings within our school community. This includes faculty within the same Upper or Lower School departments that span different buildings.
3. Providing opportunities for students to use their science knowledge in the outdoor classroom and greenhouse and apply it to our community and the rest of the world.
4. Based on the Constituent Survey conducted in 2017, CHCA showed 65% total positive rating from students versus 73% ISACS benchmark.



5. Continuing to build upon and fund our STEAM. goals so that we can continue to offer the very best in 21<sup>st</sup> century skill acquisition and opportunity for all our students.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Create purposeful time for science faculty to collaborate across buildings. This can include attending conferences as a collective department or reserving time away from the classroom to work on curriculum while on campus.
2. Work with administration to balance faculty course load to ensure that faculty have proper planning time to develop new curriculum and new classroom opportunities for students.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks – Science
3. Science Course Syllabuses
4. Curriculum Maps – K-6 Science
5. Next Generation Science Standards
6. Ohio Learning Standards – Science Draft
7. Course of Study, Upper School 7-12

**Submitted by:**

Ms. Megan Parcell, Upper School Science Department Chair  
Ms. Anna McKittrick, Otto Armleder School Science Teacher  
Mr. Doug Parsley, Upper School 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Teacher  
Mrs. Elizabeth Briggs, Otto Armleder School Mathematics Teacher  
Mr. Gary Delanoy, Upper School Chemistry and Physics Teacher  
Ms. Holly Getter, Lower School 3rd Grade Teacher  
Ms. Jaime Robbins, Upper Elementary Science Teacher  
Ms. Jody Petersen, Upper School Social Studies Teacher  
Dr. Kevin Savage, Upper School Environmental Science Teacher  
Ms. Laura Griffin, Lower School 2nd Grade Teacher  
Mr. Mark Salisbury, Upper Elementary Science Teacher  
Ms. Mindy Gallagher, Lower School Science Enhancement Facilitator  
Ms. Morgan Wilson, Otto Armleder School Technology Teacher  
Mr. Paul Gansle, Upper School Chemistry Teacher  
Mr. Steve Sideris, Upper Elementary Principal  
Ms. Teresa Null, Upper School 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Teacher

## **18. Program: K-12 Technology & Library-Media Instruction**

### **Overview:**

CHCA seeks to prepare students to engage the broader world around them, even as that world is changing at a breakneck pace. CHCA recognizes that today's learners are "digital natives," never knowing a time before broadband wireless or social media, or a time before mobile devices could connect them with people from across the world. Even our youngest students come into the classroom with the long-ingrained habits of online consumers. Yet in the spirit of Matthew 10:16, CHCA sets out to cultivate "digital natives" who are not "digitally naïve." As our PK-12 technology curriculum draws heavily from the International Society of Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards for Students, and from the Ohio Learning Model for Technology Instruction (2017), our focus is not on the technology tool, but on the unique needs and God-given potential within each child. Through a broad range of experiences and offerings, from LEGO Robotics to coding and media production courses, to our Bring Your Own Device Program, CHCA looks to cultivate our students' 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, building their capacity to be problem-solvers, innovative designers, and well-rounded global citizens who think critically about their digital consumption, even while becoming creative producers of knowledge and confident communicators who move forward with purpose. We want our students to understand that we do not use technology for technology's sake, nor should an electronic device control or define who we are. Rather, CHCA encourages students to use the vast electronic resources at our disposal with redemptive purpose and in the service of others.

### **a. EBL Lower School K-3 Technology & Media**

Edyth B. Lindner (EBL) Elementary School lays the foundation for technology instruction and information literacy. EBL employs a part-time computer teacher four days a week for dedicated technology instruction in the computer lab. KPrep and Kindergarten meet 30 minutes per week and grades 1-3 meet for 45 minutes per week. Additionally, students in grades 2 and 3 receive specialized STEAM instruction using LEGO robotics per coding for one hour per week for a nine-week rotation. The LEGO Robotics and coding curriculum is co-taught with the EBL Science Lab teacher providing students with both technological and coding skills as well as developing scientific process skills of communication, classifying, measuring, inferring, and predicting identifying concepts, including force, friction, gravity, and momentum. Currently, both teachers are working collaboratively to research and develop an introductory robotics and coding curriculum for grades K-1. Along with technology instruction, traditional library skills are also introduced and reinforced at EBL. Students in grades 1-3 have library time for 45 minutes a week in addition to technology instruction, with the goal of helping students build fluency with print as well as electronic media.

Students, especially Grades K-1, use technology to reinforce reading, math, and problem-solving skills using software and online resources. Grade 2 students have a rotating intensive keyboarding unit led by their classroom teachers; grade 2 and 3 students continuing to practice keyboarding skills during computer class. Currently the technology teacher is testing alternative keyboarding software to provide more of a blended introduction to keyboarding with age-appropriate practice content for the younger students.

All students in grades K-3 are taught basic computer skills; online safety; digital citizenship (using resources that include Common Sense Media's digital citizenship programming); introduction to coding; processes for creating, saving, and organizing files; introductory use of web resources and databases to research grade-level curricular themes; and creation and sharing of documents and presentations. Even as the regular classroom teachers at EBL rely heavily on iPads for ease of access, the technology teacher collaborates with classroom teachers in content areas to incorporate technology projects and build emerging 21<sup>st</sup> century skills through students' regular units of study.

#### **b. Lower School 4-6 Technology & Media**

The technology program in our Upper Elementary program builds upon that foundation provided at EBL. While students continue with traditional, scheduled library instruction in grade 4, the conversion of the Founders' Campus library into a media center with full computer lab reflects the convergence of technology with print media, as our library space continues to evolve. A full-time technology teacher based in the media center directs our grade 4-6 Technology and Design Thinking (TDT) courses. Student skill-building drives instruction in our TDT classes, as they build independent fluency in Microsoft Office productivity software, as well as introductory media creation and coding. During the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of TDT, students learn computer literacy. They focus on typing skills as well as use of Microsoft Word, and they work to create projects beyond an essay. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, students begin to build skills needed for efficient and effective research. They learn to craft speeches from their research and create visual supports, to then give an effective presentation utilizing technology, a foundation for building "global communicator" skills. By 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, students are challenged with computational thinking skills as they dive into coding and programming, and as they wrestle with the "Core 4" of coding and sequencing. By 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, students will learn the fundamental components of video and media creation using tools like Stop Motion and Microsoft Movie Maker. While students follow a similar technology scope and sequence progression from grades 4-6, the TDT program is designed to challenge students at each grade with increasing levels of sophistication and greater independent fluency in technology, even while transfer those fluencies to their work in the regular classroom. Instruction in online safety continues throughout the year, still drawing heavily from resources at Common Sense Media, but branching into topics like plagiarism, copyright, and fair use, as well as protecting privacy and social media safety.

Upper Elementary students make increasing use of technology in their core academic classes as well. Equipped with school-provided laptops, and with the option to bring their own school-approved devices from home, students and parents are introduced to the Canvas LMS in grade 4, and to the host of tools our teachers use to enrich the learning environment. Students begin to build research skills in online databases, interact with one another online through apps like Flipgrid and Padlet, and practice global communicator skills by interacting with worldwide audiences online in activities like "Mystery Skype." Use of the new innovation spaces for project building, gaming, or the zSpace lab are also ways in which our teachers use technology to extend the learning beyond the walls of the classroom. Events like "Operation Impact" (a week

in the spring when students work through a Design Thinking process to build and present passion projects) give students at grades 4-6 an outlet to apply their creativity and skills to real-world problems and to present their prototype solutions to authentic audiences.

#### **c. Armleder PK-6 Technology and Media**

Technology instruction at Armleder follows much the same progression as in the North Campus Lower School grades. Library and technology instruction are taught by the same teacher, who works four days per week and teaches all grades PK-6. She also works with the Upper Elementary science teacher as part of the interdisciplinary STEAM classes at Armleder, in which students explore connections between math, science, robotics, and computer fundamentals. Having a single faculty member manning both library, the computer lab, and integrated STEAM classes presents challenges given the number of preps and the wide range in student development from ages 3 to 12 within the Armleder program. Nonetheless, it is helpful for helping students make the connection between critical skills such as problem-solving, computational thinking, and thinking critically about consuming different kinds of sources and media types, whether print or digital. A difference in the Armleder program is the extent to which computer-based testing is used. Armleder students are required to take the state AIR test and MAP testing for standardized testing via PC, so the need for fluency on a Windows-based PC currently dictates many of the basic skills that students focus on in digital instruction: mousing, scrolling, reading standardized test questions in an online format, as well as keyboarding are taught throughout the program. We are also currently exploring ways to upgrade available school-provided devices (particularly iPads) to make sure up-to-date devices are available for each classroom. Moreover, as we would like to see more Armleder students move on to attend CHCA Upper School, we are also monitoring potential areas of “digital divide” between students entering the BYOD program in grade 7 and making sure device access and expectation of digital skill is equitable throughout our program.

#### **d. Upper School (7-12) Technology and Media**

While there is not a formal program for technology instruction at the Upper School grades 7-8, CHCA’s junior high classrooms are tech rich. All students have access to an electronic productivity device; roughly 85% of students at grades 7-8 bring a school-approved laptop from home as part of our Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Program, while the remaining 15% use the day loaner checkout system for device access during the school day. At the beginning of the year, students go through a brief “Digital Driver’s License” orientation to the BYOD Program, reviewing Responsible Use Policy expectations and setting the tone for academic device usage at CHCA. All new students also have a separate orientation to the technology tools; because Upper School students are expected to access specialized academic content by way of the technology, the Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning works with the Upper School administration and Guidance staff to coach new students in technology use and to help them acclimate to life in a BYOD school.

Universal use of the Canvas LMS for posting assignments and engaging content creates a level playing field for all students to engage a wide range of content by way of technology in every class, thereby reinforcing the computational thinking and digital communication skills students

learn in grades 4-6. By the end of 1<sup>st</sup> quarter in grade 7, students are expected to use Canvas fully and independently to check daily assignments, submit completed work, and communicate with teachers. Students are also independently using Office365 for productivity in each of their classes, applying skills that were learned in grades 4-6. These basic skills include creation and storage of documents, and full use of Outlook Email. Teachers instruct and support students in these skills in their first years of using their own laptops in the Bring Your Own Device program at CHCA Upper School.

Teachers at Upper School rely on a number of tech tools to maximize possibilities for learning: Microsoft OneNote, online simulations with Gizmos and zSpace, learning with games on Quizlet and Kahoot!, language apps like Duolingo, Flipgrid video assignments, interactive math with Desmos and Geogebra, and programs such as Clavinova and Tatian in the fine arts. Smartboard, interactive projectors, and iPad technology are being used by a range of teachers. Yet in all of this, our teachers work to build empowered learners—independent thinkers, confident and thriving.

At the time of this self-study, CHCA has also begun to partner with The Social Institute, an organization whose mission is teaching students, parents, and teachers positive uses of social media, building awareness and positive digital leadership within schools. The hope is to equip our teachers, students, and families with best uses of technology and widen the discussion of digital safety and responsibility.

With the proliferation of technology also comes challenges. Teachers need continual training as new tools become available, yet time for intensive training is limited. Resources are stretched for maintaining adequate school laptops at Upper Elementary, while managing potential distractions in the Upper School BYOD program presents additional challenges for teachers.

**Strengths:**

1. The guiding focus in programming—instruction and assessment in technology with redemptive purpose—aligns tightly with the Christ-centered mission and vision of CHCA and keeps the focus on the student, not the tech tool.
2. The emphasis on innovative course options and innovative instruction for future-ready students at CHCA resonates well with our parent community (see Constituent Survey results highlighting importance of innovative instruction to our parent community).
3. The high caliber of CHCA's technology instructors and forward-thinking leadership is bringing a new, cohesive focus to our technology and media scope and sequence in just a short time.
4. Recent hires at Armleder, Founders' Campus, and MSL Upper School have brought positive changes in forging a tighter connection between library and technology instruction.
5. The current availability of devices for every student and the Canvas LMS at grades 4-12 opens a wide range of possibilities for engaging students in content, blending instruction, and personalizing learning in every classroom.

**Challenges:**

1. Device cost and the number of school-provided devices needed at Upper Elementary and Armleder is stretching the available resources for maintaining a thriving, tech-rich program that is eager to innovate.
2. As possibilities proliferate for teaching with technology, the need for teacher training in technology increases, though available time and opportunities for training are limited.
3. The gap in technology instruction at grades 7-8, and the lack of required technology course offerings at 9-12, not only allows for a potential loss of some digital fluencies prior to grade 9, but risks the formation of a “digital divide” between students who have come through our lower school program and those who enter CHCA in Upper School.
4. While our parents have rated technology implementation as a top-priority item, a host of factors (tech-related distractions in BYOD classrooms, student anxiety linked to mobile device addiction, lack of training on new tools, etc.) have made our teachers less enthusiastic about embracing the technology when it is available.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Explore the hiring of additional assistive “Ed Tech” staff for the Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning to provide additional support for teachers in tech use and innovation best practices.
2. Continue to test and implement a viable device management tool that allows teachers greater oversight and guidance of in-class device usage in BYOD classrooms.
3. Implement viable models (e.g., design thinking frameworks, the ISTE Standards for Educators) for professional development as a replacement for traditional “tech trainings.” Future “trainings” must be about changing mindset from a hyper-focus on a particular technology tool to a new understanding of “teacher as innovator, facilitator, collaborator” as educator skills.
4. Move intentionally to transition EBL to a 1:1 iPad program and train teachers on strategies for using iPads as productivity devices.
5. Explore curriculum changes at upper school that expand technology course offerings at 7-12 and build upon the positive momentum of the lower school feeder program.
6. Develop an upper school teacher cohort that seeks training in best practices in online and blended course design for implements additional CHCA blended and online courses.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks – Technology
3. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks – Information Literacy
4. Course Syllabuses – Technology
5. Curriculum Maps – K-6 Technology
6. CHCA Technology and “Bring Your Own Device” Webpage
7. Ohio Learning Standards in Technology (2017)
8. ISTE Standards for Students
9. The Social Institute program description
10. ATLIS Appendix A – Document Checklist

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**Submitted by:**

Kris Gilbert, Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Committee Chair

Sally Hall, EBL K-3 Librarian

Sarah Hendrix, EBL K-3 Technology Teacher

Amy Saxby, Upper Elementary Grade 4 Teacher

Rebeca Hardy, Upper Elementary 4-6 Technology and Design Thinking Teacher

Anna McKittrick, Armleder 4-6 Science and STEM Teacher

Morgan Wilson, Armleder PK-6 Technology Teacher and Librarian

Teresa Null, Upper School 7-8 Science Teacher

Adam Cool, Upper School 9-12 Computer Science Teacher



## **19. Program: K-12 Physical Education & Health**

### **Overview**

Above all, physical education at CHCA reflects the high value God places on human life and the respect we have for each person in God's community. Our program offers opportunities for spiritual growth where students are encouraged to explore what God honoring choices and behaviors look like. The program focuses on the cognitive, psychomotor, affective, and spiritual domains. Each student is encouraged to develop their God given gifts and talents in the areas of sportsmanship, leadership, cooperation, teamwork, grace, and respect. The goal of CHCA physical education is to develop physically literate individuals who have the motivation, confidence, and competence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity in multiple environments. The department strives to create a learning environment that is safe, welcoming, fun, and noncompetitive. This is accomplished by using instructional practices and deliberate-practice tasks that support differentiated instruction, active engagement, modified activities, self-assessment, self-monitoring. Students are encouraged to develop at their own pace and full potential. This positive classroom setting fosters creativity and celebrates student's successes while supporting them in their challenges.

The Physical Education curriculum aligns with both the state (ODE) and national (NASPE) physical education standards and comprehensive benchmarks, making it an integral part of the CHCA educational process. The Upper and Lower Elementary share one full-time certified physical education instructor. Grades K-4 have physical education twice a week for 30 minutes. Preschoolers ages 2-4 participate in the Adventures in Movement (A.I.M.) program for 20 minutes once a week. The Upper School students in grades 7 and 8 do not have physical education. The Upper School, grades 9 through 12, does not have a certified physical education teacher on staff. At this level, a dance class is available for students to earn .25 credits toward the ODE requirement for graduation. The Upper School accepts physical education credits and waivers that comply with the Ohio Department of Education Standards for graduation and offers an independent study physical education course. The Armleder campus staffs one part-time certified physical education instructor who meets with Pre-K students twice a week for 20 minutes, K-3 students twice a week for 30 minutes, and grades 4-6 once a week for 45 minutes.

The Physical Education Department provides age appropriate, comprehensive content that differentiates and challenges students as they move from knowledge and skills acquisition to the application and transferring of skills to more mature movement patterns and game-situations. Topics included in the curriculum include, but are not limited to, movement skills and patterns, manipulatives, tumbling, dance, creative rhythmical skills, balancing skills, jump rope, sport-specific skills, modified, cooperative, and lead up games, a variety of fitness activities and a traversing wall (located at the lower elementary only). Students gain an understanding of rules, safety, and strategies of games and activities by participating in a variety of team and individual activities. Students explore fitness, fitness components, and understand what changes occur in the body because of exercise and how these principles affect individual health.

Instruction in health is integrated with science in the lower school grades (K-3) and in the Armleder K-6 program. Basic health topics in the workings of the human body and wellness complement the emphasis on personal fitness taught in P.E. at the lower grades. In Upper School, health is offered as an elective course at grades 7-8 which may be counted toward high school credit. By grades 9-12, students are required to take a semester (half-credit) of health that satisfies Ohio graduation requirements. A course in health is offered for students at grades 9-12 both during the summer as well as the regular semesters to satisfy this requirement, though CHCA also permits health and PE courses taken online. Upper School health instruction is also provided to all students by the school nurse with instruction in sex education, beginning with instruction in puberty, hygiene, and early adolescent development at grades 5 and 6, and continuing with specialized instruction in sexuality, disease prevention, and healthy lifestyle choices for students in grades 7-9. The Ohio Learning Standards in health instruction are very broad, allowing a great deal of flexibility to local school districts to determine instructional specifics, though also creating challenges in narrowing down the scope of program. Currently work is underway to pilot and adopt new Upper School health class resources that emphasize students' social and emotional wellness, lifestyle balance, and managing anxiety, as well as addressing new health topics including vaping and the dangers of opioid addiction (the latter now required by the Ohio Learning Standards).

An evaluation of the constituent survey reveals satisfaction ratings in Health and P.E. that are noticeably below ISACS benchmark for most of our constituent groups. The division breakdown of the survey is more telling; a high percentage of parents, faculty, and students responded, "Don't know/does not apply," to the Health/P.E. portion of the survey, while a higher than expected number of "Poor" ratings came from parents as well as teachers in the Upper Elementary 4-6 division. We attribute these results to programming cuts that eliminated P.E. at the middle grades (beginning at grade 5) and the de-emphasizing of P.E. and health instruction as priority areas as students approach the Upper School years. While P.E. remains a fixture through grade 4, and the recent re-introduction of Recreational Fitness and Health classes at grades 7-8 is working to address the gap, this remains a challenge area in our overall program.

**Strengths:**

1. The equipment and facilities at Lower School K-3 are commendable.
2. The variety of activities offered in physical education creates opportunities for lifetime fitness and the development of a physical literate individual.
3. The Physical Education Department follows the National and Ohio Department of Education benchmarks and standards.
4. Physical education class sizes are comparable to the regular classroom and are taught by a licensed physical education instructor.

**Challenges:**

1. Physical education is not offered as a class in grades 5 and 6; offerings at Upper School 7-12 are limited to the Recreational Fitness elective at 7-8 and an independent study offering at 9-12.

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2. The EBL gymnasium floor is in need of maintenance.
3. The Armleder campus lacks sufficient space for indoor and outdoor instruction.
4. The Armleder physical education instructor is only scheduled for two days a week which limits the amount of class time offered to grades 4-6.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Explore ways to offer more physical education options in grades 5-12 in addition to Recreational Fitness and the independent study high school course.
2. Explore scheduling options for adding an additional day to Armleder physical education instructor's schedule and to expand the students class time.
3. Explore upgrades to the current Upper School health resources and blended health instructional materials, consistent with new state standards in health for high school graduation requirements, and for new offerings in health and fitness at grades 7 and 8.

