



Family Participation Agreement

Parents and students agree to comply with the policies herein as a requirement for participation in the Centreville Homeschool Enrichment Support Services (CHESS) program.

CHESS Vision

Our vision at CHESS is to help parents homeschool through high school by providing classes that enrich students' lives, develop their abilities, and challenge them to explore their life's purpose.

CHESS Mission

CHESS provides courses that enrich the homeschool. Students benefit from working among their peers in a personal, small-group environment that encourages excellence, led by experienced, homeschool-friendly teachers who evaluate their work and challenge them to think. CHESS helps parents homeschool through high school by offering courses such as foreign language, lab science and writing, as well as subjects that flourish in a group environment. We also offer college-level courses at the high school pace, which allow students time for mastery of the material. CHESS helps students prepare for higher education and develop skills for life.

CHESS operates on three basic principles: 1. Commitment to the group learning experience (regular attendance and completion of assignments), 2. Respect for others, 3. Communication

Courses offered are for seventh through twelfth grade students.

The Instructor's Role

Instructors will teach the course subject as stated in their course prospectus, provide weekly homework assignments in the classroom and posted on the CHESS website, provide semester progress reports in a timely way, contact the parent if a behavioral problem arises or if homework is not being completed (according to their class policies), teach from a Biblical world view, and be positive and supportive of homeschooling.

The Student's Role

Students will be on time for class; attend all classes; comply with the teacher's prospectus requirements; meet assignment deadlines; participate respectfully in class discussions; come prepared for class which includes bringing texts, completed assignments, and all required supplies needed to participate fully in the class; respect all teachers, administrators and their helpers, fellow students, and the church property and building.

The Parent's Role

Parents will see that their student arrives on time and prepared for class, review and monitor their homework assignments, see that they are completed on time, and satisfy all requirements as outlined on the teacher's prospectus. Parents will notify the teacher regarding absences and work with the teacher to make up missed homework. It is the responsibility of the parent to make the final judgment of the performance of their student in each class, record and document their grade, and monitor home study hours. If parents have questions or concerns about a class, they will first communicate directly with the teacher.

Administrator's Role

The administrator and her helpers hire teachers as independent contractors; determine which classes will run; arrange the schedule; build and maintain the website; process registrations and payments; pay teachers, rent, insurance, and scholarships; assist in disciplinary matters and conflict resolution; act as facility liaison; and generally take care of policy and paperwork so the teachers can concentrate on teaching. You are encouraged to contact the administrator regarding situations of family duress and to offer suggestions and feedback about the program.

Communication

Contacting the Administration

Tara Taylor
Administrator
admin@chessclasses.org
(703) 753-1901 (home) Weekdays from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
(571) 264-3535 (cell) While CHESS is in session
-Mondays from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Wednesdays from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm

Kathy Kuhl (off campus)
Administrative Consultant
kathy.kuhl@chessclasses.org
(703) 715-8697 (home)
(703) 216-7978 (cell)

Michelle Miller
Coordinator
coordinator@chessclasses.org
571 276-8053

For emergencies while CHESS is in session, if you are unable to leave a message on Tara's cell phone, call the Centreville Baptist Church office at (703) 830-3333 to relay a message to Tara Taylor.

Email

All families must have access to an email account and check it regularly. Parents and students should immediately notify the administrator and teachers if their email malfunctions, or if their email address or other contact information changes. Families should check their email at least twice a week and before each class. If by mid-August you are not receiving email notices from the administrator, please contact us! If a class is canceled due to an emergency during the year, families will be notified via email. Teacher emails may be found on their course prospectus or you can email them through the CHESS website.

Website & Facebook Page

On our website, www.chessclasses.org, you can search and apply for classes, find each course prospectus, homework assignments, and policy documents. You can view a gallery of our students' work, find helpful suggestions written by our teachers, and sell your used CHESS textbooks. You can also view a video about CHESS and find the link to our Facebook page, [CHESS-Centreville Homeschool Enrichment Support Services](#) where we post social event reminders and boast about our students.

Inclement Weather Notification

CHESS does not follow the county's decisions. In case of snow or other inclement weather, the administration will email a notification by 8:00 a.m. on Mondays or 10:00 a.m. on Wednesdays if classes are canceled. Many of the conditions that affect the roads for public school students are not an issue in the afternoon, when CHESS meets.

Privacy

The personal information collected by CHESS and Study Place is used exclusively for the CHESS program. Emails to the group are limited to items relevant to CHESS or high schools students.

