

BLACKBURN STUDY CENTER

Family Handbook



Blackburn Study Center Family Handbook

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Blackburn's Vision and Mission 1 | |
| Educational Philosophy | 2 |
| Statement of Faith 3 | |
| Statement of Non-Discrimination Policy | 4 |
| Communication Policy | 5 |
| Parental Involvement | 6 |
| Parent of the Day (POD) Responsibilities | 7 |
| Student Rules of Conduct 8 | |
| Discipline Policy 10 | 9 |
| Dress Code 11-12 | |
| Attendance Policy | B |
| Class Preparation Policy | 14 |
| Home Assignments 15 | |
| <i>A La Carte</i> Classes | 16 |

2005-2006 Calendar

17

Snow Cancellation Policy

17

Tuition and Fees

18

A CLASSICAL AND CHRISTIAN HOME SCHOOL STUDY CENTER

Vision

Our goal is to glorify God by equipping students with the tools necessary for a lifetime of learning and encouraging them to live and think within a Christian worldview grounded in the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to support and enhance the efforts of home schooling families by providing classical and Christian tutorial services emphasizing the methodology of the trivium, the educational foundation of our Western culture.

Christ-Centered

In all its levels and teaching, Blackburn Study Center seeks to:

1. Teach all subjects as parts of an integrated whole with the Scriptures at the center, helping students to love God with all their minds and hearts.
2. Provide a clear example of biblical Christian life through our staff and Board members.
3. Encourage every child to begin and develop his relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ.

Classical

In all its levels and teaching, Blackburn Study Center seeks to:

1. Emphasize grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric in all subjects. (See definitions below.)

Grammar: The fundamental facts and rules of each subject, and basic data that exhibit those rules.

Dialectic: The ordered relationship of particulars in each subject

Rhetoric: The coherent, articulate expression of truths learned in the grammar and dialectic stages.

2. Encourage every student to develop a love for learning and live up to his academic potential.
3. Provide an orderly atmosphere conducive to the attainment of the above goals.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

1. God enjoins parents, not the Church or State to “bring children up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:4.) Therefore, we seek to honor and assist, not usurp, the role of parents in teaching their children.
2. We believe that God’s character is revealed in His Word and in every facet of creation. Therefore, we teach that all knowledge is interrelated and instructs us about God Himself.
3. God commands us to love Him with our minds as well as with our hearts. (Matthew 22:37.) Therefore, we seek to individually challenge children at all levels and teach them how to learn, through the centuries old classical method.
4. We want to help parents teach their children that all they do should be done “heartily, as unto the Lord.” (Colossians 3:23). Therefore, we seek to encourage quality academic work and maintain high standards of conduct.
5. Above all, our highest goal is to provide a rigorous educational environment that challenges our students to live and think from a Christian worldview.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following statements are the basic elements of Christianity that will be taught, and which the policies and practices of Blackburn Study Center shall reflect, at all grade levels.

1. We believe the Bible is the Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and the final authority in faith and life.
2. We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe the God we serve is the creator and sustainer of all things, and the source of all truth. He is holy, righteous, good, loving and full of mercy.
3. We believe that God upholds, disposes and governs all creatures, actions and things, and that God, in His ordinary providence, makes use of means, yet is free to work without, above or against them at His pleasure.
4. We believe that because of Adam's sin all mankind is in rebellion against God. For the salvation of such lost and sinful men, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary.
5. We believe in the true deity and full humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe in His virgin birth, in his sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father and in His personal return in power and glory.
6. We believe that salvation is by grace through faith alone, and that good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith.
7. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
8. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; those who are saved to the resurrection of life and those that are lost to the resurrection of damnation.

We (I) acknowledge and agree that all classes offered by Blackburn Study Center will be taught in a manner consistent with Blackburn Study Center's Statement of Faith. (Signed by both parents.)