**Addenda:**

1. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks – Health
2. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks – Physical Education
3. Curriculum Maps – K-6 Health
4. Curriculum Maps – K-4 Physical Education
5. Course Syllabuses – Health and Physical Education
6. CHCA Nurse's resources for sex education
7. State and National Standards in Health and Physical Education
8. Course of Study, Upper School 7-12

**Submitted by:**

Susan Zwarg, ECLC and Lower School K-4 Physical Education Teacher, Committee Co-Chair  
Tim Sakelos, Armleder PK-6 Physical Education Teacher, Committee Co-Chair  
Holly Getter, Lower School K-3 Grade 3 Teacher  
Jamie Robbins, Lower School Grade 5 Science Teacher  
Mike Fite, Upper School 7-8 Spanish and Health Teacher  
Gary Hartoin, Upper School 7-8 Christian Studies and Recreational Fitness Teacher  
Mark Lynch, Upper School Social Studies, Health, and PE Teacher

## **20. Program: K-12 World Languages**

### **Overview:**

World language study at CHCA's North Campus buildings prepares students to enter the global multicultural environment through the study of Spanish and Chinese language and culture. In Latin, students deepen understanding of culture, language, and history. Classical Greek and Biblical Hebrew are also offered as occasional electives. As a reflection of our teachers' dedication to the philosophy and the core values of CHCA, students learn to appreciate the unlimited capabilities that God has given all people for glorifying and serving Him through language. CHCA offers a variety of opportunities to interact with Spanish- and Chinese-speaking people in a more personal and practical way. Students are encouraged to see that their language study can create diverse opportunities for employment in their local communities and beyond upon graduation. The school supports professional development of its faculty with in-service opportunities as well as workshops and seminars that pertain to language acquisition and study.

CHCA publishes a curriculum sequence for both modern and classical languages. To graduate, a student must successfully complete three consecutive years and receive high school credit for the same World language. The World Languages Curriculum follows the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) Performance Descriptors for Language Learners which describe the language performance of language learners in Standards-based performance-oriented learning environments as well as the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines which sets out clear objectives/benchmarks of language development for student performance at each proficiency level.

#### **a. EBL Lower School PK-3 Spanish**

Students have Spanish once a week for 25-30 minutes. Teachers introduce the language orally and in context through techniques such as games, music, hands-on projects, videos, books, and other materials. Students are expected to perform within Novice Low.

#### **b. Lower School 4-6 World Languages**

Spanish study for students in grade 4 consists of 25-30 minutes once a week. Students are still operating at a Novice Low proficiency level but are continuing to foster an appreciation for the Spanish language and culture and develop a desire to pursue language study as they are able to meet more consistently. Students in grades 5 and 6 meet every other day for 58 minutes per class. Students have the opportunity to actively engage with peers in conversation using relevant and thematic topics which enhance and enrich their knowledge of the target language. The use of technology via internet resources allows them to practice pronunciation, extensive vocabulary and utilize resource tools that help them study and prepare for exams.

Mandarin Chinese in grade 6 focuses on inspiring students' experience and exploration. Students are given the opportunity to study Chinese language and theme-related Chinese

culture. They are actively engaged in daily life communications with peers and native speakers. Cultural lessons help students understand Chinese language better. Students learn Chinese songs, cook Chinese food, do Chinese dancing, etc. to know more about China. Students also can apply their language skills into the real life through these integrated activities.

### **c. Upper School 7-12 World Languages**

In grades 7-12, students begin having language classes every day of the week. In grades 7 and 8, classes are 48 minutes on the regular schedule and 40 minutes on chapel schedule. In grades 9-12, classes are 48 minutes on the regular schedule, 40 minutes on chapel schedule and 90 minutes on block schedule. Latin is offered at levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and AP Latin: Vergil. All Latin courses carry a weighted honors credit. One year of Classical Greek is open to students who have completed Latin II. Chinese is offered at levels, 1, 2, 3, 4 and AP Chinese Language. All Chinese courses carry a weighted honors credit. Spanish is offered at levels 1, 2, 2 Honors, 3, 3 Honors, 4 Honors, Spanish Conversation in Context, and AP Spanish Language and Culture. Only Honors Spanish courses and AP Spanish carry a weighted honors credit. Students may earn high school credit for Latin 1, Chinese 1 and Spanish 1 in Grades 7-8 by successfully completing said course.

In the Latin language program, deep lifelong benefits of studying the Classics are appropriately developed through a carefully ordered sequence of study. In Latin I and II students master the entire language structure, learning the declension and conjugations and the meanings which attach to nouns and verbs in their various forms. In advanced levels students increase their reading speed and accuracy by translating the works of great Classical authors. Throughout this process students sharpen the habits of an analytical mind, appreciate literary style, and become immersed in history and culture, while finding their personal capacity for excellence. They learn to study deeply and fall in love with ideas. As a result, they develop the whole person and reach new levels of self-confidence. Use of the rigorous Socratic Method throughout the Latin curriculum challenges them to analyze their thinking processes. Biblical principles are integrated into the discussions that compare the ancient and biblical Roman world to today. The newly revised AP Latin exam requirements are reflected in the curriculum to provide for student success on the exam.

In both Spanish and Chinese, teachers use a total immersion approach to instruction, maintaining a conscious effort to speak exclusively in the target language in the classroom and encourage students to do the same. Language acquisition is facilitated in a natural and conversational environment with the goal of having students reach the intermediate level of proficiency (low, mid or high) by the end of the program for Spanish and Chinese. The target language itself in the modern language classes serves as a tool not only to expand the students' knowledge in other disciplines such as art, history, literature and current events, but to expand their Christian worldview as well.

Constituent Survey responses show parents at Lower Elementary (63.6%) and Upper Elementary (66.7%) below the ISACS benchmark of approval (70.1%). Parents at Upper School

Grades 7-8 (73.7%) are above the ISACS benchmark approval and the parents at Grades 9-12 (69.6%) are slightly below the ISACS benchmark approval. The students (57.0%) have approval percentages below the ISACS benchmark (62.1%) and faculty at all levels (64.2%) also have percentages below the ISACS benchmark (76.7%).

**Strengths:**

1. CHCA's K-12 world languages curriculum provides a cohesive structure in which teachers have the ability to create and develop their own coursework with a smooth transition between divisions.
2. The world languages curriculum offers students fun, useful, valuable, and multi-faceted instruction that is designed to include various learning styles and reaches the Advanced Placement level in all three languages offered.
3. Teachers in the World Language Department provide their students with instructional quality and individual attention as students and as whole persons.

**Challenges:**

1. Lack of continuity in meeting times in K-4 and especially in grades 5-6 makes it difficult to accrue the minimum hours necessary to meet proficiency targets.
2. Because high school credit is now awarded for successful completion of Level 1 language study in Grades 7-8 (Chinese, Latin and Spanish), students are fulfilling the graduation requirement of three consecutive years in Grade 10 and are choosing not to continue their language study. This not only halts the progression of proficiency, it also creates a two-year gap between secondary and post-secondary language study.
3. Armleder currently offers no world language classes.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Develop strategies to provide more continuity to language study for students who do not have daily face-to-face time with teachers.
2. Explore implementing changes to the graduation requirement for successful completion of three consecutive years of the same world language in grades 9-12.
3. Support world language teachers as they propose Intersession trips to the countries where they are specialists.
4. Encourage and facilitate the progress of students through a full four-year high school commitment to their chosen world language.
5. Work to bring world language instruction to Armleder students.
6. Continue to offer teacher support for professional development.
7. Promote local cultural events for students to attend.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks – World Languages (Modern and Classical)
3. Course syllabuses – World Languages
4. Curriculum maps – K-6 World Languages

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5. Course of Study, Upper School 7-12
6. Ohio Learning Standards in World Languages, including Proficiency Targets, Can Do Statement, and NCSFLL-ACTFL alignment (2017)

**Submitted by:**

Cherie Bailey, MSL Spanish Teacher, Department Chair, Committee Chair

Andy Ciarniello, MSL Science Teacher

Toni Kraft, Founder's Campus Latin Teacher

James Lipovsky, MSL Latin Teacher

Rena Liu, MSL Chinese Teacher

Nitza Pinilla-Foster, EBL Spanish Teacher

John Prado, MSL Spanish Teacher

Todd Slaughter, Founder's Campus Spanish Teacher

Shanli Zhao, Founder's Campus Chinese Teacher



## **21. Program: K-12 Music, Drama, & Visual Arts Curriculum**

### **Overview:**

The Fine Arts curriculum begins with foundational elements in visual arts and music and builds on national standards and benchmarks along with expanded opportunities as the students grow and develop. Beginning in grade 9, dance and drama classes are introduced. The arts support CHCA's vision and core value of educating the whole person. The Fine Arts program faculty, with the support of Fine Arts staff, work collaboratively to engage and educate students in a multi-disciplinary approach in an encouraging and challenging environment. Our faculty fosters an environment where all students can discover and develop their God-given talents and gifts through a variety of instruction, leadership opportunities, performance, programs, and outreach. One such collaboration and program is ArtBeat – the annual Fine Arts Festival – a campus-wide celebration of the arts featuring all our performing ensembles, student performers selected through audition, an art exhibit featuring every student enrolled in an art class, a juried art competition for our grades 9-12 students, and professional and student demonstrating artists. The fine arts extra-curricular offerings support and enhance the curriculum by providing students with more opportunities to develop their passion for and gifts in the arts.

Our students and program have won many local, regional, and national awards. The quality of our program and outstanding opportunities attracts many new families to our school. Not only does the arts program attract new families, it maintains a high-level of satisfaction among parents and students as shown in the constituent survey. Our parents rated the arts program excellent, 66.5%, compared to the ISACS benchmark of 42.4%. Combined results for our parents in the excellent and very good categories were 92.4% compared to benchmark combined averages of 78.2%. Our students rated the arts program excellent, 56.11%, compared to the ISACS benchmark of 37.9%. Combined results for our students in the excellent and very good categories were 79.91% compared to the ISACS benchmark of 69.8%.

While we have an outstanding arts program, it is not without challenges. Being a small school, many of our arts classes and other classes are single offerings. However, our Guidance and Upper School 9-12 offices work with students and the schedule to limit this challenge as much as possible. Another challenge is shared faculty and part-time faculty across campus. Shared faculty makes scheduling a challenge when you are dealing with multiple buildings with different schedules. However, administrators collaborate on schedules to make this work as well as possible. Some of our arts teachers are part time, which can make finding and keeping quality teachers a challenge. However, having a part-time position is better than not offering classes and options to our students. Since arts classes were cut back to one option for grades 7-8 students, it has been difficult for students to decide which area of the arts to pursue. Many of our students are talented in and really enjoy multiple arts disciplines. The administration continues to look at the schedule for different options. In the future, we are planning to supplement classroom options with expanded extra-curricular offerings through a conservatory preparatory program, which is in the planning stages now. Another challenge is one shared performance space that is used as a classroom, for chapels, arts concerts and productions, a

church on Sunday mornings, and other CHCA events. Therefore, we collaborate with outside churches to host some of our concerts and programs. While this isn't always easy or convenient, it works while also providing us with opportunities for outreach with different churches and congregations in our city.

The PK-12 music program offers educational instruction in singing, playing musical instruments, plus dance and movement. Instruction follows national standards in music education. Students learn music theory, critical listening and aural skills, playing and singing in parts, music literacy, music history, performance skills and audience etiquette. PK-4 music classes incorporate musical instruments, singing, movement, and basic musical skills. Beginning in grades 5-12 students are introduced to dedicated ensemble classes, emphasizing performance skills and increased musicianship. Music classes enhance the cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and creative aspects of student life. Ensemble repertoire includes a wide variety of styles, utilizing world languages and allowing for theological integration in the classroom.

The 9-12 theatre program offers drama and musical theatre classes. Drama is a semester class that includes basic theatre history, reading scripts from different genres and time periods, basic theatre knowledge including the specialized vocabulary of a theatre space and roles of a theatre production staff, and acting through theatre games, improvisation, scenes and monologues. Various videos acquaint students to live productions and musicals, and students attend a live theatre production, complete a written critique and participate in a show discussion. Students also learn how to stage Scripture using various forms of theatre. Musical theatre is a semester class that includes basic musical theatre history, singing songs from various composers, learning dances inspired or choreographed by influential choreographers, basic dance/music/acting skills and combining all three to create musical theatre performances, and learning how to create story through dance, acting, and vocal expression.

Dance class is offered for grades 9-12. Dance is a semester class that covers the basics of various styles including ballet, modern, tap, jazz, musical theatre, ballroom, and hip hop. Daily class time consists of practice in each of these dance forms as well as discussion about the history and social context of each. Students enjoy instruction that uses video clips of quality performances, discussion of choreographers and styles, and theological integration through works based on scripture.

The PK-12 Visual Arts program offers educational instruction through a variety of media and conceptually-based classes. Instruction, lesson plans, and curriculum follow national standards in art education. Students learn art production, art history, art criticism and art appreciation. Students are introduced to different media, tools, and techniques used in visual art and begin to explore how they can express themselves through their use. Students in grades 5-6 experience more frequent art classes, which allows for in-depth exploration and independent growth in the visual art experience. Students in grades 7-12 continue to explore media, technique, creative problem-solving, and conceptually-based work. Age appropriate media and equipment are introduced in more advanced level classes with an emphasis on utilizing Art as a vehicle for expression and communication. God being in the center of who we are as artists and

discovering how we worship him through the creativity He has blessed us with is a thread that weaves throughout the Department.

### **Strengths**

1. Strong curriculum with a high level of interest, participation, and opportunities for the students in music, drama, and visual arts programs.
2. Satisfaction of parents and students.
3. Financial and volunteer resources provided by the Friends of Fine Arts Boosters.
4. Dedicated Fine Arts Director, outstanding faculty, support staff, and department collaboration.

### **Challenges**

1. Scheduling conflicts for students due to many single class offerings in grades 9-12.
2. Shared faculty across campuses along with part-time status for some faculty members.
3. Decreased arts class opportunities for grades 7-8 students. Students have the option of taking visual art, vocal music, and instrumental music in grades 5-6 and then may choose only one class each in grades 7-8. This is difficult for students who are interested or gifted in multiple areas to choose only one class. Since this change was implemented, our grades 9-12 performing ensemble and visual art class numbers have decreased.
4. One shared rehearsal and performance space.
5. Limited time for cross-campus department meetings and planning.

### **Plans and Priorities**

1. Continue to review and refine curriculum and extra-curricular activities to provide the best possible instruction and opportunities for our students.
2. Further develop the arts program as a CHCA center of excellence through a new conservatory program in the planning stages for the performing arts for grades 9-12 with a preparatory program for grades 7-8. This will provide our gifted arts students with expanded opportunities for class and private instruction as well as expanded extra-curricular offerings. The preparatory program will provide for more opportunities for our students in grades 7-8 who have limited class options. We have begun the expansion of our on-campus private instruction program as the first step. The next step will include expanded course offerings and requirements for grades 9-12 and an arts designation on diplomas for conservatory students.
3. Research the costs and options for conservatory program space to include a second large rehearsal and recital space, which will provide more theater access; private and small ensemble practice rooms; and a dance studio.
4. Work with campus administrators to provide more time for cross-campus collaboration by department.
5. Continue to collaborate with area churches to provide performance space for concerts and programs.
6. Continue to engage our parents in the arts as volunteers and supporters.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. CHCA Vision, Competencies, Standards, and Benchmarks - Music and Visual Fine Arts
3. Course Syllabuses – Fine Arts
4. Curriculum Maps – K-6 Fine Arts
5. Fine Arts Program Webpage
6. ArtBeat Webpage
7. Concert Programs
8. Drawn – AP Art Poster
9. Friends of Fine Arts Boosters Webpage (with FOFA Board of Directors roster)
10. Friends of Fine Arts Boosters Constitution and Bylaws

**Submitted by:**

Mona Summers, Director of Fine Arts, Report Writer/Lead  
Sandy Breitholle, Steering Committee Chair  
Emaline Allen, LS KPrep-4 Music Teacher  
Annette Eberhardt, LS 5-6 and US 7-8 Visual Art Teacher  
Della Enns, LS 5-6 and US 7-8 Vocal Music Teacher  
Mandy Feltman, Armleder PK-6 Visual Art Teacher  
Dan Grantham, US 9-12 Instrumental Music Teacher and Department Chair  
Andrew Hartman, LS 5-6 and US 7-8 Instrumental Band Teacher  
Tim Hilderbrand, US 9-12 Visual Art Teacher  
Jennifer Inoue, Armleder PK-6 Music Teacher  
Susan Jung, US 9-12 Drama and Musical Theatre Teacher  
Amy Macy, LS 5-6 and US 7-12 Instrumental String Teacher  
José Mangual, US 9-12 Instrumental Music Teacher  
Sarah Grace McCollough, Armleder Language Arts Teacher  
Sara Potts, US 7-12 Vocal Music, Dance, AP Music Theory Teacher  
Gail Varner, LS KPrep-4 Visual Art Teacher

## **22. Program: Early Childhood Learning Center and Armleder Pre-School**

### **Overview:**

The philosophy of the CHCA Early Learning Program (ELP) is based on the fact that “Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a real blessing” (Psalm 127:3). CHCA values the whole child and acknowledges each child as having unique experiences, interests, and cultural values that must be recognized and respected. We believe that all children have innate curiosity, interest in social engagement and establishing relationships, constructing meaning, and negotiating their environment. In the Early Learning Program, children choose from a wide range of developmentally, age-appropriate opportunities and activities including interactions with other children, interactions with loving, Christ-centered teachers, explorations with science and nature by using manipulatives, problem solving experiences, creative dramatics, music, art, and large and fine motor development. The program provides a balance of self-directed and teacher-directed activities to help children develop a positive self-image and offers opportunities for individual, group work, and play. CHCA’s objective is to help children realize their potential while meeting their emotional and developmental needs.

The ELP creates learning experiences that invite students to construct knowledge and make meaning of their world. Students construct their knowledge through movement, exploration, use of a variety of materials, collaboration with others, and opportunities to use prior knowledge as they connect with their world. The vibrant educational environment acknowledges that foundational to learning are the experiences and knowledge that children bring to school in combination with their natural sense of curiosity, a sense of wonder, and joyful exuberance. The preschool classroom contains a rich variety of materials and resources for the students to explore. Language is developed through conversations, books, poetry, creative dramatics, and writing. Puzzles, games, and construction materials are also available to the children when exploring math concepts. The room is divided into “centers” in which the children can choose to work each day.

The curriculum provides age-appropriate, high quality academics based on standards derived from the State of Ohio Early Learning Development Standards. CHCA Early Learning Program teachers seek to meet and exceed these benchmarks and have integrated all areas with a Christian worldview. The ELP curriculum provides meaningful, engaged, and effective learning. It is well planned and organized with instructional strategies to support, challenge, and link current learning to experiences and previous learning, and to extend children’s abilities and skills. The curriculum is rich in opportunities to solve problems, increase language and literacy development, and engage in intellectual activities.

The following ratios are maintained at all times by the ELP staff member as follows: 1:7 for every two-year old student; 1:12 for every three-year old student; and 1:14 for every four-year old student. Whenever there are seven or more children on the premise, a second adult will be readily available and easily summoned. No child is ever to be left alone or unsupervised. The preschool staff consists of the preschool administrator who oversees the daily operation of the program (including safety and discipline components); plans, implements, and evaluates the

daily program; and guides the related program staff, the lead teachers who plan and implement daily instruction, and the instructional assistants who help the lead teachers supervise the students and prepare the learning environment.

The preschool administrator and lead teachers are degreed teachers, and the instructional assistants have at least their high school diploma and two years of experience working with young children. All staff meet the requirements set forth by the Ohio Department of Education and Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy. In addition, all staff are required to participate in in-service training during each year of their employment at CHCA. The preschool staff strive to create a climate for the learner that achieves the purpose and the objectives of Christian education as stated in the CHCA Constitution while speaking, teaching, and exemplifying the truth in love.