Participation Previews

Participation Previews are mandatory orientations (or review for returning families) to the CHESS program that explain the roles that members of the program play in the education process at CHESS. At the meeting we also collect post-dated checks, share last-minute information, and enlist setup workers and substitutes. Both new and returning students and at least one of their parents are **required** to attend one of the three Participation Previews in order to receive a \$35 per student Registration Refund at the end of the year. The Participation Previews will meet at Centreville Baptist Church at the following times:

August 20 from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

August 26 from 10:00 -11:00 a.m.

September 1 from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

CHESS Expo

The Expo in April is an exciting opportunity for families to hear a brief word from our teachers, meet them, ask questions, and find out what makes them passionate about their subject(s). Some families will add or change their class choices after attending the Expo and hearing directly from our teachers. Parents and students grades 7-12 are welcome to attend, as well as younger siblings however no child care will be provided. It is strongly suggested that registered families meet their teachers at least once before the classes begin in September; the Expo is a great time to do that.

Open House

We host an Open House in the spring each year for families who are interested in the program, as well as for currently participating families. Visitors can sit in on the classes throughout the day. Visiting a class is a great way to determine if a class is a good fit for your student, in addition to a careful reading of the teacher's prospectus for the class.

First Day of Class

It is strongly suggested that at least one parent attend the first class with his/her student. This is an opportunity to connect with the teacher and get excited about what your student will be learning over the course of the year. Childcare for younger siblings featuring Veggie Tales videos will be available during the first day of class to allow parents to attend classes with their students. Parents are welcome to occasionally audit the classes during the year.

Academics

Grades

Each teacher will write a prospectus, which will include their policies on (1) course objectives, (2) grading scale, (3) grading criteria, and (4) late homework/quizzes/tests. Prospectuses for each class will be available at the Expo and on our website, www.chessclasses.org.

Teachers will provide two semester grade reports in January and June. Whereas grades or evaluations are issued by the teachers, it is the responsibility of the parent to make the final judgment of the performance of their student and record the grade on the student's transcript. It is also the responsibility of the parent to monitor home study hours. The State of Virginia requires 120-180 hours of study in order to receive a full Carnegie unit of credit for a high school course. This translates to 2.6-4.5 hours of

study per week in addition to class time for CHESS classes meeting once per week, or 1.6-3.5 hours for classes meeting twice per week. (Completing a textbook also qualifies for a Carnegie unit.) Parents should make sure that their students devote an appropriate amount of time to study apart from class. CHESS is not a school and does not provide transcripts.

If a student drops a class, the teacher is not obligated to issue a semester grade for a class whose assessment is based upon a full year of participation.

Honors Option Classes

Students looking for more challenging courses may choose the honors level option of a class. Parents should record an honors class as such on the high school transcript and add .5 points to the grade point for that course. For example, if a student taking an honors course earns an "A," the grade point for that course would be 4.5 rather than 4.0. There is an additional fee of \$45 per annum for an honors option class. The fee is added to the total tuition payment after discounts have been applied.

Advanced Classes

Advanced courses prepare students to take the CLEP exam, but do not receive a weighted grade on the transcript.

Attendance

While many homeschoolers enjoy flexible schedules, the CHESS program is not designed to accommodate a spontaneous lifestyle. This is a fast paced 33 week program. Punctuality and regular attendance are expected. The hour (or two) that teachers have with the students each week is vital to covering the material and to communication. A student's absence in a class that meets once a week is the equivalent of missing one week of instruction, and, in many cases, it is impossible to make up what has been missed, e.g., classroom lecture and practice.

Absences are considered excused in the cases of illness, family duress, or annual testing. Travel, activities, competitions, and other choices are unexcused; every week your student misses a class for one of these reasons, it counts as an unexcused absence. A student may be dropped from any class upon incurring three unexcused absences.

Personal Holidays

The CHESS calendar lists the holidays that CHESS is scheduled not to meet. We respect your family's decision to observe other holidays during the year; however, absences taken for other holidays will be counted as planned absences.

Absences – What to do

For planned absences, parents (not the students) will notify the teacher at least **two weeks in advance** so that the student can pick up, complete, and turn in (if required) any homework due in advance. Students are expected to keep up with the homework assignments while they are absent.

For unplanned absences, parents (not the students) will notify the teacher within **24 hours of the class meeting date** to follow up on missed homework assignments and find out what needs to be done to keep the student on track.

If no reason is given by the parent for an absence, it will be considered unexcused. Please copy the administrator when you notify the teacher about an absence.

Tardiness

A student is tardy if they arrive after the classroom door has been shut. Students that are tardy may not enter the class until they have obtained an "Administrative Notice" from the administrator or assistant. After obtaining an "Administrative Notice," students should go directly to class, enter quietly, hand the

notice to their teacher and be seated. Teachers are not obligated to make special accommodations for students who arrive late for class - the students are responsible for what they missed.