Father's Signature

Date

Mother's Signature

Date

Are there any points in Blackburn Study Center's Statement of Faith that are inconsistent with your convictions? _____. If so, please explain:

08/11/05

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Blackburn Study Center is a private educational institution. It does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, sex, physical disability, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies and other administrative policies.

08/11/05

COMMUNICATION POLICY

We consider it a great privilege to assist families in educating their children. We are committed to upholding and supporting parental authority in the lives of students. We also recognize that ours is a learning community, where families are working together to fulfill shared goals. These relationships require, and we strongly encourage, prompt and clear communication.

In the event of conflict, communication should follow the biblical standards set forth in Matthew 18 and James 3. In all matters, conflict should be handled discreetly and carefully, while believing and speaking the best about each other. The failure to follow those biblical standards can be deeply harmful to individuals and institutions, and may result in action by Blackburn Study Center, up to and including expulsion, at the Board's discretion.

- **Parents to Tutors:** If an issue should arise regarding individual tutor rules or procedures, the parent should speak to the tutor before discussing the matter with those in authority over the tutor.
- **Parents to Administrator:** If an issue should arise concerning school rules, procedures, school programs, finances, facilities, curriculum, or tutors, parents are encouraged to send an e-mail to Blackburn Study Center's Administrator, Amy Mee, at **blackburnadmin@comcast.net**. Parents may also submit matters by e-mail to Board members for consideration at regularly scheduled Board meetings.
- **Tutors to Parents:** If an issue should arise concerning a student's learning or behavior, tutors should speak directly with the student's parents before discussing the matter with Board members.

08/11/05

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Although parents of Blackburn students have employed tutors to help meet their goals, they retain the primary responsibility for the education and upbringing of their children. *Blackburn Study Center strongly recommends and encourages close parental involvement.* Each family is expected to participate in the following ways:

- Pray for our children, their tutors, and the direction of their education.
- Oversee your children's class work, and work with them on any assignments to be completed at home.
- Provide diligent instruction on non-study center days and in the additional subjects that comprise the balance of your children's curricula.
- Attend all parent-tutor conferences. Informal conferences may be held if necessary at the request of the parent or tutor.
- Be aware of and praise your child's progress.
- Read and respond (when necessary) to all paperwork sent home by Blackburn Study Center. This is essential to the efficient running of the Study Center.
- Serve as Parent of the Day on a rotational basis.
- Communicate your ideas for improvement. We want to hear from you!

08/11/05

PARENT OF THE DAY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Parent of the Day (POD) must arrive at the study center at 7:45 a.m. on his/her scheduled day.

The POD will be responsible to make sure opening room and classes are arranged for the day's activities.

The POD will assist children who are dropped off in preparing for the day (i.e., storing coats, snacks, and settling-in).

During class time, the POD will be available to assist the tutors as necessary (e.g., helping students, making copies, assisting in discipline, relaying messages, gathering supplies, etc.). In general, the POD's responsibility is to facilitate and maximize the tutors' instruction time.

During snack break, the POD will be the responsible adult (tutor is on break). It will be the POD's responsibility to keep order and see that the students complete their assigned duties (clean up, etc.). It will also be the POD's responsibility to see that children return to their classrooms at the appropriate time.

At the day's end, the POD will ensure that the children are in lines to await their ride. Again, the tutor is "off" and it will be the POD's sole responsibility to see that children are safely delivered to their parents.

The POD will make a final review of the church's condition, making certain that furniture is returned to appropriate location, and that supplies are stored for future use.

Note: The tutors and the POD are representatives of the Study Center on class days; please dress accordingly so that a professional atmosphere is maintained.

08/11/05

STUDENT RULES OF CONDUCT

This is the basic code of conduct that Blackburn Study Center requires all students to obey.