Inspired by the Reggio-Emilia philosophy, the Blake Lindner Thompson Early Childhood Learning Center's inquiry-based curriculum provides meaningful, engaging and effective learning. We believe that each child is curious, creative and capable to ask questions, collaborate, and use exploration to solve problems and make meaning of their learning. Teachers guide the children to construct knowledge through a hands-on discovery learning process that emerges from the interests of the students, tailoring the provocations and investigations to ensure learning benchmarks are met. The classroom environment is set up to be a springboard for the inquiry, provoking observation, discussion and application to their knowledge of God's creation. Fine arts, foreign language, gross motor instruction, integrated technology, and science enhancement support the development of the whole child and enrich classroom learning. Work in the Atelier allows students time to interact, manipulate materials and create, promoting critical thinking skills and expression of their learning.

The Early Childhood Learning Center at CHCA's Armleder Campus has implemented a Step up to Quality improvement system. Step up to Quality (SUTQ) is a rating and improvement system administered by the Ohio Department of Education. SUTQ recognizes and promotes learning and development programs that meet quality program standards that exceed licensing, health, and safety regulations. The student population at Armleder is diverse. Therefore, the preschool program is intentional and sensitive about incorporating cross-cultural instructional experiences for the whole child. The Armleder Campus is also working in partnership with Preschool Promise to ensure that quality and affordable preschool education is available to more students in the community. Preschool Promise assists community providers with achieving and maintaining high quality ratings with Step up to Quality. Using the Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards, Creative Curriculum (for Preschool's Objectives for Development and Learning) are aligned with the standards for Step up to Quality. Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards describe key concepts and skills that young children develop during the birth-to-five-year period. Their purpose is to support the development and well-being of young children and to foster their learning. The standards promote the understanding of early learning and development, provide a comprehensive and coherent set of expectations for children's development and learning, and guide the design and implementation of curriculum, assessment and instructional practices with children. There are

standards within each domain which include: social and emotional development; physical well-being and motor development; language and literacy; cognition and general knowledge; and cognitive skills (math, social studies, and science).

The Constituent Survey indicates that overall our parents believe we have a positive school spirit. The faculty benchmark, however, is below the ISACS benchmark. Our parents and faculty believe we have a strong commitment to morals, values, and character development and that both boys and girls have an equal opportunity for success. In addition, parents and faculty believe the school promotes academic success.

### **Strengths:**

1. The school has a strong commitment to moral values and character development supported by the commitment of teaching Biblical principles. These values are taught within Christian Studies and through integration in academic areas as well.
2. The school supports academic achievement through innovative curriculum. CHCA is committed to providing equal opportunities to all children so they can develop their God-given abilities and talents in order to be leaders of their generation.
3. The school has a caring atmosphere and environment. Our students and their families feel well known by the school and its broader community.
4. Students are offered opportunities to participate in fine arts, large motor instruction, foreign language (Blake Lindner Thompson Early Childhood Center) and technology (Armleder Campus). This allows students time to interact, manipulate materials, and create critical thinking skills which promote the expression of their learning.

### **Challenges:**

1. Providing more opportunities, resources, and time for needed professional development for all of the Early Learning Program staff. Some trainings are difficult to find and are costly. Ohio Department of Education requires a certain number of “mandatory” training hours for staff. This takes a significant amount of our professional development funds within our budget. Also, attaining additional training for the instructional assistants is difficult as we cannot pay them overtime and must maintain proper student teacher ratios during school hours.
2. The ISACS Constituent Survey indicates parents feel that we do not we have the right emphasis on grades and student evaluations within our program.
3. The ISACS Constituent Survey indicates that parents feel that we do not give the appropriate amount of homework.
4. To work as a cohesive elementary school connecting the students, staff, and faculty across multiple grade levels would promote a broader sense of community. This would lend itself to increasing curricular understanding and achieving greater awareness of the learning that occurs at each stage in order to yield students who are self-confident and secure on their learning journey.



**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Finding accessible and affordable training can be challenging. We will research some creative ways to acquire training. This will encompass investigating ways to schedule and include our aides and part-time staff during work hours as well as on faculty in-service days.
2. Implement even more communication with assessments and evaluations through parent/teacher exchanges of information.
3. Evaluate the amount of homework that we are requiring for our preschool students through a survey to the parents.
4. Discover more opportunities for shared experiences between the Early Childhood Learning Center and the Lower Elementary including but not limited to: International Week, Learning Fair, and service projects in conjunction with older students. We will create a time to open up dialogue with higher-grade level teachers in order to look at benchmarks that will help us to collaborate in our philosophy of learning and exploring the avenues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner. Preparing a list of focus words that reflect our mission will help guide the mission of the school as a whole.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. Armleder Pre-School Student and Family Handbook
3. CHCA Early Learning Webpage
4. Ohio Early Learning Content and Development Standards
5. CHCA Blake Lindner Thompson Early Childhood Learning Guide
6. CHCA Armleder Early Childhood Learning Guide
7. CHCA Blake Lindner Thompson Early Childhood Learning Center Curriculum Statement (with Topical Scope and Sequence for PK2, PK3 and PK4)

**Submitted by:**

Heather Briggs, CHCA Blake Lindner Thompson ECLC Teacher, Committee Co-chair  
Donna Furtwengler, CHCA Armleder Pre-School Teacher, Committee Co-chair  
Sandy Breitholle, CHCA Blake Lindner Thompson ECLC Principal, Steering Committee Member  
Cammie Montgomery, CHCA Armleder Pre-School Principal, Steering Committee Member  
Jill Honerlaw, CHCA Blake Lindner Thompson ECLC PK2 Teacher  
Bea Clements, CHCA Armleder Pre-School Teacher  
Becky Mills, CHCA Armleder Pre-School Teacher  
Christine Overmyer, CHCA Blake Lindner Thompson ECLC *Atelierista* Art Studio  
Mary Smith, CHCA Blake Lindner Thompson ECLC Teacher

### **23. Student Services: Guidance, School Counseling, and Testing Services**

#### **Overview:**

The purpose of the school counseling program is to help students and families effectively navigate academic, social, emotional, and spiritual aspects of life as they relate to the student in regard to school and school relationships. As CHCA is committed to the growth of the whole child, counseling services are rooted in the belief that each student's unique gifts and talents grow through an individualized approach and on-going communication amongst the team of people surrounding our students. Especially as student mental health and anxiety are growing concerns nationwide, CHCA's team approach to counseling includes the family, teachers, administrators, counselors, the school nurse, and even extra-curricular activity leaders. This approach helps each student to feel heard and helps reassure families that each child is growing in every respect with careful guidance.

Although there are not counselors at every building, crisis plans are in place and all faculty have received training on recognizing the signs of a student in crisis. All buildings have a list of trusted practitioners for referral. Students are empowered to talk with administrators, the nurse, the counselors, and the family about their observations. Similarly, each building addresses specific issues that are most appropriate for each age group.

#### **a. EBL Lower School K-3**

With no dedicated school counselor, instruction in basic character development, emotional regulation, and positive peer interaction falls largely with the classroom teachers, administrators, and school nurse. Despite this the constituent survey shows a largely positive view of the job being done in these areas. In this age group, anxiety and feelings of unease are generally expressed through inappropriate behaviors, inadequate performance in academics, or strained peer relationships. Because the students spend the majority of their day with one classroom teacher, the teachers are quickly able to discern changes in student affect and behavior. Teachers conference with parents and administrators to ensure the student's best interests have been met. At this level, great lengths are taken to match a student with the best possible classroom teacher taking into account academic ability thus far, previous teacher recommendations, parent input, and student personality. Ongoing character and bully education occur at the lower grades teaching students how to treat one another well.

#### **b. Lower School 4-6**

The counselor at the Founders' Campus works with grade 4-6 students largely on behavioral management and peer relationships. This counselor wears many hats and is also on-call for Lower Elementary should any crisis arise. Orientation and welcome programs are provided prior to the opening of the school year. Special attention is given to students who are new to CHCA, and a Building Buddy helps them navigate their first few weeks. The counselor meets with these students in small groups throughout the first few weeks to welcome them, establish a safe place for them, and aid in their transition. The counselor then visits students through classes in each grade level during the first month to explain the role of the counselor and lead a guidance activity. Students are asked to provide information about their interests, goals for the

year, and feelings about school to help the counselor get to know students and better understand their needs. The counselor is tasked with presenting lessons to students on healthy ways to manage stress, positive interpersonal relationships, bullying prevention, and refusal skills while integrating Christian faith and Biblical truths into interpersonal relationships.

The counselor also meets with students individually and in small groups to address their social, emotional, and personal concerns. Often these meetings stem from communication with faculty, administration, observation of students in social settings, or parent referral. Students have a very full schedule and limited time to make advantage of counseling services.

#### **c. Armleder PK-6**

As the most diverse school in the CHCA family (14% white, 86% non-white), students at the Armleder campus bring with them unique perspectives. Programs like *The Leader in Me* are instrumental in teaching 21<sup>st</sup> century leadership skills to students and faculties. Students are well-versed the terminology and practical application of these concepts in and out of the classroom enabling them to overcome difficulties and challenges. The students also employ the WIGs model of goal-setting to compliment *Leader in Me* curriculum.

#### **d. Upper School 7-12**

Within our Upper School 7-12 structure, the counseling office works with families to support them through the transition from lower school to upper school, from grade 8 to 9 (building change), and from upper school to college. These transitions can be stressful, and the Guidance Office's unique programs help students and parents manage those transitions successfully. Upper School counseling staff includes five licensed counselors and two support staff with close to 70 years of experience working with adolescents and children on social-emotional issues as well as academic concerns. Three of the five counseling staff members are licensed school counselors, and three also have clinical counseling experience. Those working as college counselors have demonstrated track records of strength in helping students and families navigate this ever-changing field.

At the beginning of the upper school journey, the part-time grade 7-8 counselor (who is also the Upper Elementary 4-6 counselor) anticipates students' social-emotional and academic needs, addressing those in classroom guidance activities, coffees with parents, and programming designed to help students grow their social-emotional skills. The counselor meets individually with students and in groups to ensure needs are being met. Individual counseling typically occurs at the referral of administration, parents, or as teachers notice changes, whether behavioral or academic. Our freshman counselor has spent many years in the world of mental health counseling; his primary role is crafting a smoother transition from grade 8 to 9 while onboarding new grade 9 families and developing strong relationships with freshman faculty and staff. The freshman counselor begins working with families in the latter half of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade year when they are starting to schedule for high school. He continues his mentorship as he meets with each freshman and his/her family several times throughout the year. This allows for close monitoring of student progress during the transitional year from grade 8 to 9, developing a 4-year academic plan with each student, and making adjustments as needed.

Those working with our older students as college counselors have demonstrated strong track records in helping families navigate this ever-changing field. To ensure families are heard, the counseling office holds morning coffees that are grade specific, as well as topic-driven roundtable discussions in the evenings.

One counselor is also assigned to our International Program students throughout the duration of their time at CHCA. Many of these students will start their experience in the sophomore or junior year with the express intent of improving their English skills in order to earn acceptance into an American college or university. These students come with their own unique sets of issues and often struggle with homesickness, cultural integration, and a desire to meld with the domestic students. Most students do remarkably well academically, but need help thriving within American philosophies and friendships. This counselor attends workshops specifically designed around working with an international population and develops close relationships with them during their time on the CHCA MSL Campus.

Many concerns in the upper school years are academic as well as social-emotional. Thus, our counselors spend much time advising students and families on best practices and choices in the realm of academics and course selection—all part of students' carefully-managed progression from year-to-year. Special attention is given to onboarding new students to CHCA; a tech orientation and a peer ambassador help them navigate their first few weeks. The counselor meets with these students in small groups to ease the transition to a new place and aid in their success socially, emotionally, and academically. As all students continue into the first quarter, their counselors visit them during Christian Studies classes to explain the role of the counselor and lead a guidance activity. All grade 9 students attend an orientation prior to the start of school which allows them to get to know upperclassmen and their Peer Advisors—upperclassmen who will serve as their homeroom facilitators. Sophomores transition from their freshman counselor in November of the sophomore year when they take the first of a series of career and interest inventories. The Strong's Interest Inventory and the Skill Scan are the two measures used in tandem to start a dialogue during a family meeting in the spring of the sophomore year. This dialogue begins the college process and sets the student on a path to discover colleges that match their personal desires and talents. All sophomores take the PSAT to help them prepare for standardized testing during the college process. The Upper School counselors also deliver a two-day Depression Awareness Workshop to all sophomores, a curriculum developed by Boston Children's Hospital. This curriculum includes parent education and student education. Junior year is often lauded as the "hardest and most important year in the college process," as academic course loads, athletic endeavors, and extra-curricular activities can cause a great deal of stress. The counselors meet with juniors and their families while being available for conversations at any time necessary. All juniors take the PSAT and ACT in preparation for the college admission process. Students in grade 12 are consumed with post-high-school planning, as senior year is dedicated to college applications, financial aid and scholarship applications, and ending their high school careers on high notes academically, athletically, and socially. Seniors can often find themselves in crisis when confronted with disappointment, frustration, or feelings of fear. Thus, the counselors develop close relationships with the students, and students are comfortable seeking counsel on many topics.

The counseling office knows improvement is possible in the areas of identification of students who will struggle academically upon acceptance and matriculation to the 9-12 building. Counselors use a variety of tools, including the Canvas learning management system, to track student grades and progress. The Dropout Detective tool in Canvas allows counselors to see when students have below passing marks in any classes. Class placement can also be a challenge; without remedial classes it can be difficult to help some students find placement at levels appropriate for their backgrounds. The use of teacher recommendations in the scheduling process works to help students find appropriate placement if transitioning from our 8<sup>th</sup> grade and in the 9-12 building, but if the student is new to the community then they will often go through many levels to find a good fit academically.

The use of a messaging system has made it easier to safely communicate with students and families via text messaging allowing for faster response time to important issues and communication. The counseling office also has an online newsletter that is released bi-weekly and updated on the Upper School counseling website in real time as new information regarding events and points of interest to families are received.

**Strengths:**

1. Counselors and administrators within and across buildings collaborate on programming, student concerns, and best practices to keep communication open and available for all.
2. Counselors build strong rapport with students and families allowing them to best serve the student and his/her needs.
3. Counselors treat all students with respect and as the individuals they are. There is no one-size-fits all approach, and every situation is viewed from a place of uniqueness.
4. Counselors address needs of all students regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, learning abilities, or religious preference. We treat all students with compassion and meet them where they are mentally, academically, physically, and spiritually.

**Challenges:**

1. Across all levels and buildings, there is an increasing need to address students' social-emotional and mental health concerns.
2. At all levels time constraints and daily schedules make meeting with students individually and in groups difficult. At the lower levels due to students' schedules and at the 9-12 timeframe because of lost class time.
3. Communication of information between different parts of a student's success team.
4. Identifying and supporting students who do not fit the typical academic CHCA model.
5. Although it seems the families are aware of the range and scope of services offered through the CHCA Counseling Office, the faculty do not seem as aware or impressed as noted in the constituent survey.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Counselors will continue to create a trusting and caring environment that facilitates building strong rapport and relationships with students and families.
2. Continue to find outside agencies with which our families can be referred as significant mental health issues arise.
3. Educate faculty and staff to the different services offered by the counseling office in order to help them better utilize the counselors to service students.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. Skill Scan Written Summary Example
3. CHCA Counseling Webpage
4. CHCA 4-Year Plan

**Submitted by:**

Kara Ussery, Upper School 7-12 Guidance and Counseling Department Head

## 23b. College Counseling

### Overview:

The goal of the college counseling team in the MSL building is to guide students and families through a college search, application and selection process tailored to the individual needs and desires of each student and his family. The process is increasingly anxiety-filled, and the college counselors try to ease this by helping families determine colleges that are strong fits academically, spiritually, socially, and financially. This process is often the first time a student has heard a hard “no” and experienced a disappointment that cannot be remedied. The counselors have sought to normalize the “no,” by helping students have balanced lists that include a variety of schools including those that might result in that “no” for each student. The college counseling staff includes three college counselors reflecting the addition of one counselor in the past two years. The counselors divide students alphabetically, keeping the same students for almost 3 years. The caseload for the college counselors is approximately 120 to 1 which is far below the national average of 482 per counselor, and in line with or ahead of our same city competitors.

The college counselors have been chosen specifically for their knowledge and talents within the college counseling field, with over 59 years of combined experience. Each counselor maintains close relationships with different college admission professionals and a deep understanding of the nuances of college admissions. CHCA has seen a 100% turnover of the counseling staff including the college counselors, office management, and registrar position in the past 5 years. At times this has left families questioning the quality and consistency of the counseling program in general and the college counseling program specifically.

The counseling office moved to a much improved and larger space two years ago. While this move has improved the overall ability for the counseling office to function while providing families with an inviting environment, it has removed the counseling staff from the main traffic flow in the building making the counselors’ visibility less than optimal. Students, faculty, and administrators have to be intentional in seeking them out. Seniors will go the extra mile to get questions answered, but that does not typically extend to the other classes, reducing much of the counselors’ interactions to email.

Starting in grades 7-8, counselors introduce students to Naviance, an online college search tool utilized by the counseling office. Counselors encourage students to utilize this tool for keeping track of activities, awards, and volunteer opportunities. Parents are also invited to coffees at which counselors answer questions about the college counseling program, academics, and how those relate to one another. Working with students at the younger upper school grades helps them to see the counselors as allies and advocates as they transition to the MSL 9-12 building. Grade 9 is largely a transitional year whose focus is based upon helping students achieve at their personal best academically, socially, and spiritually. Counselors work with freshmen families to help students acclimate to the increased workload and expectations. Freshmen continue to interact with Naviance, engage a series of interest and personality inventories, and begin a basic college search. Freshmen also take several tests, including the PACT, to build familiarity with standardized college entrance exams.



Students transition to their full-time college counselor in November of the sophomore year. At this time students complete the Strong's Interest Inventory College Edition, sample report attached. This report will be used as the basis for the sophomore meeting that is held with the student and family in the spring and coupled with academic information to begin the conversation about college major and career possibilities. This is used in conjunction with the Skill Scan inventory, an interactive tool that helps students identify strengths. When coupled with information from the Strong's Interest Inventory, students gain a deeper understanding of self and potential majors. All sophomores take the PSAT to introduce them to the format of the SAT and prepare them for the NMSQT test the next fall. As part of the college-readiness process, counselors host an informational evening meeting for parents focused solely on the college process, a test interpretation and scheduling roundtable, as well as a coffee designed to allow parents to ask questions in a more informal setting.

By junior year, much of the responsibility for communication with counselors has been shifted to the student. The counselors work closely with juniors from the beginning of the year as they navigate what is commonly referred to as "the most important year" in the college admission cycle. The students and families are expected to attend an evening event that includes a panel of 8 different college admission professionals from a variety of schools. This gives families an inside view of the college application process from the admission professionals' perspective. Families receive a junior year timeline at this event; expectations include completion of a student and parent questionnaire and at least two college visits, followed by individual student and family meetings. It is during this meeting families begin to make potential college application list.

All juniors take the PSAT: NMSQT in the fall, and each year several CHCA students qualify as National Merit Semi-Finalists. Because students have trended toward the ACT more in recent years, all juniors take an ACT during the late winter of the junior year. Taking the test during the school day at their own school often removes some of the stress and anxiety surrounding standardized testing and allows the students to perform at their academic best. This test assists families and the counselors in assuring all students have at least one valid standardized test score usable for the college application process prior to senior year.

To minimize the stress of senior year, counselors offer an application bootcamp during three days in early August. Most students will complete at least one full application during this time. Throughout junior and senior years, counselors help students identify possible schools using several data points, including testing information, academic information, as well as admissions information specific to CHCA.

Counselors also conduct six full-day application workshops for students during the fall semester. These occur during block schedule days to maximize available time. Counselors also schedule classroom visits with seniors and require a one-on-one meeting with the college counselor before any transcripts or support documents are sent to colleges. Counselors encourage parents to participate in several parent only events that detail the process and timeline of the senior year. Counselors also host a spring event for parents, giving hints and tips on letting go and supporting their students as they make a college choice. Counselors work with families concerning boundaries during this process and act as a buffer when students and parents may not agree.

Throughout the college counseling experience, counselors develop and publish a bi-weekly email newsletter, updated in real-time via the Upper School Counseling website. Counselors all post notes from all events in Naviance so those unable to attend have an opportunity to engage with material. Any important events that occur are also announced and explained via an email blast as well as using the Remind system to text students a reminder.

The Counseling Office also hosts over 100 college counselors who visit the school each fall, and students have the opportunity to talk individually or in a small group with each of them. These visits are advertised via announcements each day as well as through the College Visit portion of Naviance. The CHCA Counseling Office also works in a consortium with three other independent schools to host the Cincinnati Suburban College Fair, which boasts close to 180 schools in attendance. This gives students the opportunity to talk with an even wider range of colleges than those who come to CHCA.

**Strengths:**

1. The Counseling Office staff brings a wealth of experience and connections with colleges/universities that directly benefits CHCA students in the college search process.
2. The intentional hiring of a third college counselor reduced the freshmen counselor's load and allowed college counselors more time for developing relationships with families and students, making the college counseling experience one that is truly individualized.
3. The counselors' ability to build a rapport with students is very strong.
4. The counselors have distinct skill sets which are put to use in creating programming for families and allows for a variety of insight and advice when asked.

**Challenges:**

1. Lack of participation in large group sessions: While the counselors offer six different opportunities for parent engagement concerning the college process, each program garners not more than 20% participation, rendering them ineffectual in disseminating information. This can limit the effectiveness of the individual meetings and their intent to focus specifically on the student.
2. Lack of visibility: Counselors noticed a decline in "drop in" traffic by students and faculty when the space was moved to a less visible area. While the counselors do not want the office to become a hang out, it is nice when students feel comfortable coming to the office for a friendly hello or to find some comfort in a busy day.
3. Role ambiguity and office perception: Teachers and parents often view the counselors as administrators with the ability to make unilateral decisions. They become frustrated when the counselors then need to take concerns higher, thereby extending the amount of time it takes to get a decision.
4. Due to turnover in prior years, there is anxiety within the community concerning the effectual nature of the college counseling program, as well as a hesitancy to trust the opinions and knowledge of the counselors.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Develop an online video streaming library which will eliminate the need for large group events which disseminate general information. Families can then watch them at their convenience prior to individual meetings.

**Addenda:**

1. Upper School Counseling Webpage
2. School Profile
3. Strong's Interest Inventory Sample
4. Skill Scan Result Overview
5. Panel Agenda
6. Junior Year Timeline
7. Score Testing Data by Class
8. State of College Counseling Report
9. myUS Counseling Newsletter Webpage
10. Student to Counselor Ratio Report of 10 years

**Submitted by:**

Kara Ussery, Upper School 7-12 Guidance and Counseling Department Head  
Kathy Baxter, Upper Elementary 4-6 and Upper School 7-8 Counselor  
Tracy Early, Freshman Counselor  
Jamie Rueger, College Counselor, I-R  
DeAnne Vallo, Armleder School Admissions  
Carmen Swedes, Upper School 7-12, Math Teacher  
Dorie Cucinotta – Head School Nurse

## **24. Student Services: Academic and International Support**

### **24a. K-12 Student Support**

#### **Overview:**

CHCA strives to provide an excellent college preparatory environment that aligns with its mission and core values. With that in mind, student support personnel, classroom teachers, and administrators are very sensitive to the fact that some students will not perform at the same academic rates as their peers or demonstrate the same levels of success in each classroom. For some families, Student Support Services are an essential supplementary component that facilitate the success of their child in CHCA's rigorous academic program. The goal of Student Services is to provide assistance to students with learning differences, ADHD, language disorders, visual and hearing impairments, psychological disorders, other health impairments, and a variety of other needs to aid them in recognizing their own strengths and challenges and provide strategies to foster their independence, lead them to a path of successful learning, and offer a skill-set which can be employed throughout their life beyond the halls of school. In addition, the program seeks to assist communication and collaboration between teachers and parents, aid in the identification process, and update teacher knowledge with the most current research pertinent to learning differences, ADHD, reading disorders, and a variety of other recognized learning disabilities. The Intervention Specialists, classroom teachers, administrators, nurses, parents, other professionals, and students form a partnership to evaluate each individual's progress and create a program to address the unique needs of each child. This program is a fee-based service at the Upper and Lower Schools, with Armleder not charging for Support Services. Financial aid is available for families who qualify.

The Constituent Survey results for Student Support Services show high favorability among current constituents, with statistically significant differences above the ISACS benchmarks: parents (73%+ / ISACS 51%), faculty (79%+ / ISACS 44%), students (64%+ / ISACS 56%), staff administration (87%+ / ISACS 53%), trustees (93%+ / ISACS 52%), and parents of alumni (71%+ / ISACS 47%). Faculty approval ratings for the K-3 Lower School, 4-6 Upper Elementary, 7-8 Upper School, and the 9-12 Upper School are significantly higher than the ISACS benchmarks. This high faculty approval rating is due in part to having a group of dedicated Intervention Specialists teaming with the general education teachers, participating in team meetings and supporting the regular classrooms.

At Armleder School in the PK-3 program, the faculty approval (60%+) and the parent approval (75%+) ratings are still significantly above the ISACS benchmark. However, for the Armleder 4-6 program, while statistically meeting the ISACS benchmark, the faculty approval (43%+) and the parent approval (55%+) is significantly lower than both constituent ratings at the Lower School and the Upper School. This statistic could be due in part to the lack of an Intervention Specialist to support these students, teachers, and parents.

**a. Lower School PK-3 Student Support**

CHCA's Lower School employs one full-time Intervention Specialist for grades 1-3, serving 25 students. The Lower School employs one full-time administrator who also oversees kindergarten student support needs, serving approximately two students. The Lower School employs one full-time Academic Language Therapist who utilizes an Orton-Gillingham based program called Take Flight, serving five students in grades 1 and 2. Student support serves a total of 32 students, which is 14% of the population.

A goal for student support at the Lower School is to identify students with learning differences early. This allows for early intervention, offering strategies and accommodations, which help students become more successful in the classroom long-term. Classroom teachers and parents are typically the first to recognize a student is having difficulty meeting the demands of the academic curriculum. They partner with the Intervention Specialist to put classroom strategies in place and monitor the progress of the student. If the coordinated strategies that are implemented are not enough to bring about the desired academic results, the Intervention Specialist begins targeted intervention services that involve a contractual agreement and develops a student learning plan. The student learning plan is a working document with input from the Intervention Specialist, the classroom teacher, the parents, and other educational professionals. It guides the student's educational experience and offers strategies and accommodations to be utilized by the student, parents, classroom teacher, and Intervention Specialist. Instructional approaches might include individual attention, small group support, accommodations for academic work, and test proctoring. In some cases, the Intervention Specialist will work with the students in the classroom setting to support teacher instruction, work with small groups of students, and assist with research projects and writing activities.

At the Lower School, a student's progress is continually assessed throughout the quarter via communication with parents and teachers. A review of progress is conducted quarterly via written report. Services may be amended at this time based on student's progress and/or additional needs. At the end of each school year, a transition meeting is held to review and update the Student Learning Plan and the Intervention Specialist conveys this information to the new team of teachers at the start of the following school year.

**b. Lower School 4-6**

In CHCA's Upper Elementary, there are two full-time Intervention Specialists, serving 41 students in these grades. The Upper Elementary also employs one part-time assistant and one full-time Academic Language Therapist who serves four students in grades 4-6 and utilizes the same Take Flight program as the Lower Elementary. Student Support serves a total of 45 students, which is approximately 20% of the population.

At this level, Student Support serves as a bridge between the academic skill-set built in the younger grades and the independence required in the upper grades. Intervention Specialists team closely with parents and teachers in order to identify and support the needs of students. A student learning plan is developed in collaboration with teachers, parents, and the Intervention Specialist. This document is a working document and highlights a student's

strengths, areas of need, and strategies to best support them in and out of the classroom. These students attend all general education classes but are supported through a combination of three service options: 1.) *Classroom inclusion*—Intervention Specialists go into students' core classes and assist with general education curriculum. They partner with the classroom teacher to provide a smaller teacher/student ratio, give more individualized instruction when necessary, and can better support students with the academic curriculum. 2.) *Test proctoring*—Test proctoring allows student to take assessments in a small group setting with extended time and test-strategy instruction provided by the Intervention Specialist. 3.) *Guided study hall*—Provides students with a structured classroom setting where the Intervention Specialist monitors work as well as assists with assignment management and homework completion. It also gives the opportunity for re-teaching core content when necessary.

At the Upper Elementary, a student's progress is continually assessed through their daily work in their general education classes and reported on throughout the quarter via communication with parents and teachers. Services may be amended at quarter's end based on student's progress and/or additional needs. At the end of each school year, a transition meeting is held to review and update the Student Learning Plan and the Intervention Specialist conveys this information to the new team of teachers at the start of the following school year.

### **c. Armleder PK-6**

CHCA's Armleder School employs a part-time Title I teacher through federal funding administered through Cincinnati Public Schools. This teacher is assigned on a yearly basis to work with 21 students primarily in grades K-3, with a few students in grade 4, in identified areas such as Reading and Math. The Lower Elementary (grades K-3) also uses volunteers and instructional aides to help tutor students in small groups and one-on-one settings. The Upper Elementary (grades 4-6) uses an advisory bell period, operated by the general education teachers, which incorporates tutoring for specific curricular areas daily. The after-school program also aides in facilitating an environment where students in all grade levels who are having difficulties in certain subjects can be tutored and supported. All kindergarteners and all students in grades 4-6 receive support, in order to equip them with the skillset they need for further academic success. 73 students in grades K-6 receive one or more of the above services, approximately 69% of the student population.

Initial identification of students who may need support services begin with conversations focused on student academic performance and include the building principal, support services teacher, the classroom teacher, and sometimes the parent or other school personnel. In these initial conversations the school seeks to understand whether the student's performance warrants a formal evaluation. Evaluation may include understanding what previous interventions have taken place, student performance on classroom assessments, standardized testing, anecdotes about performance and student response, what the parent observes, and other data. The public school district in which the Armleder building is located is responsible for sending personnel to meet with us to see if an educational evaluation is warranted, and if it is warranted, then they will proceed with testing. Armleder School does not service individualized education plans (IEP's) but does provide a Student Learning Plan which lists ways in which the

Title 1 teacher will work with the student, strategies the teacher can use to better assist the student, and a description of how progress will be assessed. No fees are charged for these services.

#### **d. Upper School 7-12**

In CHCA's Upper School, there are three full-time Intervention Specialists, serving 82 students in these grades. The Upper School also employs one part-time support assistant to serve in grades 7-8. The Upper Elementary Academic Language Therapist does provide Take Flight service to one student in grade 7. Student Support serves a total of 83 students, which is approximately 13% of the population.

The emphasis of the Student Support Program at the Upper School is helping build independence and empower students to own their academic and personal success. Thus, the Intervention Specialists employ an academic coaching model to help students begin to intentionally prepare for life beyond high school. The focus is on in-depth and ongoing dialogue between classroom teachers, Intervention Specialists, counselors, students, and parents. The Intervention Specialist gathers data and alongside the student, assesses the student's needs. Through this collaboration, these individuals will derive and execute a coordinated set of strategies for implementation at school and at home, and this plan is documented through a contractual agreement between the parents and CHCA. The contractual agreement can include the following services: 1.) *Case management*—a daily guided study hall; classroom learning supported by an Intervention Specialist; academic and skill-based coaching; and ongoing monitoring of student progress. 2.) *Accountability check*—a brief meeting between the Intervention Specialist and student; available to students who have demonstrated adequate independence and management of student-life; the frequency of these meetings based upon individual need. 3.) *Accommodation plan*—with the help of the teachers, administration, parents, and student, a plan will be developed for students with a diagnosed disability who have the proper documentation and evidence of need for these accommodations. It is the responsibility of the student, teachers, and Intervention Specialists to implement this plan. Throughout all levels of service, the intervention specialist maintains the use of the coaching model to encourage and empower students as they assume responsibility for their educational experience, and as they cultivate the independence required for college and beyond.

Student progress is continually assessed via the Canvas learning management system (LMS), between parents, teachers, intervention specialists, and students. The intervention specialist and students set goals each quarter, identify and employ strategies for achieving these goals, communicate progress to parents, and assess the effectiveness of these strategies as they move through each quarter. Services may be amended based on a student's progress and/or additional needs at the beginning and end of each academic quarter. The intervention specialist holds transition meetings at the end of the school year and conveys any pertinent information to the new team of classroom teachers at the start of the following school year.



**Strengths:**

1. Collaboration: Students' needs are addressed through a team-approach, demonstrating the value placed upon collaboration between all involved parties. In addition, the team of Intervention Specialists lends their expertise to the school, in order to offer new insight and perspectives which can enhance the classroom experience for all students.
2. Individualized program: Students are seen through a whole-child lens, highlighting the unique talents and gifts of the child, at the same time the individual needs of the student are also being recognized. The program focuses on teaching children about themselves and building a self-awareness so they can realize their strengths, recognize their challenges, and learn how to overcome them.
3. Communication: There is an importance placed on communicating the strengths and needs of each student, as well as what works and what does not, to all parties involved in the education of the child. Not only is communication an area of focus among the adults, but students are also taught how to best communicate their needs to those invested in the process.

**Challenges:**

1. Armleder does not have the support of a full-time intervention specialist or other dedicated Student Support Services team members, beyond the part-time Title 1 teacher. This puts much of the responsibility of providing services, training volunteers, monitoring progress, and coordinating services with the Title 1 employee on the regular education teachers.
2. Many students who have disabilities require the outside assistance of other professionals. Full educational evaluations, speech and language services, physical or occupational therapies, for example, are a few areas where families have to acquire a professional outside of the school in order to meet the needs of their child. If information needs to be shared between the professionals and CHCA's faculty, parents might be required to pay for this individual to come in and meet with student's educational team.
3. Student and class schedules create a challenge for Student Support Services. The Intervention Specialists see students from various classrooms, grade levels, and sometimes even buildings, all having unique schedules. It is a priority that students receive the services of the Intervention Specialist, but also that they do not miss the majority of instruction from the classroom teacher or the rich educational experience which comes from being in a classroom with peers. In addition, the scheduling conflicts which occur gives the Support team very little time for collaboration with each other.
4. There is not a clearly defined scope and sequence specific to Student Support Services, which would identify the skills necessary for student success as they progress through the various grade levels and across buildings.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Provide professional development to teachers and Intervention Specialists which will educate on topics such as ADHD, learning disabilities, sensory challenges, children who have faced trauma, dyslexia, etc., how these can impact education, and how we can

provide support in the context of the regular classroom and Support Services to help students who face diverse situations. Through these professional developments, offer real and practical methods the teachers and Intervention Specialists can utilize to enhance the educational experience for students in their classrooms.

2. Have individuals from the Student Support Team meet with administration and/or faculty from Armleder to understand how we can enhance and further reinforce the teachers and the Support Services at the Armleder campus.
3. Schedule one meeting per quarter for the Support Services Team to collaborate.
4. Investigate options on how to better coordinate the schedule for students and support faculty. Visit other schools who have successful programs to gain insight and understanding into ideas which might also work at CHCA.
5. Further train and/or employ other Academic Language Therapists to provide Take Flight therapy for students with language-based disabilities, such as dyslexia.
6. Develop scope and sequence with specific Student Services' vision, skills-based standards, and benchmarks in order to establish a department cohesiveness.

**Addenda:**

1. Student Services Brochures
2. Lower School Referral Packet
3. Lower School Quarterly Status Report
4. Lower School Student Learning Plan
5. Upper Elementary Contract
6. *Take Flight* Program Description
7. Upper School Contract
8. Upper School Accommodation Plan Guidelines
9. Upper School Accommodation Plan
10. Transition Meeting Notes
11. Title One Services Document
12. Financial Aid Request Form

**Submitted by:**

Jennifer Rogers, Intervention Specialist, Upper School, Committee Co-Chair  
Kara Ussery, College Counselor, Upper School, Committee Co-Chair  
Joyce Smith, Intervention Specialist, Upper School  
Susan Vanderkolk, Intervention Specialist, Upper School  
Emily Beuerlein, Intervention Specialist, Upper Elementary  
Tess Scholz, Intervention Specialist, Upper Elementary  
Rachel Miller, Academic Language Therapist  
Tiffany Clayton, Academic Language Therapist  
Christy Acheampong, Classroom Teacher, Armleder Campus  
Kim Vincent, International Program, Director  
Emily Rempe, International Program, Student Engagement Coordinator

## **24b. Student Services: International Students Program (ISP)**

### **Overview:**

The International Student Program seeks to advance the mission and vision of CHCA by offering the benefits of an academically excellent Christ-centered education to students from all over the world. Since the program's formal beginning in 2011, students have come from over 20 countries. During the 2018-2019 school year 32 students have come from China, Taiwan, Guatemala, Bulgaria, India, and Kyrgyzstan to attend CHCA. We offer a full immersion program for students who demonstrate English language fluency and have already demonstrated a high level of academic achievement, prerequisites for success in a rigorous college preparatory environment in the United States. CHCA allows students to experience not only academic opportunities, but also the social and cultural immersion in an American educational setting that often differs tremendously from their school experiences in their home countries.

CHCA is distinct in that it has a full ISP department to provide students with the best possible experience once they're here. The Director of Programming leads the ISP program and is responsible for admissions, recruitment of students, marketing, consistency of programming, training of faculty, and the overall department budget. The director works with governmental departments, including the Department of Homeland Security, to ensure compliance with immigration laws and best practices for oversight of students studying from abroad. The director also works with outside agencies to connect with students' parents abroad to help them feel as much a part of the CHCA community as possible. All of this work is part of the larger task of setting the vision for ongoing improvement and continuance of a thriving international program.

The department's Student Engagement Coordinator works to ensure that students are integrating into the overall school community, helping students make friendship connections with established CHCA students, facilitating leadership development with American and international students. The Coordinator maintains close relationships with students to help them make the emotional adjustment of coming to America and being away from families overseas. The Coordinator works with host families as well to make sure the students are placed with the best possible fit while they are here. She consistently provides follow up, training, and ongoing support and communication for host families in our community. Overall, the Coordinator's goal is to empower students as learners, in the spirit of CHCA's core value of developing the whole child.

The ISP Academic Coordinator teaches the ISP integration course, as an everyday touchpoint for students developing their academic and social skills in an American high school setting. The Foundations of Faith and Culture class is one example of the onboarding experience to provide students with the tools to engage the faith-based mission of CHCA. With a focus on core life-skills—ethics and integrity, elements of navigating Western culture, and the basic frameworks of religion and faith—the Foundations class helps students develop the tools to navigate life in our faith-based academic environment, as well as basic skills they will need to be successful beyond life at CHCA. As the key liaison between the international students and their grades, the

Academic Coordinator also conducts daily progress and grade checks, intervention with students as required, as well as fostering newly-discovered opportunities for students to connect with their teachers—self-advocacy skills that are often difficult for students to manage on their own. In turn, managing students' stress levels and their high expectations, often perfectionistic, is a regular part of the Academic Coordinator's work. She provides academic summary reporting to students' families, often utilizing the support of third-party agencies like iPERC for translation and support.

Finally, a part-time program assistant provides administrative and structural support, helping to manage admissions tasks, document compliance with DHS, and providing general support to all the members of the ISP team. She conducts research into best practices to execute the work of ISP coordination. Providing academic support and coordinating orientations with new ISP students are among the many support functions she provides.