1. Students are expected to observe Christian standards of behavior and conversation. For example, students must speak honestly, respect their peers and submit to authority.
2. Prompt and cheerful obedience is expected. Talking back or arguing with tutors, administrator or the Parent of the Day is not permitted.
3. Students must comply with the dress code in all respects.
4. In order to avoid litter and distraction, chewing gum and electronic musical devices or games are not permitted.
5. Students are expected to be aware of and avoid the off-limit areas of the church building. Students should not play on or around cars in the parking lot.
6. Running is not allowed in the church building.
7. Students are expected to treat all class materials and facilities with respect and care.
8. Students are expected to treat one another with kindness and respect. Teasing, criticizing, name-calling and other forms of verbal or physical abuse are not permitted.
9. Students are expected to treat prayer and class discussion with proper reverence. Jokes, songs, or behavior that trivialize or exhibit disrespect towards God are not permitted.
10. Public displays of affection in the context of boy/girl relationships are not permitted at Blackburn Study Center. Jokes and teasing on this subject are not permitted.
11. Any missed work due to absences should be completed in a timely manner as set forth in the Home Assignment Policy.
12. Students may not speak out of turn during class time and must raise their hand and be recognized by the tutor prior to speaking.
13. Clowning around and other forms of disruptive class behavior are prohibited.
14. It is expected that students will work diligently, participate in class discussions and concentrate on their work while in school.
15. Students accept responsibility to complete all homework assignments in a timely manner.
16. Students recognize that they are to be held responsible for their conduct, both in action and attitude, by their parents, tutors and those in authority at Blackburn Study Center.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

We will seek to provide an environment where students are encouraged and challenged to exemplify Christian behavior. It is very important that our children feel safe and secure in a loving and nurturing environment. Actions that jeopardize the safety and well-being of students and staff must be dealt with firmly and expediently.

At Blackburn Study Center, discipline will consist of restitution, apologies (public and private), swift and measured punishment (corporal punishment is left to parental discretion; it will never be administered by the tutor or the POD) and restoration of fellowship. Parents will be made aware of disciplinary action as soon as possible after each incident, as well as any other concerns or warnings given to a student by a tutor or POD.

The tutor will carry out the majority of day-to-day discipline. There are instances, however, where a stronger warning or more severe penalty is needed. The following offenses may necessitate such action:

1. Disrespect shown to tutor or POD;
2. Dishonesty in any situation while in class, including lying, cheating or stealing;
3. Rebellion, i.e., outright disobedience in response to instructions;
4. Fighting, i.e., striking in anger with the intention to harm another;
5. Unkind, obscene, vulgar, or profane language as well as using the Lord's name in vain.
6. Continued disruptive class behavior.

If any of the above actions occur, the student will be sent from the classroom to the administrator and will not return for the remainder of that class. At the completion of class, an apology from the student to the offended tutor will be required. The administrator may require the student to meet with the headmaster who will decide whether further action should be taken. Restitution, parental attendance of classes with the child, or other measures deemed appropriate may be requested. In severe cases, where there is no change in the student's actions or assistance from the parents, the child will be expelled for the remainder of the academic year.

1. Suspension: The Board will normally follow the protocol below. In cases where change is evident and the student appears repentant, exceptions are possible. The Board will determine in its sole discretion (in consultation with the tutor(s)), if an exception is to be made. Appeals for exceptions will not be recognized.

FIRST OFFENSE - Warning, restitution/apologies, suspension for remainder of the day. (Missed work must be turned in within one day of suspension or a grade of zero will be recorded.)

SECOND OFFENSE - Restitution/apologies, suspension for two class days. (Work must be turned in within two days of returning to class or a grade of zero will be recorded.)

THIRD OFFENSE - Restitution/apologies, suspension for four classes, (Work must be turned in within two days of returning to class or a grade of zero will be recorded.).

FOURTH OFFENSE - Student will be expelled for the remainder of the academic year.

2. Expulsion: We realize that expelling a student is a very serious matter and should always be carefully dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Repentance, restitution (repairing damage through work, apologies, etc.) and forgiveness are fundamental to our discipline policy. However, should a student and his parents fail to eliminate behavioral problems before a fourth offense occurs, the student will be expelled.