The ISP program looks at a number of success measures as the program continues to grow. International students from the program have 100% matriculation rates to university, whether here in the United States or abroad. The program is also able to maintain sustainable enrollment numbers while maintaining high admissions standards. The financial model of the program does include the ability to scholarship students from underrepresented countries who could otherwise not afford to study abroad. Building and growing the diversity of student representation is a pillar of the program and contributes to the strength of the school community overall. However, this also taxes the current department budget as we see increasing need for scholarships from countries less represented in our program.

Some limiting factors also persist. International students' inability to participate in OHSA sanctioned sports limits their ability to create connections with other students. We also struggle with students' access to clubs and extra-curricular activities sponsored by the school. Overall, staying ahead of market trends in international education, maintaining student pipelines, and managing the expectations of families overseas are ongoing challenges. Maintaining technology instruction given the high expectations of families overseas also presents challenges. Overall, we look forward to meeting these challenges head on as we work to prepare our international students for a bright future.

**Strengths:**

1. The International Student Program continues to grow and provide students from abroad a high-quality Christ-centered education.
2. The structure of the ISP department provides high levels of support from our students in a way that distinguishes CHCA from other American school programs.
3. The financial model and generous donations allow us to offer scholarships to students to increase the diversity of our student pool.
4. The school's overall support for recruitment of students from abroad, including travel to countries overseas to meet with prospective and schools, greatly contributes to the ongoing success of the program.

**Challenges:**

1. Global events, declines in overseas markets, and trends that impact enrollment in American schools generally from overseas are creating competition in overseas venues that have traditionally been pipelines for enrollment at CHCA.
2. Limitations to international student access to state-sanctioned sports, extra-curriculars, and other activities also limits connections with other students and can make it difficult for students to take part in the larger community.
3. Helping the students make the adjustment to an American instructional environment is an ongoing challenge for the department.
4. Maintaining a direct relationship with sending families can be difficult, particularly at points when third-party agencies wish to step into a liaison space and speak for the school.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Explore ways to provide more intensive social-emotional support for our international students as they not only manage the transition to American schooling, but also manage growing anxiety levels endemic to students generally.
2. Explore ways to open more extra-curricular opportunities to international students.
3. Continue to grow the existing pool of reliable host families to meet the demands of our growing program.
4. Move toward a system in which all communication on student progress will go directly to the student's natural family as opposed to using third-party agencies to carry that messaging forward.
5. Continue to conduct in-person travel to prospect countries in order to further relationships with existing and potential CHCA families as we work to grow the international program.

**Addenda:**

1. ISP History for ISACS Report
2. Course Syllabus: Foundations of Faith and Culture
3. International Student Program Handbook
4. International Student Contract
5. International Student Program Webpage
6. ISP Application
7. Host Family Handbook and Application

**Submitted by:**

Kim Vincent, International Student Program Director

Emily Rempe, International Student Program Engagement Coordinator

## **25. Student Services: Health Care & Records**

### **Overview**

CHCA offers full time nursing care in dedicated clinic space by licensed Registered Nurses to over 1,400 students in each of the four campus building locations with an approximate nurse to student ratio of 1:450 for the North Campus buildings and 1:150 at the Armleder location. This is well within the recommendations set forth by the National Association of School Nurses which promotes an ideal nurse to student ratio of 1:750 (NASN, 2018). The nurse's primary responsibility is to serve as a health and safety advocate for students during the academic day in partnership with parents, the student's private medical provider and the student's teachers to facilitate health, healing, and readiness to learn. The nursing staff also works collaboratively with the Ohio Department of Health and Hamilton County Public Health Department to ensure that parents and students are aware of and in compliance with the recommendations and mandates of these regulatory agencies such as immunization compliance and vision and hearing screening. The nursing team offers faculty, staff, and students' multiple educational offerings throughout the year and serves as a key member of the schools' safety team to address natural and other emergencies occurring during the school day. Nurses coordinate the health care of students living with both chronic and acute illness and develop plans of care to prevent, mitigate or treat communicable disease outbreaks as well as any accidents or injuries that may present in the academic setting. The nursing team feels most fortunate to work alongside faculty and staff in ways that promote the school's mission, vision, and values as they create opportunities for students to verbalize their feelings, pray about their concerns, and learn effective communication strategies to self-advocate in ways that promote healthy growth and development.

### **Student Records:**

Creating and maintaining student health records is the responsibility of the nursing staff. Record care includes creating a confidential health file on every enrolled (active) student that contains the required Authorization for Emergency Transportation form for K-12 students, the required Authorization for Emergency Transportation form for Preschool students, the required Preschool Health History Form, the Permission for Medication Administration form for K-12 students, Permission for Medication Administration form for Preschool students as well as submitted student immunization records and vision and hearing records both submitted by private health care providers and generated through school screenings as well as any written or electronic nursing notes that contain the assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of delivered care. Student health records for currently enrolled students are cumulative and will follow the student from year to year to promote continuity of care among the nursing staff. The active records are stored in locked file cabinets in each nursing clinic. When a student leaves the school because of graduation or withdrawal, the records (inactive) are archived in locked storage for 7 years. Parents complete a records request form to have immunization records forwarded to another school when a student's enrollment is no longer active. The following four areas encapsulate the responsibilities of Health Services in the area of Student Records: (1) Coordinating the collection, management and review of the Authorization for Emergency Treatment form required of all students at the start of each academic year to assess

the health needs of the student population, plan subsequent meetings with parents to better understand more complex medical and safety needs of select students and create Emergency Action Plans to guide delivery of onsite health care during the academic day as indicated; (2) Collecting and checking the accuracy of all Permission for Medication Administration forms to ensure the timely and safe delivery of physician orders for a students' medication administration needs during the school day and document all medication administration events; (3) Review and documentation of all student immunization records to assess each student's compliance with the Ohio Department of Health's Annual Immunization Summary and the filing of the required annual compliance report to the state as well as, following through with outside requests for student immunization records for students who have transferred; (4) Maintaining electronic charting records on all student visits to document safe, quality and evidence-based nursing care (5) Coordinate on site, state mandated vision and hearing screening events, document findings both in individual student health records as well as report data collectively to the Ohio Department of health, generate written communication to parents for all non-passing students and initiate written referral for professional follow up.

#### **Student Care:**

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy Nursing Staff strives to provide a variety of programs and opportunities that promote a healthy learning environment for students and staff during the academic year. One of the most important services offered by an on-site nursing clinic is "walk-in" triage care that provides open door clinic hours during the school day to care for both scheduled and unscheduled student needs including, but not limited to: (1) Daily and "as needed-PRN" medication administration; (2) Skin assessment and dressing changes as well as emergency first aid for acute injuries such as cuts, lacerations, abrasions, nose bleeds and burns; (3) Musculoskeletal assessment of symptoms related to sprains, strains and trauma from playground injuries as well as mobility and sports injury ice therapy; (4) Respiratory assessment including asthma care, shortness of breath and inhaler education; (5) Severe food and other allergy care and education as well as Epinephrine preparedness; (6) Care of gastric upset; (7) Neurological assessment related to migraines, headaches, head injuries, post-concussion assessment and care of the seizure patient (8) Eye trauma and routine contact care; (9) Menstrual cramping and other causes of physical discomfort; (10) Management of symptoms secondary to fever, colds, congestion, seasonal allergies and flu; (11) Oral care secondary to tooth loss and orthodontic needs; (12) Ear and body piercing infection assessment; (13) Hypotension and fainting incidents; (14) Hair checks and lice management; (15) Endocrinology symptom management related to diabetes, along with blood sugar checks; (16) Disability assessment and advocating for student accommodations related to promote learning and classroom success, (17) Assessment and communications about communicable disease risk or outbreaks both internally with Administrators, staff, parents and externally as required by law to public health agencies, (18) Overseeing medication preparation for all school day field trips and mission trips as well as any overnight experiences including camps and travel abroad; (19) Implementing assessment of Tuberculosis risk per Hamilton County Public Health recommendations in our environment as well as education about such risks; (20) Coordination for release to home or emergency medical services for any of the above as indicated.



In addition to providing acute direct care out of the Health Clinic, long term programming that promotes the healthy growth and development of students as well as the education and training of faculty, are planned and implemented. Some of these programs include: (1) Participating in inter-disciplinary conferences with parents and staff when health needs impact student outcome such as a student's need for glasses, hearing aids, desk placement, food limitations, use of crutches for mobilization, as well as explanations of any medical alerts or limitations that have the potential to impact learning; (2) Delivering age appropriate student education programs on puberty and normal adolescence development; (3) Providing Elementary student programming on correct hand washing technique; (4) Volunteering nursing coverage at key school events such as the Homecoming Festival, After Prom party and Graduation ceremony; (5) Initiating emergency preparedness training and updates for students and staff relating to fire, tornado, lock down and shelter in place drills; (6) Coordinating free glasses for Armleder School students in need, through the One Sight program; (7) Serving as Nurse Preceptors to nursing students attending the University Of Cincinnati College of Nursing; (8) Providing the annual OSHA training for faculty and staff including recognition of and protection against blood borne pathogens, employing universal precautions, early recognition of severe life threatening food allergies and emergency treatment of allergies with Epinephrine use and 911 protocol, as well as the early signs and symptoms of emergency distress for students diagnosed with seizures, asthma and diabetes; (9); Promoting the annual CPR class open to all faculty and staff including adult and pediatric cardiac resuscitation, use of the automatic defibrillator and choking help; (10) Coordinating the annual mammography van on-site for all female staff and parents with education of the importance of annual screening; (11) Scheduling the annual on-site Employee Flu Immunization Clinic and educating staff regarding the flu vaccine's important role in the prevention and spread of disease.

**Strengths:**

1. CHCA is committed to hiring nurses with a four-year or higher professional degree (not unlicensed personnel or health aids) to deliver direct hands on care as well as implement a multitude of educational programs that foster health literacy, self-care advocacy, work place safety and faith building in in the school community recognizing that Baccalaureate degreed nurses bring a broad based liberal arts background and an evidenced-based Nursing Science foundation to address the many complex health needs arising daily in a multi-cultural school setting.
2. Nurses utilize the nursing process to create individualized Emergency Action Plans for those students living with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, asthma, severe allergies and seizures as an important communication tool to inform and train selected staff to understand potential barriers to learning these needs may present as well as how to rapidly respond to health and safety emergencies.

**Challenges:**

1. While the four CHCA campus buildings is fortunate to have designated clinic space for student care, and while two clinics (Founders and AS) have been renovated and enlarged to include in-suite bathrooms, space configurations in the EBL and MSL clinics still lack direct access to bathrooms for increased student privacy and safety.

2. Finding adequate time and resources to expand upon current K-12 anti-drug and alcohol programming is a challenge, as we see the need to include content on medication safety, starting in the lower school, as well as the dangers of pain medication misuse and Opioid abuse to upper school students.
3. Psycho-Social-Emotional care is currently provided by the building nurse and lay staff on the Armleder and EBL Campus. With documented national, regional and local increases in depression and anxiety diagnoses, Armleder and EBL have seen increases of students experiencing mental health concerns and are working to address student needs in this area without the aid of an on-site licensed mental health professional.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Prioritize allocating space and resources for the purpose of reconfiguring or expanding the EBL and MSL health clinic space to include designated student only, private bathroom, and facilities.
2. Create a multidisciplinary committee of Science Teachers, Nurses and Administrators to develop and implement a K-12, age appropriate, anti-drug and alcohol curriculum to include medication safety for the lower school population and prescription drug abuse and Opioid addiction education to the upper school population that is integrated into the health and science programming.
3. Look at current employment and staffing of mental health professionals and consider rotating staff from the MSL and Founders Campuses to the AS and EBL campus
4. Explore the possibility of community partners to provide both anti-drug educational programs and on-site mental health care as part of a larger comprehensive plan to provide programming and services.

**Addenda:**

1. Health Records Management and Retention Policy (hard copy available in building clinics)
2. Authorization for Medical Emergency Transportation form, K-12 Students
3. Authorization for Medical Emergency Transportation form, Preschool Students Only
4. Preschool Only Health History Form
5. Permission for Medication Administration form, K-12 Students
6. Permission for Medication Administration form, Preschool Students Only

**Submitted by:**

Dorian Cucinotta, RN, MSN, LSN, NCSN- Lead Nurse PK-12

Stephanie Loranzen, RN, BSN, Armleder School PK-6

Diane Goebel, B.S. Education, Edyth B Lindner General Curriculum Grade 2 Lower School

Rebecca Ashbrook, RN, MSN, Edyth B Lindner PK to Grade 3 Lower School

Betsy Dodson, M.A. Early Childhood Education, Blake Lindner Thompson Early Childhood Learning Center PK3

Patricia Heath, Project Manager/Payroll

Lori Duke, Accounts Payable/Purchasing Manager

## **26. School Life: Spiritual Life**

### **a. K-12 Outreach & Service**

#### **Overview**

Outreach is realized at every grade level and flows directly from our core value of Christ-Centeredness, as “Christ himself led, served, taught, loved, and lived.” Our service and outreach programming encourages students to put spiritual life principles into practice. From the youngest of our children serving by singing songs to the elderly or making Christmas boxes to send around the world, to our grade 7 and 8 Upper School students who spend a week serving and learning during Service Intersession, and to our high school students who give over 13,000 hours a year to the community, CHCA students are active in reaching out to the community. Our 2019 graduating class averaged 285 volunteer hours per student with over 36,000 hours served during their tenure in the high school, surpassing the school graduation requirement.

CHCA’s constituent groups also recognize service and outreach as pillars of the school’s program and key to our mission and vision. The constituent survey conducted in 2017 indicates the school has a strong commitment to moral values and character development. The vast majority of parents, faculty, and students agree or strongly agree that our school has a caring and community environment. The percentage of our current students rating our community service as excellent or very good is above ISACS benchmark. This is also true of our current parents and faculty, who see the quality and life-changing experiences of our outreach programs at CHCA.

#### **Edyth B. Lindner Elementary and Armleder School Outreach**

Our EBL and Armleder pre-school and elementary schools focus on cultivating the values of service and outreach at the earliest of ages. Teachers integrate service into classroom plans and there are multiple outreach programs that are a focus for an entire division. While we know that the experiences of serving others greatly enrich ones life in many ways, it is hoped that this time will provide three integral opportunities for the students. One is that service projects will supply firsthand the rewards that service can bring which will lead to a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Secondly, it is hoped that introducing students early in their lives to the importance of serving others will help them to see the example that Christ gave us in serving others and therefore make it a priority in their daily lives, not only now but as they grow into adulthood. Finally, we hope to broaden the student’s perspective of the world around them, not only in the city in which they live but globally as well. Each year the service and learning experience foster a strong growth among the students spiritually and academically. Examples of these projects include first graders serving lunch to our local firemen, third grade children serving at Matthew 25 Ministries, and doing “Chores for Chickens,” in which K-Prep students serve at Meadowbrook Care Center via a program and handmade gifts for the residents. Kindergarten students collect small gifts for babies for the Life Forward/Pregnancy Care Center of Cincinnati. Grade 2 students participate in “Cans for a Cause” in which students collect, crush, and recycle aluminum cans. The students earn money to donate to World Vision.

Students write a persuasive essay and vote to decide how to spend the money. All grade levels participate in Samaritan's Purse, providing Christmas gifts for the underprivileged.

### **Lower School 4-6 Outreach**

At CHCA Upper Elementary, many opportunities for outreach continue fostering a servant's attitude. Our goal is to involve students directly with outreach so that when they reach the Upper School, it's already a mindset.

In its first few years of existence, the Upper Elementary begun laying a solid foundation for building-wide service projects that are inspiring. One such project is the "Beary Special Project" for at-risk children in Price Hill. The Upper Elementary also collects books during our book fair for elementary schools that were victims of the fires in California. In various classrooms, students participate in other outreach activities such as Hands Against Hunger or on campus service projects that are peer-to-peer related. Currently the principal is working on a program with our Christian studies teacher that will be incorporated into our Spiritual Life Emphasis Week each spring.

### **Upper School 7-12 Outreach**

One of our signature programs in the Upper School 7-8 is a week-long Service Intersession. Students are meaningfully engaged outside of the school for four days at numerous nonprofits in our city as well as in places such as Red Bird, KY and Monterrey, Mexico. In Monterrey, students volunteer in orphanages with Back2Back Ministries. This cross-cultural opportunity for our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students helps to develop a broader Christian world view while serving some of the poorest of the poor. Our Upper School grades 7-8 also initiate outreach events through Student Council, National Junior Honor Society, and SOS Juniors. These events include penny wars for the Mexican orphanages, Thanksgiving foods for needy families, collecting toys to give to City Gospel Mission for Christmas Store, and recycling. SOS Juniors also offers a weekly after-school volunteer opportunity with grade 9-12 students at a local elementary after school program.

Outreach is a vibrant part of the high school student's experience. Led by an Outreach Coordinator and a part-time assistant, opportunities for the high school students to volunteer are plentiful. While students are required to complete 120 community service hours and two mission projects for graduation, our students go well beyond. Last school year the senior class volunteered an average of 285 hours per person. Fifty-seven students are currently leaders in Student Organized Service (SOS). The student leaders of SOS attend an annual service-learning retreat in the late summer and continue in the school year with monthly leadership meetings to help them plan and lead volunteer opportunities in Greater Cincinnati and beyond. During the school year, SOS offers numerous opportunities each week to volunteer in after-school programs, nursing homes, shelters, home repair programs, and other programs that serve the handicapped, poor, and disadvantaged. In addition to more than thirty Student Organized Service teams, high school students choose from many service immersion experiences each year. Service immersions include local, national, and international service. Currently 157 students are registered to serve on five service immersions during our upcoming January

Intercession program, with an additional 166 students registered for Intercession programs that include a service component. A highlight for students and faculty was a house build in our parking lot in 2018. Led by a leadership team of students and faculty, on one school day over 100 volunteers built the walls of a three-bedroom house in our auxiliary parking lot in partnership with two nonprofit agencies.

At the MSL Campus (grades 9-12), service is not limited to the Outreach Department and is encouraged through other extra-curricular activities. For example, Student Council and NHS have started annual service events including Thanksgiving baskets and Operation Christmas Child. Our athletic teams are encouraged to serve through opportunities such as Volley for the Cure and Miracle League.

**Strengths:**

1. CHCA creates an environment that inspires students to serve and supports them in their initiatives.
2. School provides a foundation for servant leadership that is life influencing beyond graduation. We develop students who become adults that serve in their communities.
3. Elementary classrooms connect service activities to the curriculum.
4. Some funding is now provided for classroom service projects at the elementary and middle school levels.
5. The Upper School 7-8 Service Intercession has provided a meaningful and age-appropriate means of engaging this group of students in service.

**Challenges:**

1. Finding age-appropriate and meaningful volunteer work is an ongoing challenge, as is teaching and onboarding new faculty in leading and making service an authentic part of their students' CHCA experience.
2. While service opportunities are prevalent in our community, it is most often compartmentalized and separate from the curriculum. Helping students make the connection to service through academics and the other aspects of their lives is challenging. Service learning through the curriculum is currently very limited.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Explore more opportunities for professional development for K-12 staff to consider service learning as part of the core curriculum.
2. Host a volunteer fair for teachers.

**Addenda:**

1. CHCA Faith & Service Webpage
2. 2017 Constituent Survey
3. CHCA Service Projects by campus
4. High School Service Hour Award Summary
5. Sample of SOS teams, descriptions, weekly activities

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6. EBL Elementary Outreach UBD & Project Planning and Evaluation Sheets
7. Armleder Elementary Outreach Project Planning and Evaluation Sheets
8. Local News Story – SOS Outreach Project

**Submitted by:**

Karen Hordinski, Student Outreach Coordinator, MSL High School

## **b. Chapel and Spiritual Growth Programs**

### **Overview:**

Chapel programs are a defining distinctive of the CHCA experience. They are held on a weekly basis at each school division. CHCA is a multi-denominational Christian school enrolling students from diverse doctrinal backgrounds as well as students with no religious background. We also have an increasing number of international students that come from a wide array of religious experience. Our chapels seek to engage every student at whatever stage of faith they are currently in and help them take the next step in their journey with God. We do this by studying Scripture, worshipping together, and discussing the questions students have at their stage of development.

At Armleder there are weekly chapel times for PK-K, grades 1-3, and grades 4-6. Each of these segments meet at various times on Friday to help facilitate learning and understanding at their appropriate level. Themes are often connected to broader school themes and initiatives. Speakers could be faculty as well as local community ministers or parents. Singing and worship is faculty- or volunteer-led. Upper School students are also occasionally able to come lead the worship and possibly even speak in the chapel times. This provides a student perspective of school life and creates a sense of unity between the two campuses.

The Lower School includes the Early Learning Program (PK2-PK4) and the Lower Elementary (K-Prep-grade 3). The Early Learning Program (PK2-PK4) has weekly worship on Thursday morning. This time is composed of singing and learning about God and Scripture through stories that connect with children in their place of need. Lower Elementary (K-Prep-grade 3) meets most Fridays and is served by a volunteer coordinator. Chapel is held in the gym and is typically led in worship by faculty; the message could be provided by a teacher, principle, or outside volunteer. Upper Elementary (grades 4-6) meets for chapel every Wednesday morning and is also served by a volunteer coordinator. Faculty also lead worship for this time and the speakers vary.

The Upper School is separated into grades 7-8 and 9-12. There is an Upper School Chaplain that is responsible for organizing worship and series content for both of these experiences. Grades 7-8 meet for chapel on Friday mornings and grades 9-12 meet Thursday mornings. Worship is a central component to the chapel time. Students are highly involved in every aspect of these experiences ranging from leading worship, running a/v equipment, and possibly even sharing their story. A faculty or outside worship leader also help to coordinate and train students to lead worship for the Upper School. Chapel messages seek to respond to a variety of questions such as: Where does the Holy Spirit seem to be leading us now? What is going on in culture today? What is going on in our local community? And lastly, what tensions are common in our student body? Chapel series can range from a yearly theme to a multi-week series to a one-off talk by an outside speaker.

There are also numerous parent groups that meet to share in community and pray for both the student body and the larger CHCA community. Various administrators, teachers, and parents also lead adult and/or student groups for more personalized accountability and discipleship.



CHCA is committed to encouraging its students to pursue a heart that is aware and concerned for the needs of God's world. Service opportunities are provided for students beginning at the elementary continuing to the Upper School where the focus is building up student leaders to create opportunities for their peers to serve. The spiritual life of CHCA is a multi-faceted approach that leverages the Christian Studies academic program to renew the mind, student and adult/parent led service to engage the hands, and prayer/small groups to form the heart to love God and love people.

**Strengths:**

1. Student involvement throughout the grade levels in chapels as appropriate.
2. A diversity of backgrounds and doctrinal perspectives.
3. Chapel talks are relevant, authentic, and appropriate to each age level and build on one another in themes to provide for greater community with opportunity for worship.
4. Numerous parent/faculty groups devoted to developing the spiritual life of families.
5. A solid Christian education (academics and faculty) which helps students feel grounded in biblical knowledge and Christian doctrine and confident they can approach their teachers with difficult questions.

**Challenges:**

1. Ensuring a strategic direction for spiritual development, including promotion, communication, and support of the groups working toward this purpose.
2. A lack of attentiveness/reverence during chapels due to a confusion about/ignorance to religious worship and dependence on the use of technology.
3. A wide, and perhaps widening, spectrum of Spiritual maturity and interest within the student body, parent community, and faculty.
4. Inadequate financial and personnel support for service outreach programs which limits student participation.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Create a Spiritual Life Committee that meets regularly to set a vision/direction that guides the spiritual formation across CHCA.
2. Find ways to increase inclusive community experiences and more regular rhythms of worship across the campuses.
3. More intentional communication to parents of what their students are learning and experiencing in chapel services, classrooms, and small groups.

**Addenda:**

1. CHCA Constituent Survey
2. CHCA Faith and Service Webpage
3. CHCA Spiritual Life Webpage
4. CHCA Chapel, Prayer, and Bible Study Webpage

**Submitted by:**

Jordan Kramer, Upper School Chaplain and Christian Studies Teacher, Committee Chair

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Susan Vanderkolk, Student Support and Student Organized Service  
Emily Beuerlein, Student Support and Upper Elementary Chapel Coordinator  
Dr. Peter H. Dongell, Upper School Christian Studies  
Dan Saxby, Parent and Chapel Volunteer  
Jon Paris, Lower School Teacher and Chapel Coordinator  
Karen Hordinski, Upper School Student Organized Service Director  
Jeffrey Pyle, Parent and Men's Group Leader

## **27. School Life: Extra-Curricular Activities**

### **Overview:**

The extra-curricular programs are outstanding, broad, and inclusive. There are opportunities at all levels for students to get involved for the first time whether in elementary or Upper School. The majority of our students are involved in at least one area of extra-curriculars with many in several. Students are encouraged to participate in many different areas of extra-curriculars, which is unique in our area. Many local schools are very segmented, and students choose one area for participation. Our extra-curricular programs are an essential element of educating the whole child.

### **a. Athletics**

The athletic program offers a total of thirteen interscholastic sports to the student athletes in the Upper School and eight intramural sports to students in grades K-6. CHCA competes in various divisions of Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) based on enrollment and competitive balance as defined by the OHSAA. Our teams compete in the Miami Valley Conference, consisting of both private and public schools. Our philosophy of the athletic department is to build a culture of champions that develops, motivates, and empowers student athletes to impact the world for Christ.

Our mission is to build a “360 Athlete” with intentional focus to equip student athletes to encompass life-long values of faith, leadership, and strength of character while walking with humility, grace, and preserving our culture of champions. In our “360 Armor” program we focus on the development of the spirit, mind, and body at each level. CHCA addresses the distinct differences among developing athletes. Grade K-6 athletes need instruction and skill development while being sensitive to how sport experiences can deeply affect personality development. Some of the focus areas include: encouragement, prayerful, enthusiasm, coachable attitude, effort, basic fundamentals, and discovery of sport. At this age level the CHCA Athletic Department views winning as subordinate to student enjoyment, equal playing time, and character development. Grade 7-8 athletes require similar sensitivity, but at this age athletes engage in more competitive interscholastic sports. Some of the focus areas include: character development, selflessness, commitment, competitiveness, wellness, and advancing fundamentals. There is more of an emphasis on winning, yet it is still subordinate to the experience and character development. The tremendous physical and emotional variability in this age group is also taken into consideration and differential playing time is to be expected. In addition, all students in sports through grade 8 participate under a “no-cut” policy. Grade 9-12 athletics are organized around individual skill, ability, commitment, and participation. Playing time is not guaranteed, but every effort is made to involve all players in good standings at appropriate opportunities of the competitive experience. We believe that by pouring into our student athletes’ spirit, mind, and body through a commitment by our coaches, performance staff, and athletic department, our student athletes will developed to their fullest potential.

As part of the school's mission, students have an exceptional number of extra-curricular opportunities, which develop each individual's God-given gifts. Often, student athletes are involved in more than one after-school activity. A distinctive feature of CHCA's athletic program is its overall competitiveness, considering its small size and rigorous academic program and participation by athletes in other extra-curricular activities beyond sports. As indicated in the athletic survey section, we are on par with other ISACS schools. CHCA athletes have excelled by earning 18 individual state titles, three team state titles, six regional titles, 31 district titles and 126 Miami Valley Conference titles since 1995. We believe that students that commit to fully developing their gifts are glorifying Christ.

The athletic staff is led by the Athletic Director, Assistant Athletic Director, Athletic Coordinator, Youth Coordinator, and an Administrative Assistant. There is a full-time athletic trainer as well as a full-time Performance Director that oversee the health and wellness of our student athletes. The coaching staff consists of 92 paid coaches, 13 of those positions filled by 10 teachers at CHCA, and over 50 volunteers. The coaches at CHCA are one of the most significant components of our athletic program. Coaches must model Christ-like attitudes, behavior, and desires for our student athletes while maintaining a highly competitive program.

**Strengths:**

1. Implementation of the "360 Athlete" program creating an environment for growth. Our philosophy in this program is to develop, motivate, and empower our student-athletes to impact the world for Christ.
2. Sports Performance program dedicated to the health and wellness of our student athletes.
3. Growth of our youth sports programs to include eight sports ranging from grade K-6 and impacting our students enrolled at our Armleder campus.
4. Improving CHCA Athletics branding through social media, graphics, and facilities projects.
5. Student athlete leadership program to extend CHCA's core values into athletic teams.

**Challenges:**

1. Facility space for athletic participation (gym, field and weight room) as well as adequate storage.
2. Transportation issues for our grades 7-12 students to away contests and off-site practices.
3. Recruiting, developing, and retaining quality coaches on all levels with competitive coaches' compensation.
4. Roster sizes in some sports due to other options as well as athletes focusing on a single sport.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Fundraising for a new Performance Center which would include 2 courts, weight room, training room, turf, coaches' offices and area for storage.

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2. Evaluate ways to be more efficient with transportation as well as looking into expansion of busing fleet.
3. Continuing to focus on hiring “program builders” as head varsity coaches that will focus on their entire youth through high school program.
4. Committee of grade 9-12 coaches to determine best methods to meet the needs of multi-sport athletes as well as athletes that are involved with other extra-curricular activities.

**Addenda:**

1. 2017 Constituent Survey
2. 360 Athlete Blocks
3. Athletic Handbook 2018-19
4. CHCA Athletics Webpage

**Submitted by:**

Eric Taylor, Athletic Director  
Tony Schulz, Assistant Athletic Director  
Andy Vest, Youth Athletic Coordinator

#### **b. Fine Arts Extracurriculars**

The PK-12 fine arts extra-curricular programs support the fine arts curriculum and provide expanded opportunities for our students who desire a more in-depth or diverse Arts experience. As part of CHCA's mission, our Arts programs foster an encouraging and challenging environment where students can discover and develop their God-given talents and gifts through a variety of excellent instruction, leadership opportunities, performance, programs, outreach, and service.

Our students and program have won many local, regional, and national awards. The quality of our arts program, including extra-curriculars, and outstanding opportunities attracts many new families to our school. Not only does the arts program attract new families, it maintains a high-level of satisfaction among parents and students as shown in the constituent survey. Our parents rated the arts extra-curricular program excellent 64.9% compared to the ISACS benchmark of 40.1%. Combined results for our parents in the excellent and very good categories were 87.8% compared to benchmark combined averages of 76.1%. Our students rated the arts extra-curricular program excellent 53.51% compared to the ISACS benchmark of 37.7%. Combined results for our students in the excellent and very good categories were 80.71% compared to the ISACS benchmark of 68.9%.

While we have an outstanding extra-curricular arts program, it is not without challenges. One challenge is having a highly-involved student body who sometimes need to make difficult choices about their extra-curricular participation. Our student participation in the arts is strong; however, there are times when a student who has an interest in participating can't because of conflict with another extra-curricular. When possible through collaboration between programs, we work out a compromise for a student to participate. Another challenge is having one shared rehearsal and performance space. For rehearsals for theater events we often find alternative rehearsal locations on campus to allow for multiple rehearsals. We diligently work on the calendar each year with scheduling for rehearsals and performances in mind to alleviate as much conflict as possible. While this doesn't always work out perfectly, it works. Another way we deal with this challenge is to schedule some performances in local churches. While this isn't always easy or convenient, it works while also providing us with opportunities for outreach with different churches and congregations in our city.

**Music:** Several after-school music ensembles are available to students providing additional music training, development, and performance opportunities including: Armleder Celebration Choir (grades 3-6), EBL Melody Makers (grade 3), Strings Club (grades 5-8), Genesis Jazz (grades 6-8), and Premier Pops (grades 6-8). All these groups meet once a week after school. In connection with ArtBeat, our annual Fine Arts Festival, students may participate in the ArtBeat Festival Choirs (grades K-1 and 2-3). Each summer we also offer band and string camps.

**Theatre:** Our Theatre Department is very active and provides performance opportunities in the areas of straight plays (comedy and drama), musicals, and improvisation (Off the Cuff Improv Troupe). In a four year span (grades 9-12), students can experience (either onstage or behind

the scenes) a variety of dramatic works. There are five annual productions with three major productions, a variety show, and “The One Act” for our grade 9-12 students; and a grade 5-8 musical that includes students from both our Armleder and north campus.

All our Upper School productions are supported by a very active Student Production Team (SPT) for grade 9-12 students. The SPT includes roles as stage manager, assistant stage managers, sound, lights, set design and build, set dressing, video, props and costumes. The SPT also supports weekly chapels and other school events.

Other opportunities to learn about theatre are the Curtains Up eight-week acting program for grade 4-6 where students learn the fundamentals of acting and knowledge of the stage, a two-week StageStruck camp for students entering grades 5-8, and a one-week StageStruck New Faces camp for students entering grades 3 and 4.

Our grades 9-12 program participates in The Theatre League – a group of local schools who choose one production each year for the other schools to attend. The visiting schools attend a pre-show session with the director to hear about the show. Also in attendance are local professional theatre critics who rate the show for acting, directing, set, lights/sound, and costumes and makeup. Last year our school was awarded a Superior rating in production for “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” as well as excellence in music performance (our pit orchestra), performance (student lead actor), performance (brothers’ ensemble), stage management (student stage manager), and production execution (Student Production Team).

**Private Music Lesson Program – Grades PK-8:** CHCA offers a unique on-campus private music lesson program during the school day. The program strives to provide informed musical training, while challenging students toward personal growth. For our students in grades PK-4 options include piano, voice, violin, viola, and cello. Beginning in grade 5, options are expanded to include woodwind, brass, percussion, and bass lessons. While most lessons are provided during the school day, we also offer after-school, on-campus options. In addition to private lessons, there are also additional add-on options for a vocal ensemble for grades 2-3 and a string ensemble for grades K-8.

**Private Music Lessons – Grades 9-12:** This is an on-campus program that we have begun to expand in preparation of the conservatory program that we plan to add in the near future. Lesson options are expanded as student interest warrants.

**Dance:** The CHCA Dance Academy is an after-school dance program that offers competitive team, recreational, and technique class options to students in grades PK-12. The Dance Academy is a full-service studio program offering classes in many dance styles. The Academy was started to provide our CHCA families a dance studio option that aligned with CHCA values and was God honoring. Since the program began in 2011, it has grown to 64 dance students. In addition to classes, we offer summer camps and outreach opportunities for our dancers. Our Armleder Campus offers the Faithwalkers Dance Team for girls in grades 1-6. The girls are trained to perform in praise and worship dance. They perform for outreach events, in Armleder programs, ArtBeat, and some chapels.



**Visual Arts:** We offer opportunities beyond the classroom for students to further experience visual arts. After-school Arts Enrichment for grades 1-4 offer specific classes developed by the EBL Arts teacher. Artists Guided Studio for grades 5-8 provides additional time for students to work on projects of their choosing while enjoying the guidance of the Art teacher. At our Upper School 9-12 campus students may take advantage of Arts Open Studio with times available before and after school with the art teacher present to guide them. There is also an Art teacher led Art Club for grades 9-12, where students find community, express and develop their gifts, and serve through the visual arts. Our grade 9-12 students compete in the National Scholastic Art Awards and the regional Overture Awards.

**ArtBeat – Annual School-Wide Fine Arts Festival celebrating 21 years in 2019:** ArtBeat is a day-long celebration of the visual and performing arts at CHCA. ArtBeat includes an art exhibit featuring artwork from every visual arts student; a juried art competition for grades 9-12 judged by outside judges; performances on three stages that include all CHCA performing ensembles as well as solos, duets, and ensembles selected through 15 hours of auditions over a three-day period; professional and student demonstrating artists; a bake sale; and lots of delicious food donated by area restaurants and businesses.

**Strengths:**

1. Extra-curricular fine arts programs support the curriculum and provide more opportunities in the arts for gifted and motivated students
2. A diverse program offering opportunities in all areas of the arts across all age groups and abilities
3. Outstanding theater facility and equipment
4. Highly satisfied parents and students
5. Financial and volunteer resources provided by Friends of Fine Arts Boosters
6. Dedicated Fine Arts Director, support staff, outstanding faculty and directors

**Challenges:**

1. CHCA's highly involved student body has many extra-curriculars to choose from and many times they conflict limiting student participation
2. One shared rehearsal and performance space
3. Dance studio is too small to accommodate program growth
4. Limited storage space for equipment and supplies

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Continue to review and refine extra-curricular activities to provide the best possible instruction and opportunities for our students.
2. Further develop the arts program as a CHCA center of excellence through a new conservatory program in the planning stages for the performing arts for grades 9-12 with a preparatory program for grades 7 and 8. This will provide our gifted arts students with expanded opportunities for class and private instruction as well as expanded extra-

curricular offerings. The preparatory program will provide for more opportunities for our students in grades 7 and 8 who have limited class options. We have begun the expansion of our on-campus private instruction program as the first step. The next step will include expanded course offerings and requirements for grades 9-12 and an arts designation on diplomas for conservatory students.

3. Research the costs and options for conservatory program space to include a second large rehearsal and recital space, which will provide more theater access; private and small ensemble practice rooms; and a dance studio.
4. Continue to engage our parents in the arts as volunteers and supporters.

**Addenda:**

1. ArtBeat Program
2. Dance Academy Brochure
3. Private Music Lesson Program Grades PK-8 Brochure
4. Fine Arts Handbook
5. Link to myArts Links & Info page
6. Friends of Fine Arts Brochure
7. 2019 National Scholastic Awards

**Submitted by:**

Mona Summers, Director of Fine Arts

Emaline Allen, Lower School KPrep-4 Vocal Music Teacher

Annette Eberhardt, Lower School 5-6 and Upper School 7-8 Visual Art Teacher

Jim Jung, Theater Manager & Technical Director

### **c. Armleder School Programs**

The PK-6 extra-curricular programs support Armleder's curriculum and provide expanded opportunities for our students who desire additional experience and outreach. As part of CHCA's mission, our extra-curricular programs foster an encouraging and challenging environment where students can discover and develop their God-given talents and gifts through a variety of leadership opportunities, outreach, creative thinking, and service.

The extra-curricular programs involve 40% of the students. While we have an outstanding extra-curricular program, it is not without challenges. One challenge is having a highly-involved student body who sometimes need to make difficult choices about their extra-curricular participation. There are times when a participating student has a conflict with another extra-curricular. Often, we are able to work out a compromise for a student to participate but not always. At least everyone is willing to have a conversation about a student to see if there is a workable compromise. We diligently work on the calendar to alleviate as much conflict as possible. While this doesn't always work out perfectly, it minimizes the issues.

**Bible Bowl:** Bible Bowl is an Armleder academic competition program for grades 3-5 that helps students learn Scripture through study and local competitions. A selected book or books of the Bible is determined as the text that season. A team competes against another team over a selected segment of the text. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins. This program was added in the 2018-19 school year providing more opportunity for students and staff with a passion of continued, deeper learning to be even more fully engaged with their Christian education in a fun, game-based way. This fosters an environment of engagement and community.

**Card Committee:** The Armleder Card Committee was established by four second grade students in 2016 and has expanded to grades PK-6 with 25 students participating weekly to create cards to bring joy to the card recipients. While pursuing the purpose, committee members strive for excellence when creating their cards. This means a focus on their heartfelt message, punctuation, grammar, and penmanship. In addition, the students prepare and present proposals for "jobs" (i.e. school-wide birthday cards, invitations to school-wide events, etc.). They vote on opportunities and delve in the production aspect of the opportunities.

**I-Witness News Team:** The Armleder I-Witness News Broadcast began televising live to Armleder classroom and YouTube subscribers in January 2016. This is a student directed and led news broadcast that airs daily. Grade PK-6 participating students take on every role that a news broadcast has including writing the script, teleprompter scrollers, sound technician, and producer. The I-Witness News Team's Mission is to build an engaged school community. The broadcast is a way of starting the Armleder community in united way every day by students who are sharing the information.

### **Strengths:**

1. Student Leadership
2. Life Skills

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3. Administrative Support
4. Committed Participation

**Challenges:**

1. Finding available time for the wide array of activities we want to provide our students at Armleder is difficult.
2. Developing students' literacy and public speaking skills is challenging.