3. Serious Misconduct: Should a student commit an act with such serious consequences that the Board deems it necessary, the protocol defined above may be bypassed and suspension or expulsion imposed immediately. Examples of such serious misconduct may include, without limitation: acts that seriously endanger the safety of other students or staff members; gross violence/vandalism to the facilities; violations of law; or other deliberate acts in clear contradiction of Scriptural commands that threaten serious harm to others. Students may be also subject to discipline for serious misconduct which occurs after Blackburn Study Center hours.

4. Re-admission: Should an expelled student desire to be re-admitted to Blackburn Study Center at a later date, the Board will make its decision based upon the student's attitude and circumstances at the time of re-application.

08/11/05

DRESS CODE

The following dress code has been implemented in the interest of harmony between students and parents. We believe the dress code will enhance the atmosphere of the classroom and orderliness of students.

In our experience, the dress code has not been an issue with most students; however, a very small minority of students have repeatedly attempted to violate the dress code. When that has occurred, tutors, administrators and/or board members have spent an inordinate amount of time and energy dealing with the infractions. Please note that deviations from the dress code will be addressed in the following manner:

First time violations, with no other violation of the code of conduct (arguing or disrespect shown) will result in a warning, write-up in the student's record and an email to the parents. Subsequent violations will result in the student's removal from class until his parent can bring the proper clothing. Additionally, the incident will be recorded in the student's record and an email will be sent to his parents.

Boys:

- Navy blue, black, or khaki dress slacks worn with a solid belt when there are belt loops (no cargo or carpenter pants, 5-pocket pants, or denim).
- Navy blue, black, or khaki dress shorts worn with a solid belt when there are belt loops (warm weather only).
- Solid blue, white, blue pinstriped, or black long or short sleeved Oxford or polo shirts. Shirts must have collars.
- Solid, plain white, blue or black turtlenecks, sweaters, sweater vests or fleece may be worn in cold months. (Sweaters must be worn with turtlenecks or collared shirts.)
- White, navy, black, or tan socks.

Girls:

- Navy blue, black, or khaki skirts or dresses. All skirts must be worn at the waist level, not at the hips. (Dresses must have a modest neckline: jewel neck or regulation collar. Jumpers may be worn with collared shirts or turtlenecks.)
- Solid blue, white, blue pinstriped, or black long or short-sleeved Oxford or polo shirts or blouses. Shirts must have collars.
- Shirts must be plain (no ruffles, lace, trim, etc.). They may have pointy, Peter Pan or Oxford collars, 3/4 length sleeve is permissible; darts and tailored tight shirts are not.
- Solid, plain white, black, or blue turtlenecks, sweaters and sweater vests or fleece may be worn in cold months. Turtlenecks and sweaters must be accompanied by a collared shirt.
- Navy blue, black, or khaki dress slacks may be worn in extremely cold weather (no cargo or carpenter pants, 5-pocket pants, or denim). "Extremely cold weather" means the temperature does not exceed 32° F for the day.
- In order to have a standard place to check if it's "*skirt weather*" or "*pants weather*" for Blackburn girls, the following link is provided: <http://www.weather.com/weather/local/15237>. Check it on Sunday & Tuesday evenings.

If the forecasted high temperature is 32 degrees or below, girls have the option of wearing slacks to school the next day.

- White, dark, or neutral-colored socks or stockings.

A neat, modest appearance is expected of both boys and girls at all times. Tight clothing is not modest. To encourage this, the following guidelines will be observed:

- Skirts and dresses should cover the knees.
- Shirts for both boys and girls should be tucked in at all times.
- Shoes should be neat, clean and should not have open toe or heel. No sneakers. No platform shoes or high heels.
- No tattoos or body piercing (boys and girls) with the exception of one pair of earrings (girls only).
- Hair should be kept neat, clean, a natural color and out of the face.
- Boys' hair should be no longer than collar length (no ponytails).
- Light, natural-looking make-up and nail polish may be worn with parental permission. Unnatural makeup or nail polish is not permitted
- Coats, including denim jackets may not be worn during class time.