**Addenda:**

Armleder Extra-Curricular Activities Webpage

**Submitted by:**

Pamela Bailey, Armleder School Director of Operations

#### **d. STEM**

The bulk of CHCA's STEM extra-curricular program consists of FIRST Robotics teams. Students in grades 4-12 participate in exciting, developmentally appropriate, and challenging robotics competitions that allow them to design, build, and program robots while interacting with professional engineers and scientists to inspire them to develop and pursue their passions in STEM. CHCA is the only private school in Ohio offering three levels of FIRST Robotics:

- **FIRST LEGO League (FLL):** In FLL, students in grades 4-7 work together to research a real-world problem and are challenged to develop and present a solution. They must also design, build and program a robot using LEGO Mindstorms, which competes on a table-top playing field. FLL Students work closely with parent coaches and are mentored by experienced students from the 7-12 teams.
- **FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC):** In FTC, students in grades 7-8 work together to design and build an 18"x18"x18" robot to play a challenging 2-on-2 field-based game. With the help of students from the 9-12 program, the FTC students must analyze the challenge, prototype, design, assemble, and program their robot. All throughout the process, they must keep detailed records of their process in their engineering notebook.
- **FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC):** In FRC, students in grades 9-12 work alongside adult mentors to design and build a 120-pound robot to play an exciting 3-on-3 field-based game. On a tight deadline, with limited budget and resources, students must analyze the game challenge, develop a winning strategy, design, fabricate, assemble, wire, plumb pneumatics, program, and compete. The Beak Squad's business and branding team is tasked with creating an exciting brand, maintaining a strong social media presence, developing a business plan, writing award submissions, planning outreach events and running our pilot print shop. Along with on-field achievements and numerous awards at competition, the robotics program's growth is a strong indicator of success—from ten grade 9-12 students in 2011 to 80 students in grades 4-12.

Our STEM program also offers opportunities for students to participate in after school math enrichment and competitive math programs in grades four through twelve. Minorities in Math Science and Engineering (M2SE), Mathematical Minds Math Club, MathCounts, and Mu Alpha Theta—all programs that encourage students to embrace challenges, expand their mathematical knowledge, and build confidence in their problem-solving skills.

#### **Strengths:**

1. Some students focus on STEM extra-curriculars alone, while others are involved in fine arts and athletics. This allows for some to focus in and dive deep while for others, it represents an opportunity to broaden exposure. Student participation in STEM extra-curriculars has grown eight-fold in seven years.
2. The Robotics program is expansive and inclusive. Students can begin participation in robotics in upper elementary. They can explore and develop in many skill areas including research, design, mechanical, electrical and controls, and marketing.
3. The inclusion of projects, business and branding activities allows for students with a broad range of interests to be involved and inspires greater interest in STEM pursuits.

4. Our connections to local businesses allow for students to be mentored by industry professionals and creates opportunities for future internships/co-ops for our students.

**Challenges:**

1. Robotics is an expensive program that is not included in school-wide fundraising and budget.
2. Inter-team connections/cohesiveness is challenging with all teams not meeting in shared space.
3. Use of borrowed space off-campus because space on campus is insufficient to house the program.
4. Robotics is an extra-curricular only and therefore we are missing interested students who don't have the time available to devote to the program after school.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Secure funding for large, on-campus space with room for all STEM extra-curriculars to utilize, enhancing manufacturing capabilities and inter-team collaboration.
2. Further integrate STEM topics (in particular, coding and robotics) into the curriculum at all levels of the school.
3. Organize a parent booster program to encourage and support family involvement in the program at all levels.

**Addenda:**

1. Robotics Program Webpages
2. 9-12 Team Handbook
3. CHCA Robotics Teams Awards and Achievements

**Submitted by:**

Linda Bollman, Upper School 7-12 Math Teacher  
Andy Ciarniello, Upper School 7-12 Science Teacher

#### **e. Student Government**

Student government exists at CHCA to provide students an opportunity to develop their leadership skills while planning events that affect student life. Elected members plan social events and teacher appreciation, as well as functioning as an important liaison between the student community and administration. At the present time, no student government exists at the Lower School K-3 or 4-6 level at North Campus.

At Armleder, 4-6 graders may run for Student Council. Candidates participate in a campaigning process including poster creation and “air-time” on their student news network. Students in K-6 vote for the President of Student Government, while students in grades 4-6 elect class representatives. Elected members meet every other week during lunch/recess. The two largest events they plan are the Armleder Alumni College Fair and the Talent Show. They also plan for out-of-uniform days.

At the Upper School 7-8, student council members are elected at the beginning of the school year. Candidates have a week to campaign and must deliver a speech before their peers in a chapel assembly. This helps to develop their public speaking skills. Officers and representatives are elected for each class, typically totaling about a twenty-member body. Council meets every Thursday morning before school. They plan all socials and teacher appreciation events for the year. They also help plan pep rallies and spirit events. Student members inform the administration about issues or challenges facing the student body. They also can create petitions to affect change. They also take the lead in making sure all students feel included in the student community of the school. Recently, they have spearheaded such campaigns as “See Something, Say Something” to inform administration about dangers in the school or students who are at risk.

At the Upper School 9-12, Student Government is responsible for planning all events related to student life. They oversee: Homecoming Week (including the powder puff football game, king and queen selection, and the dance), Spring Fling Formal, Powder Puff Volleyball, the year-long spirit competition, and the Thanksgiving Food Drive. In addition, Student Government sponsors several teacher appreciation events. Student Council also will work with the administration to affect change in school policies that impact students, such as dress code. Student body president, the three vice-presidents, a treasurer, and a spiritual life leader are all nominated by teachers and elected by students in the spring for the following school year. Grade-level representatives serve as class officers and are self-nominated and elected in the fall.

#### **Strengths:**

1. Student government is a platform in which students can develop life-long leadership skills in accordance with our school motto “to Learn, Lead and Serve” as they plan social and spirit events.
2. Student government serves as a voice of the student body to the administration.
3. Students develop public speaking skills as they campaign and regularly address their peers.



**Challenges:**

1. Acquiring the best candidates to run for office and dispelling ideas of elections being popularity contests.
2. Feasibility of some of the events Student Government wants to execute at the lower levels as student leaders are constrained to the school day.
3. Finding the best meeting times for students to participate with ever-growing student activities.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Create written constitutions for the different bodies at each building.
2. Create written descriptions of past events/responsibilities for future advisors.
3. Create opportunities for K-3; 4-6 grade students at the North Campus to also participate in student council type leadership groups.
4. Find more substantive responsibilities for government at the Upper School.
5. Continue to develop ways for student government in all buildings to lead in national campaigns like "See Something, Say Something" as we continue to see more students with emotional difficulties.

**Addenda:**

1. Student Council 7-8 Webpage
2. Student Council 9-12 Webpage

**Submitted by:**

Holly Metzger, Upper School 7-8 Assistant Principal, Steering Committee Member  
Mona Summers, Director of Fine Arts, Committee Lead

## **28. School Life: Unique Structure & Activities**

### **Overview**

The Unique Structures and Activities report area at Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy covers five primary programs that highlight a diverse offering of student-centered opportunities at the school. First are the Student Directed Learning (SDL) and Personal Responsibility Time (PRT) programs which help prepare students for entering college by enabling them to develop key personal and social skills in minimally structured free periods that replace the traditional study hall paradigm. Second, the school is invested in an honor and discipline system that is based on displaying Christ-like principles through positive instruction. In addition to these programs, the school features a burgeoning business entrepreneurship program that teaches hands-on business skills to students in grades 7-12 while preparing them for future work in a variety of fields. Finally, the summer enrichment programs at the school provide for an extension of the Christ-centered education the school offers during summer months while the upper school intercession program creates an abundance of unique opportunities for students to take learning outside the classroom and experience education in a variety of settings. All in all, Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy seeks to educate the whole person through its diverse offerings as reflected in its Unique Structures and Activities.

### **a. Upper School 7-12 SDL/PRT**

The Student Directed Learning (SDL) and Personal Responsibility Time (PRT) programs grew out of reflection of the success on our students entering college. Academically, CHCA graduates and their parents consistently communicate that they are positioned above their college peers and feel confident in their writing ability, research capability, and in their ability to handle the fast pace of the instruction and are highly successful in their selected college majors. The only area of some concern was in the area of time management. Going from a highly structured high school program to all the freedoms inherent in college life posed some anxiety on the part of some of our graduates. Thus, during the Fall of 2011 an exploratory committee of administrators and faculty began inquiries into alternate study hall options. They connected with Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School in Indianapolis, IN. It was here that CHCA learned about the Personal Responsibility Time (PRT) concept and determined to design its own iteration to address this area of need. The PRT program replaced the traditional study hall where students with a free period would be assigned to a classroom where they were supervised by a teacher and made to get busy and work on assignments from their various classes.

### **Student Directed Learning (SDL) – Upper School 7-8**

During the last bell of the day from 2:30 p.m.-3:10 p.m., all students can work in quiet rooms or in collaboration spaces monitored by a teacher. They also have the option of seeing a teacher for help or one their peers in the NJHS tutoring room. Students receiving Support Services can work together with their Support Teacher to map out study plans for the evening, address individual academic issues and interface with individual classroom teachers for assistance on specific subject matter. The goal of this time is for students to learn to manage their study time and get assistance when needed. This time also prepares students for PRT at the 9-12 level.

### **Personal Responsibility Time (PRT) – Upper School 9-12**

PRT is a privilege. During periods when a student does not have a class scheduled, they are responsible for how they utilize this time. The goal is time management training for learning to make wise decisions before students experience the freedom of the college campus. There are certain parameters students must follow for PRT. It is not “do whatever you want to do” time. All students must stay on campus except seniors with parental permission provided they return punctually for their next class. Underclass students, grade 9-11, may not leave campus but may enjoy the following options on campus:

- Utilize the Collaboration Space for research, study, reading, etc.
- Conference with a teacher who is not currently teaching a course.
- Utilize the cafeteria for study, conversation and/or eating in bells other than bells 4-6.
- Use the gymnasium or Theatre Commons areas for a study break or exercise.
- Study in designated areas in the Miracle Commons.
- Seek physical therapy from the athletic trainer.
- Meet with a counselor in the Counseling Office.

Certain areas of the building are restricted from PRT students such as hallways immediately outside of classrooms.

Eventual consequences for students who are failing a class at the end of a quarter grading period need more time concentrated on their studies. They are required to report on time to the library during their PRT for the entire next quarter. If those students have no failing grades by the conclusion of the next quarter, the PRT privilege is restored. A positive effect was realized in the high school PRT program after the SDL program was instituted. A greater number of freshmen students showed more immediate time and focus on study than on the other activities available.

#### **Strengths:**

1. SDL provides for the establishing of good individual study habits and seeking assistance from teachers, tutors, and collaboration with peers.
2. SDL allows students to experience the reward of more discretionary time at home when some homework is accomplished in school and receive praise for doing so.
3. SDL offers opportunity for developing study habits and training for PRT in Upper 9-12.
4. SDL provides designated time daily when students may meet with the school counselor without loss of instruction time.
5. Though some students may initially struggle to use their PRT time wisely and effectively, it does so at a time when they still have influences, parents and teachers, around who may influence the outcome and eventually establish good time management before being on their own.
6. PRT helps student realize the value of honoring trust to maintain privileges.
7. PRT increased student collaboration in studying and motivating each other.

8. PRT builds a pleasant environment where students feel appreciated and respected by school administration/faculty; operating on a culture of trust and allows for a time of stress reduction.

**Challenges:**

1. End of day format in SDL can make it difficult for some students to focus, as they can be mentally and/or physically fatigued, making productive work difficult.
2. All students receiving support services are seen at the SDL time, making it a challenge to meet all needs of all students on support caseload, creating a barrier to comprehensive services. SDL is not held during Chapel Day (Fridays); therefore support students lack support contact before a weekend and for all of Spiritual Life Emphasis Week.
3. Seeking to avoid instructional times for counselor meetings, School Counselor can only meet with a maximum of two students per SDL period.
4. For those students who have trouble relating to others and socializing, PRT can magnify the issue as other students are not required to be in the same space with them. It compels counselors and teachers to encourage other students to reach out to those who tend to be alone at these times.
5. Keeping track of students in their PRT is a challenge.
6. Maintaining neat, clutter-free, organized spaces on campus during PRT by the enforcement of the policies and procedures with the freedoms allowed.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Consider rescheduling SDL to a mid-day period before lunch.
2. Under current format in SDL there is a need to Increase Student Support Personnel to adequately service all students during one period.
3. Allow specific School Counseling Group Activities to take place during SDL time.
4. Include support students in any social events scheduled during SDL time.
5. Consider enhancement of student ID cards to include swiping capability for monitoring.
6. Explore alternative ways of communicating the privileges and responsibilities of this program with all students.
7. Establish an accountability system that observes and addresses areas of irresponsibility in a timelier manner: a.) Develop 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Program for all incoming freshmen and transfer students to include time management and study skills training, and tips for community living. b.) Identify areas of the building whose use is not yet clearly defined and communicate expectations for use during PRT.

**Addenda:**

Upper School 7-12 Handbook, SDL and PRT Policy on p. 31-32

**Submitted by:**

Dave Walker, Upper School 7-12 Assistant Principal  
Katie Howarth, MSL US English Teacher  
Karen Robinson, MSL US College Counselor

#### **b. Honor and Discipline Systems**

The philosophy of discipline at CHCA is based on the cultivation of a lifestyle in keeping with Christ-like principles. We seek to teach students to exercise their freedom responsibly within the framework of God's Word, with loving regard for the sensitivities of others. We encourage freedom without disregarding law. We promote students being responsible without becoming legalistic. We desire to be a community marked by integrity, responsible freedom, and dynamic, Christ-like love.

We collaborate with parents to achieve the goal of a safe environment that promotes student learning, develops productive citizens, and creates servant leaders in their communities. We desire to provide learning in a peaceful, loving, and kind atmosphere. Discipline occurs in a positive way through instruction, modeling appropriate behavior, and rewarding proper behavior. Believing discipline must be developmentally appropriate, the approach transitions from an external motivation system at the younger levels to an internal control psychology in the upper school. When it becomes necessary to enforce consequences, those administering discipline do so in a restorative manner, not in a punitive manner, with the intent of the student accepting personal responsibility by admitting the error, changing the behavior and receiving forgiveness.

School disciplinary policies and procedures are outlined in the Student Handbook, which is located on the school's Website. Student Handbooks are also published on the CHCA website in the Family Information Guide for each building.

At the Lower School Campus (pre-school–grade 3) character themes are utilized each year to bring a campus wide focus on points the administration feels need to be emphasized. Chapels and assemblies promote positive attitudes. The contained classroom teachers develop positive assets and character qualities in their individual classrooms. Student uniforms are required.

On the Armleder School campus (preschool–grade 6) the discipline system is divided into two divisions. The preschool and kindergarten fall under one system and grades 1-6 have their own set of rubrics for behavior. Chapels and assemblies promote positive attitudes. The contained classroom teachers develop positive assets and character qualities in their individual classrooms. Faculty training in the Responsive Classroom approach was initiated spring 2012. Student uniforms are required.

At the Founder's campus (grades 4-6) the E.A.G.L.E.S. Program (see Addendum) was instituted in August 2018. By implementing a consistent approach for all teachers, increasing understanding of expectations for students, and keeping families more informed, the community becomes closer and the students become stronger. Each Monday, teachers have students fill out their planner for the week with important assignments and school activities. Teachers also use the planners as a tool for communication about the child's behavior in class. Student uniforms are required.

The disciplinary system is based more on an internal control psychology, as a student transitions to MSL Upper School Program (grades 7-12) This methodology keeps in mind that the goal of our adult discipline of students is to slowly become replaced by self-discipline on the student's part. MSL has a dress code but does not require student uniforms. In 2010, the MSL Campus implemented two initiatives: a bi-annual Pride Survey, sponsored by the Coalition for a Drug-free Greater Cincinnati. This provides the school a benchmark of student perception and behavior. Secondly, the school enlisted the professional services of the K-9 Resources Company. The organization provides education and counsel; a confidential Safe School Tip-line; and random unannounced inspections as a deterrent to unwanted items and activity.

We believe that all the above approaches are congruent with the mission and core values of the school in the development of students "to learn, lead, and serve."

**Strengths:**

1. Proactively recognizing and building positive developmental assets into the lives of the students.
2. In keeping with the mission of the school in valuing and teaching the whole child, our discipline philosophy is restorative rather than punitive.
3. Developmentally appropriate behavioral expectations and disciplinary procedures that take into consideration the needs of the whole child.
4. Incorporation of the K-9 Resources Company at Upper 7-12 encourages a safe and drug-free environment.

**Challenges:**

1. Effective communication concerning policy changes and rationale to all constituents.
2. Consistent policy enforcement among faculty of each campus.
3. Incorporating faculty and student input in the annual review of discipline policies.
4. Monitoring across school divisions the pattern and frequency of bullying according the school's definition and the success of the interventions utilized.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Hang a copy of the Student Handbook on Canvas, the school's LMS so it is easily available to all students and parents to access.
2. Consider different ways to communicate the points of emphasis from the Student Handbook to students and parents.
3. Develop a system for early, consistent, and inclusive input and implementation for discipline policies.
4. Continue to communicate the clearly defined definition of bullying and to implement solutions that equip students, parents, and teachers with skills to identify, effectively address, and eliminate instances of bullying.

**Addenda:**

1. Student and Family Handbooks (Sections on Academic Honesty Policy, Dance Policy, PRT Policy and Procedures, and Discipline Policies)

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy  
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2. Technology Responsible Use Policy
3. E.A.G.L.E.S Program (Lower School grades 4-6)

**Submitted by:**

Dave Walker, Upper School 7-12 Assistant Principal



**c. Upper School 9-12 Business Entrepreneurship**

The Business Entrepreneurship is spearheaded by the flagship business called The Leaning Eagle Coffee Bar which received its permanent location in the fall of 2015 and has thrived both as a financial operation offering high-end coffee products and as a training program for future entrepreneurs. Every part of the business, from tracking inventory and managing sanitation to scheduling special events and creating promotional materials, is handled by students. All students working the coffee bar are required to undergo barista certification training and are subject to additional trainings in customer service and business management.

With hours from 7:30 A.M. until 3:30 P.M., the coffee bar is staffed solely by students who are enrolled in the school's business program. The program is open to students in grade 9-12 and offers a tiered curriculum which enables students to take the program as a first, second, third, or even fourth year student. In addition to acting as coffee bar managers in charge of particular bells, students enrolled in the program are also involved in creating new business proposals, tracking weekly and monthly sales patterns, and understanding financial investing principles.

During bi-weekly meetings, all students managing the coffee bar gather to brainstorm new ideas, solve current problems, and analyze sales data. Aside from these meetings and curricular requirements, students report to the coffee bar instead of a classroom on a daily basis. Instead of sitting in a four-walled room taking notes, these students are receiving invaluable hands-on training.

All students enrolled in business entrepreneurship begin with a hands-on opportunity to work one of the student-run businesses in a manager-role. First year students are in 101 with the additional obligation of creating a new business proposal complete with executive summary, industry analysis, customer analysis, marketing plan, operational and financial plan, and management team.

Second year students, in 201, are in charge of sales tracking and complete quarter-end analysis reports along with information on sales trends and expectations. Third year students, in 301, are placed on an overall management team to oversee one of the businesses. Fourth year students, in 401, complete a business entrepreneurship internship through an independent study.

The business entrepreneurship program at Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy is one of the most exciting programs at the school. With the combination of hands-on business experience, management opportunities, and invaluable entrepreneurship knowledge, it is easy to see why. The program continues to grow and has a vibrant and exciting future ahead.

**Strengths:**

1. Hands-on business training for high school students including but not limited to customer service, financial tracking, quality inspections, daily and specific troubleshooting, and time management.

2. Program offers a range of confidence-boosting benefits and builds character and leadership through management training.
3. Over twenty schools have shown interest in emulating the program because of the success which has been well documented by local news programs and through conference presentations (CESA and ISACS).
4. Program attracts new students while fostering continued growth with existing students through its unique structure which enables students to take the program up to four years in a row while having different curriculum each year.
5. Program teaches real life skills and prepares students for a variety of potential fields.

**Challenges:**

1. Program is currently maxed out at 25 participants and would need additional faculty members in oversight positions in order to grow in size.
2. Constant changing of shifts throughout any given day can present trouble in terms of fulfilling all necessary orders.
3. Keeping the business profitable while undergoing a new shift to sustainable business practices (including sourcing of products and use of compostable takeaway cups).

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Look into the possibility of hiring an additional faculty member to oversee future growth of program into additional student-run businesses.
2. Finish the creation of an apple-store ordering app that would solve traffic problems during shift changes.
3. Educate the students at the school about the importance of sustainable business practices from an ethical perspective in order to justify price fluctuation.
4. Find additional funding to promote business growth into new sectors.
5. Maximize curriculum to match college level business entrepreneurship programs through problem identification strategies in business design.

**Addenda:**

1. Business Plan
2. Leaning Eagle application
3. Secret Shopper Form
4. Mission Statement
5. Secret Shopper Survey

**Submitted by:**

Stephen Carter, MSL US Business Entrepreneurship Director

#### **d. Summer Enrichment Programs**

CHCA SummerFlight Programs advance CHCA's mission through Christ-centered offerings that enable students to learn, lead, and serve during the summer months. The ISACS Constituent Survey respondents agree that CHCA has a positive impact in the areas of providing a caring environment and academic programs. CHCA SummerFlight Programs actively promote these strengths through summer activities that connect students to caring staff and through Academic Courses, College Preparation, and Academic/Technology, Fine Arts, Athletic and Enrichment Specialty Camps that encourage the whole-person development of current and prospective students.

##### Summer Academic Courses for Credit

Summer Courses for Credit are available for rising grade 9-12 students and meet the same benchmarks as those classes held during the school year. These course offerings allow Upper School students the ability to take classes that do not otherwise work into their schedule, may permit a free bell during the school year for students involved in extra-curricular activities, and provide an option for credit recovery. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and opens annually in February. By early March, class cancellations due to low enrollment are announced. If a cancellation impacts a student's course selections, the Guidance office works with students to make any needed schedule adjustments for the upcoming academic year.

##### College Application Bootcamp

The goal of this session is to take the stress out of senior year. Incoming senior students get organized, work on essays with industry professionals, and learn what happens to their college applications once they are submitted. Students bring a laptop if they have one (the school will provide one for student use if needed), and a list of colleges to which they plan to apply. This camp is held for three days in August and is led by the CHCA Director of Counseling.

##### Specialty camps

CHCA SummerFlight Specialty Camps normally run for one week and consist of summer Academic/Technology, Fine Arts, Athletic, and Enrichment camps for rising grade K-8 students. Voluntarily planned and led by CHCA faculty, specialty camps provide students with Christ-centered opportunities to grow academically, develop skills, gain new experiences, and connect with others. CHCA values specialty camps for their opportunity to engage current students, attract new students, and provide valued faculty with additional income and growth opportunities during non-school months.

##### Strategic, Mission Aligned Partnerships

CHCA partners with organizations that have summer programs that are mission aligned and provide additional opportunities beyond faculty led camps.

##### SpringHill Camp

Held annually in July, CHCA partners with Montgomery Community Church for this offering. SpringHill Day Camp welcomes students who have completed grades K-5 and includes small group Bible teaching, high-energy large group sessions, and adventure such as archery,

bungee trampoline, camp songs, climbing wall, crafts, and more. The camp runs for five full days from 9:00-4:00.

#### *Future Design School*

CHCA was pleased to offer in 2018 a unique summer opportunity for rising grade 5-8 students that guided students through Google's process of designing creative solutions to real world problems resulting in measurable growth in critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

#### *Laffalot Camp*

Voted Best Camp For Kids: Fun and Games by Cincinnati Magazine, Laffalot Summer Camp offers kids ages 6-12 old a week of fun-filled activities that will leave them smiling, exhausted and ecstatic. Led by well-trained counselors, students spend the day playing high-energy sports and games that help them develop teamwork, learn sportsmanship, build whole body coordination, enjoy friendly competition, and improve interpersonal skills.

Specialty Camps' design and duration vary with camp purpose. The typical camp meets on the CHCA campus for 12-15 hours during one week of the summer, though some specialized experiences meet off-site and academic for-credit courses meet as many hours as CHCA's curriculum requires. Academic courses and Specialty Camps intended to prepare students for the CHCA curriculum require staff or faculty receive permission for their offering from the CHCA Division Head. Students earning graduation credit over the summer must complete all assignments and assessments in order to earn credit.

#### **Strengths:**

1. CHCA SummerFlight Programs enjoy the support of a thriving CHCA school institution that has a well-defined mission, healthy enrollment, excellent facilities, strong finances, and a welcoming environment.
2. CHCA SummerFlight Programs leverage CHCA's mission beyond the academic year through activities that connect students and staff and that encourage the whole-person development of students and employees.
3. CHCA SummerFlight Programs have the potential to expand the school's reach to the outside community by attracting non-CHCA students to summer sessions where the faculty and staff share the CHCA culture of Christ-centered excellence.
4. Summer academic courses allow Upper School students to open their school year schedules to take courses that do not easily integrate into their schedules, allow for credit recovery if a student fails a course during the school year, and allow students who are involved in extra-curricular activities to lighten their school year schedules by having an additional free bell.

#### **Challenges:**

1. The CHCA Athletic and Fine Arts Departments offer a wealth of summer camp opportunities. Creating a schedule of offerings without overlap is always a challenge.
2. Many dual-career families need full-day care. Half-day camps can be an issue for them.

3. CHCA surveyed elementary school families (grade K-3) in 2018 to determine the level of interest by summer week and potential course offerings. The few received responses revealed little synergy for weeks and topics of interest.
4. The program content in the Young Innovators Camp offered by Future Design School wonderfully augments work done in CHCA Innovation Labs. The required Fee of \$5,000 for each session is potentially cost prohibitive. Achieving a balance between the cost of a summer program so that it is reasonable for the students and financially worth the investment for the faculty is an continual effort.
5. While the CHCA SummerFlight camps offerings are thriving, the school is unable to compete with sustained summer programs that offer field trips and have swimming facilities.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Continue to ensure that summer programming has balanced offerings especially in the Athletic Camps for both boys and girls. (Community survey: Both boys and girls have an equal opportunity for success.)
2. Continue to ensure that CHCA-led camps and outside, mission aligned partners (such as SpringHill, Future Design School and Laffalot) encourage the development of moral character and the ability to work with and respect others. (Community survey: The school has a strong commitment to moral values and character development.)
3. Continue to ensure that summer camp programming is available and promoted to CHCA and non-CHCA students including invitations to our downtown Armleder campus students with financial assistance available on a confidential and limited basis as granted by each camp leader. (Community survey: The school has a commitment to racially, culturally, and economically diverse environment.)
4. Continue to encourage student participation in summer programming where student to instructor/camp leader ratios are low and ensure that CHCA Admissions has lists of available summer opportunities to welcome new students into the CHCA community. (Community survey: Each student feels well known by the school.)
5. Continue to look for summer camp opportunities to enhance new school educational initiatives such as Innovation Labs. (Community survey: The school is innovative in its educational offerings.)
6. Develop and implement standards for CHCA summer programming quality and pricing to ensure that summer offerings match CHCA standards.

**Addenda:**

1. 2018 Summer Programs Review
2. 2019 Summer Offerings ([chca-oh.org/summer](http://chca-oh.org/summer))
3. 2019 Summer Camp Leader Guide and Cancellation Policy

**Submitted by:**

Sharon Frankart, UltraCamp/Summer Programs Coordinator  
Susan Zwarg, Lower School, Physical Education Teacher

#### **e. Upper School 7-12 Intersession**

For nearly two decades, beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, Upper 9-12 Intersession has been a two-week intensive, experiential learning program at CHCA. Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, we expanded the program to include the Upper 7-8 students in a one-week Service Intersession. Upper 9-12 Intersession occurs in January or each third year in May. January Intersession, referred to as Winter Term, occurs the first two weeks of school upon return from Christmas Break and in May, referred to as May Term, occurs the last two weeks of school directly following the conclusion of AP exams. Moving the date in a three-year cycle has allowed all faculty and students the opportunity to fully participate in the travel portion of Intersession. Upper 7-8 Service Intersession occurs over four days, generally the last days of October and first days of November following our Fall Break.

Intersession is a distinctive program for the CHCA Upper School, it challenges our students to push beyond their comfort zone and lean into life. They are stretched to use their talents and gifts to serve in ways that glorify God and help others. Aided by their faculty course leaders they learn to see the world in new ways, to see themselves in new ways. They have time away from their familiar building and friend group, away from the rigors of a CHCA education to learn to love learning. When experienced fully, our students can come away with a new life skills. Our students also learn well-earned life lessons: international travel is taxing and you need to be prepared; knowing a second language can help you bridge a new friendship; even at age 14 God made me with the ability to make a difference in the life of another person. Our intent is that this will help shape them into passionate life-long lovers of learning, adventure and personal growth. Our hope is that this will begin a long life in service to others, in openness to new things and places and in a Christian worldview that says everyone has value and people are not to be judged for difficult life circumstances but that we are called to help them if they want to rise from their current situation.

Intersession is also a unique opportunity for new relationships. Year after year, we witness students making new friends across grade level boundaries. Students and faculty mix in courses allowing for in-depth interaction. Faculty and students appreciate each other in new ways when they discover a love of cooking, when they share a meal together in an orphanage or see a famous work of art together for the first time. Opportunities abound for real connections to take place because it's nearly impossible not to bond with someone when spending time together for two weeks.

**Upper 7-8 Service Intersession:** The Upper school grade 7 students' course is structured so students have a similar but not necessarily identical agenda over the four-day period. Students have participated in interactive programming learning about modern day human trafficking, serving at food banks and shelters, one-on-one interactions with seniors in cultural discussion, game-playing and talent shows, and home/yard maintenance with a local ministry partner to seniors and the disabled. They have visited the Freedom Center, had a time of spiritual retreat together, and donated hours to local churches cleaning and organizing their spaces. They have participated in self-evaluation and reflection activities to better understand themselves and how they might use their God-given gifts to serve others.

Upper grade 8 students select a course to participate in, similar to the Upper 9-12, which allows them to directly connect with those whose life situations put them at risk or in need. The course offerings for grade 8 include one international offering to Monterrey Mexico, two domestic travel options and three to four local options allowing families to select the option which best fit the individual student. Past grade 8 offerings have included serving in an underserved preschool, learning about and serving with a local ministry/drug rehabilitation facility, and traveling to Kentucky to serve with an Appalachian ministry and learn about the mountain culture. Building on what they learned as 7<sup>th</sup> graders, the 8<sup>th</sup> graders are challenged to dig deeper and learn more about their service calling in the world.

**Upper 9-12 Intersession** is a graduation requirement, each course completed appears on the student transcripts with a numerical grade for a .25 credit that is calculated into their overall GPA. All courses include some reading and or writing component, most also include some personal journal or reflection activities to allow students to process what they are learning. Upper 9-12 students select from between 20-24 Intersession courses. These courses fall into one of three types; in-depth learning, service immersion, and cultural immersion. In-depth learning courses allow students and faculty to study one topic intensely for the two-week period. Service immersion course allow students to directly connect with people whose life situations put them at risk or in need. Cultural immersion allows students to travel to different parts of the world and learn about the culture. Continuing our commitment to offering a wide range of courses, we offer courses ranging in cost of zero to close to but less than \$4,000.

#### **Strengths:**

1. Intersession provides an alternative learning experience outside the traditional classroom; it offers students the chance to engage in experiences that require a diversity of learning styles.
2. Intersession courses present students with a better understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of education.
3. Intersession addresses the mission of the school by helping to “prepare students intellectually and spiritually for success in higher education and beyond, and to impact and influence the world according to their unique gifts and talents.”
4. Intersession enhances the relationships between students and between students and faculty by allowing deeper and new interactions between grade or academic level groups.

#### **Challenges:**

1. Consistently offering exciting and engaging local low-cost courses across all age groups.
2. Managing affordability across all courses in the face of rising tuition and increased travel costs.
3. Faculty planning time for Intersession in the reality of the high level of engagement our faculty exists within daily.



4. Providing meaningful service opportunities for grade 7 in light of age limits at service locations, widely diverse maturity levels of students, and faculty-to-student ratios.
5. Balancing the need for winter committed non-travelers to have an opportunity to travel with the myriad of complexities that May Term adds to the Upper 9-12 spring schedule.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Finalize scholarship opportunities available to seniors to aid those who wish to travel and cannot afford full price registration fee.
2. Work with International Student Program to develop a course or streamline course options to ensure that summer enrollees have better access to a full range of choices.
3. Work with Upper school administration to find teacher workdays to give faculty time to plan for Intersession.
4. Study data on May Term and decide on frequency of repetition to balance needs of Winter commitments and Spring calendar complications.
5. Continue to proactively help enhance local offerings to ensure high quality; low cost courses, balancing faculty rotation of travel and local offerings from year to year.

**Addenda:**

1. Course offerings for May Term 2018 and Winter Term 2019
2. Spreadsheet of historical Intersession Price Points
3. "What is Intersession?" by Dr. Dean Nicholas

**Submitted by:**

Corliss Hayes, MSL US Intersession Coordinator  
Katie Howarth, MSL US English Teacher  
Karen Robinson, MSL US College Counselor

## **29. School Life: Extended Day, Before and After School Care Programs**

### **Overview:**

Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy is committed to the vision of developing the whole person, and instilling a lifelong passion for learning, leading and serving. Extended Day Programs play a unique and vital role realizing this vision. Each year more families seek extended supervision for their children. The school has developed solutions that go well beyond supervision and afford families and students much greater opportunities. It is the privilege of the school and faculty to serve the families and students with such extensive services. Extended Day Programs advance the school's vision, mission, and core values. Extended day/before school/after school programs offer a vibrant sense of community. The school offers the following programs:

#### **a. Blake Lindner Thompson Early Childhood Learning Center for PK2-PK4**

Students can arrive as early as 7:00 a.m. with dismissal at various times up to 6:00 p.m. Eaglet Camp is an additional day care program available for children enrolled in the PK2-PK4 program. Eaglet Camp begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 5:00 p.m. on conference days, special event days, and selected school break days.

#### **b. Edyth B. Lindner Elementary**

Edyth B. Lindner Elementary School permits students K-3 to arrive as early as 7:30 a.m. with dismissal at 3:15 p.m. and parents may choose the fee-based after school care at Eagles Landing with pickup at 6:00 p.m. All schedules, fees, descriptions and regulations are detailed on the myLower School Webpage. The Eagles Landing After School Program currently serves approximately 50 students and is designed to provide quality, regular, ongoing childcare throughout the school year for CHCA's Lower Elementary families. This program is not designed for drop-in nor short-term, periodic childcare needs. The program is open on all regular, full school days.

#### **c. Lower School 4-6**

The Upper Elementary School (grades 4-6) allows students to arrive as early as 7:30 a.m. Students gather in the Upper Elementary cafeteria where they can socialize with classmates. Before school supervision is provided at no charge. Parents may choose the fee-based after school care at Eagles Zone (EZ) with pickup at 6:00 p.m. All schedules, fees, descriptions and regulations are detailed on the myLower School Webpage.

#### **d. Armleder PK-6**

Students may arrive to school as early as 7:30 a.m. with class beginning at 8:00 a.m. Students then move to their classrooms and the school day ends at 2:50 p.m. Parents may choose the fee-based after school care at the Armleder Achievers Program with pickup at 5:30 p.m. The program provides a Christ-centered, fun, and safe atmosphere where Armleder students can develop their identity in Christ while focusing on academic and social skills. All schedules, fees, descriptions and regulations are detailed on the myArmleder School Webpage.

**e. Upper School 7-8**

Before school care is not needed. Students are free to be in hallways at lockers as early as 7:30 a.m. Parents may choose the fee-based After School Room (ASR) with pickup at 5:45 p.m. All schedules, fees, descriptions and regulations are detailed on the myUpper School Webpage.

All North Campus After School Care Programs for grades K-8 and the Armleder After School Room are closed on all early dismissal days, faculty in-service days, conference days, holidays, and holiday breaks. Normal program hours are:

- Eagles Landing: 3:15-6:00 p.m.
- Eagles Zone: 3:15-6:00 p.m.
- After School Room: 3:15-5:45 p.m.
- Armleder Achievers After School Room: 2:50-5:30 p.m.

Eagles Landing provides a safe place where students can build relationships, be creative, achieve homework goals, have fun and more. Our staff is experienced in childcare and is enthusiastic about seeing each child each day. Children have many activity options as they transition from one room to the next, including the cafeteria for a provided snack, gym, computer lab, library, and playground. Children are escorted to and from extra-curricular activities while in our care.

Eagles Zone provides a safe place where students can build relationships, be creative, achieve homework goals, have fun, and more. Students transition between activities, including the cafeteria for a provided snack, library, Innovation Space, and playground. Students with scheduled activities on the Founders' Campus (such as music lessons) may sign themselves out to attend their activity with a parent's written permission.

Upper School 7-8 After School Room (ASR) is a teacher-supervised, pre-registered "pay-to-stay" program designed to provide your student with a space for quiet activity and homework until they are picked up for the day or transition to a scheduled after school activity (sports, etc.) All students remaining on campus at the end of a school day must be in a supervised activity or the After-School Room. Students have considerable freedom within ASR, but most choose to finish homework. No snacks are normally provided, but students are free to eat what they bring with them if they clean up after themselves.

Armleder Achiever Students are under the care and supervision of the Director and her assistant. Snack time, materials and activities mentioned above are much the same except for the addition of time allotted for homework and study. This program does not require licensure and utilizes the Armleder School After School Room and gym.

**Strengths:**

1. Highly trained Christ-centered professionals collaborate as a team to provide age-appropriate materials and stimulating activities, allowing opportunities for academic, social, emotional, and spiritual achievement.
2. All programs are ranking above the benchmark per constituent survey.

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3. At the lower elementary level enrichment activities, as well as individual talents and gifts, are incorporated in the program.
4. At the upper elementary level there is a loose structure much like the lower elementary allowing freedom to the student that is age appropriate for grades 5-6.
5. At the Upper School After School Room provide reasonably priced care and a quiet environment for students to work on homework or read to meet parent needs for care.

**Challenges:**

1. Maintaining affordable, quality care at for an ever-growing population of students and families requesting care outside the scheduled school day.
2. Managing the business part of program operations by care personnel.
3. Having the facilities, materials, transportation and support staff available.
4. At Founders' Campus not having the gym for large group play is difficult during inclement weather.

**Plans and Priorities:**

1. Review the policies, procedures and administration of our Extended Day Programs/ Before and After School Care Programs ongoing.
2. After School Care/Extended Day Staff will review findings and present any recommendations to the CHCA administration for consideration with the understanding that the administration will consider those based on priority of importance, timeframe and/or funds/resource that would be required.
3. Additional personnel or CHCA Upper School student volunteers to lead break groups focusing on special interests like cooking, writing, fine arts, and athletic "workshops."
4. Consider special field trips or outings.
5. Seek opportunities to host special performing groups or guest speakers.
6. Each year plan for the after-care leaders to meet and brainstorm possibilities for the development of each program.

**Addenda:**

1. Edyth B. Lindner Elementary Eagles Landing
2. Founders' Campus Upper Elementary Eagles Zone
3. Founders' Campus Upper School Gr 7-8 After School Room
4. Armleder School Armleder Achievers Program

**Submitted by:**

Kathy Wesson, Upper Elementary 4-6 Administrative Assistant, Committee Chair  
Cathy Andry, EBL Kindergarten Teacher, Eagles Landing Coordinator  
Cyndi Morgan, Armleder Grade 1 Teacher  
Sharon Frankart, Enrichment Program Coordinator