When in doubt, bring in the clothing item and ask the administrator if you may wear it next time.

08/11/05

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A student enrolled at Blackburn Study Center is expected to be present and on time every day the Study Center is in session.

Blackburn Study Center Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:10 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. Doors will be open at 7:50 a.m. for student arrival.

1. Short-term Absences: If a student needs to be absent from the Study Center for one to two class days, for any reason, the parents should contact Board by note or phone as soon as possible.
2. Long-term Absences: If a student needs to be absent for three or more consecutive class days, the parents should notify the Study Center in writing explaining the circumstances. This will permit Blackburn to inform the tutor(s) and to compile the necessary schoolwork that the student would otherwise miss. Notice should be given as soon as possible to limit the amount of missed schoolwork.
3. Extended Absences: The Study Center will gladly cooperate with families taking their children from Blackburn for vacations, trips, etc. However, when extended absences are voluntary (i.e., not due to emergency or illness), all schoolwork should be completed within the time specified by the tutor(s). We recommend that to the extent possible students complete their assignments before planned, extended absences. This eliminates the need to work on vacation and complete make-up work.
4. Make-up work: Students may take make-up tests and submit any other make-up work before or after class. Students or their parents should discuss these arrangements with the tutor and take the initiative in completing the missed work.
5. Lateness: Students are required to arrive and be ready to begin morning prayer and announcements promptly at 8:10 a.m. The Study Center will open by 7:50 a.m. to allow students to arrive and complete any necessary activities to be ready on time.

08/11/05

CLASS PREPARATION POLICY

Blackburn's tutors will not notify parents if a child is unprepared or misses an assignment. Parents will receive two student progress evaluations: one at mid-year and another at the end of the year.

Unprepared students will not be permitted to hold back the rest of the class. For instance, if one student has not purchased his literature book, the rest of the class will proceed as scheduled. In some classes, tutors assign activities that require the students to know material in order to participate meaningfully. If students are prepared, they may participate in the activity. Those students that are not prepared should sit quietly and watch. Unprepared students may also be sent to study hall to complete the assignment that wasn't completed at home.

If a student's lack of preparedness is disruptive to other students, he will be removed from class.

08/11/05

HOME ASSIGNMENTS

Blackburn Study Center tutors will give home assignments to their students to reinforce concepts taught in the classroom. The principal reasons for home assignments are as follows:

- Students often need some amount of extra practice in new or specific concepts, skills, or facts. In certain subjects, regular practice at home may be necessary for mastery. Therefore, the tutor may assign homework to allow for necessary practice.
- Repeated, short periods of practice or study of new information are often a better way to learn than one long period of study.
- Home assignments enable parents to monitor the current topics of study in class.

08/11/05

A LA CARTE CLASSES

We strongly recommend that students enroll for all classes offered by Blackburn Study Center for the following reasons:

As students progress through the learning stages, they will benefit from having been exposed to the full range of classes in previous years;

Tutorial instruction will be more “seamless” and interactive from year to year if all or most students have taken the full range of classes in previous years;

It fosters the development of a learning community consisting of entire families who are pursuing classical and Christian education;

It reduces the administrative burden on Blackburn Study Center.

However, Blackburn Study Center exists in the first instance to serve home schooling families, and we presume that parents are able to make the best decisions concerning their children’s education.

Accordingly, in the event that parents want to enroll their student(s) in less than all classes offered by Blackburn, our offerings are available on an *a la carte* basis.

The tuition for classes taken on an *a la carte* basis is \$165.00 per class per semester. For all subjects, students who are enrolled in the full range of Blackburn’s classes will be given priority over students who wish to take a class on an *a la carte* basis.

08/11/05

2005-2006 CALENDAR **BLACKBURN STUDY CENTER**

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| August 29, 2005 | Orientation Night at North Park Church |
| September 12, 2005 | First day of classes |
| November 2, 2005 | End of first quarter |
| November 21, 23, 2005 | Thanksgiving Break |
| December 19, 21, 26 and 28 | Christmas Break |
| January 19, 2006 | End of first semester |
| March 16, 2006 | End of third quarter |
| April 17, 19 2006 | Easter Break |
| May 18, 2006 (tentative) | Last Day of Classes |

SNOW CANCELLATION POLICY

1. With respect to cancellations due to snow and inclement weather, Blackburn Study Center will follow the decision of North Allegheny School District.
2. If North Allegheny School District delays classes due to cold weather, Blackburn Study Center will be open as usual with no delay.
3. If North Allegheny School District delays classes for two hours and the roads are improving, Blackburn Study Center will be open, beginning at 9:00 a.m.
4. Listen to KDKA (1020 AM) for information and check your email by 6:30 AM for information regarding delays.

08/11/05

TUITION AND FEES

2005 - 2006 SCHOOL YEAR

| | |
|---|---|
| One Time Application Fee: | Due with application, \$50.00 (non-refundable) per student. |
| Book/Material Fees: | Will be assessed. |
| Tutoring Service Fees: | \$130 per month, per student |
| <i>A La Carte</i> Tutoring Service Fees: | \$325 per class per year for classes that meet twice/week |
| | \$165 per class per year for classes that meet once/week |

Payments are due on the first of each month starting with August and ending in May (subject to change). Families may choose to pay the full year's tuition or one term's tuition in advance. Alternatively, families will be asked to submit five (5) pre-dated checks at the Orientation Meeting and again in the middle of December, before Christmas break, to simplify the collection of fees. There will be no month-to-month tuition payment plan. A fee of \$5.00 per child per month will be charged for late checks and a fee of \$30.00 will be charged for dishonored checks.

All checks not collected by the Orientation Meeting must be mailed prior to the start of the term to Blackburn Study Center, c/o Mr. Mark Moyer, 231 Walnut Road, McDonald, PA 15057. This ensures proper receipt and application of all fees.

Blackburn Study Center makes financial decisions based upon its projected annual revenue. Fees and tuition need to be paid promptly in order to make payments to tutors, facilities, and other financial commitments in a timely manner. Therefore, tuition commitments are made for the whole school year and are not refundable.

In the event that a student who is registered in Blackburn Study Center on a full-time basis wishes to withdraw from Blackburn Study Center between August 1 and the first day of Blackburn Study Center's school year, the student's parents remain obligated to pay one-quarter of the full year's tuition, unless the student is able to be replaced by another student within one month of withdrawal. In the event that a student who is registered in Blackburn Study Center on a full-time basis wishes to withdraw from Blackburn Study Center *after* the first day of Blackburn Study Center's school year, the student's parents remain obligated to pay one-half of the full year's tuition, unless the student is able to be replaced by another student within one month of withdrawal.

With respect to students attending Blackburn Study Center on an *a la carte* basis, if the student wishes to drop a class(es) between August 1 and the first day of Blackburn Study Center's school year, the parents remain responsible to pay Blackburn Study Center one-quarter of the full year's tuition per dropped class, in addition to the full tuition for those classes for which the student remains enrolled. If the student wishes to drop a class(es) *after* the first day of Blackburn Study

Center's school year, the parents remain responsible to pay Blackburn Study Center one-half of the balance of the full year's tuition per dropped class, in addition to the full tuition for those classes for which the student remains enrolled.

Waiting List: In the event of a full class, a child may be placed on our waiting list after all other admission requirements have been fulfilled. You will be notified in writing of your numbered position on this list. You may withdraw from the list at any time.