Parents should make every effort to communicate with the administration in situations of family duress and emergencies. Generally, situations that could have been prevented are considered unexcused. Repeated tardiness will be considered noncompliance to the policy.

The administration will take the following action in reporting unexcused tardiness:

- On the first occurrence, a parent will be notified and the student will receive a copy of the administrative notice
- On the second occurrence, a parent will be notified and the student will receive a copy of the administrative notice
- On the third occurrence, a parent conference with the administration is required
- On the fourth occurrence, the student may be dropped from the class

Homework Assignments

It is the responsibility of the student to complete, on time, all homework, tests, quizzes, and other assignments—even those given while the student was absent or tardy. Homework for each class will be given in class and posted weekly by the teacher on the CHESS website. To check on posted homework assignments, go to www.chessclasses.org and click on the *Families* tab, then *Homework*. If the information is unavailable on the website, parents should contact the teacher directly.

When the teacher determines that a student has not complied with their class policies they may issue an "Administrative Notice." Parents will be notified when an "Administrative Notice" has been issued by the teacher. If a student receives as many as 3 notices in a class, a parent meeting with the administrator is required. A student that incurs 4 notices may be dropped from the class.

Classes Meeting Twice a Week

The policies above for tardiness, absences, and homework apply differently for classes that meet twice a week. At the end of the first semester (16 weeks), if a student has not been dropped from a class, the administrators will not count the first semester's administrative notices towards the second semester. For example, if a student was late twice in the first semester and late again in March, that counts as a first violation rather than a third.

Modified Assignments

If a parent wants to modify the teacher's guidelines for the class in any way, they should contact the teacher in advance and make a request. It is the teacher's discretion to allow any changes and/or allow a student to audit a class or continue if changes are made. If a parent modifies the assignments, and the student is permitted to remain in the class, the responsibility for grading will then fall to the parent.

Special Needs

Our program is not designed to serve special needs students, although we are sometimes able to do so. Our teachers have only 33 or 66 hours to cover a year's worth of material and do not have time for remedial work. If you have a child with learning challenges, medical conditions, or is not at grade level for their age, and you think he or she can keep up with the pace of the work and the teacher's expectations, please discuss your child's special needs with the teacher before applying and provide details when you register. It is the teacher's discretion to allow a student to take their class when there are special needs. If it is determined during the course of the year that a student's needs are making excessive demands upon the teacher or the class, the student may be dropped from the class.

Conduct

Code of Conduct

CHESS upholds a Biblical standard of respect, honor, and integrity for all who participate in the program. Students are to be respectful to all others, including adults and fellow students, in action, speech, and demeanor at all times.

Cheating and plagiarizing are serious violations. If a student is found to be cheating or plagiarizing a parent conference will be required including the student, teacher and administrator. Teachers may assign a grade of zero for the assignment, at their discretion. If there is a second occurrence, the student will be dropped from the class.

The administration and teachers reserve the right to limit and define appropriate content for all student produced work.

Disciplinary Action pertaining to Code of Conduct

When the administration determines that the code of conduct has been violated, the issue will be dealt with according to the level of offense, based upon the following guidelines. (The administration is not exclusively limited to this procedure.)

- A student may be given a verbal warning, and the parents may be notified
- A student may be removed from the class or location where the violation occurred and be placed under administrative supervision, and the parent will be notified
- A student may be dropped from the class where the violation occurred or expelled from the CHESS program

Resolving Conflict

We recognize that conflict is an opportunity for personal growth. Some conflicts can be quickly resolved by communication. Other conflicts may need a more studied approach. When there is a conflict, involved parties are encouraged to first go directly to the other person to understand interests and search for solutions, then to the administration if needed. While we know not all families involved in CHESS are Christian, CHESS aims to operate upon Biblical principles. We will deal with conflicts according to the *Peacemaker's Pledge*, a helpful summary from Peacemaker Ministries, which can be read here: http://www.peacemaker.net/site/c.aqKFLTOBIPH/b.958159/k.A440/Peacemakers_Pledge.htm. All CHESS participants agree that any claim related to this agreement shall be settled by mediation in accordance with the *Rules of the Institute for Christian Conciliation* which may be read here: <http://www.peacemaker.net/rules/>.

Attire

The standard for dress is **modesty** to allow students to focus on learning. Generally, clothing should draw the eye to the face rather than the form. Here are some standards to go by:

- Clothing should completely cover the torso, regardless of posture
- No skin-tight garments (leggings and tights are not considered pants)
- Dresses and skirts should reach at least to the knees
- Shorts should reach half-way to the knee or longer as measured from the inseam
- No spaghetti straps, shoulderless garments, midriffs or low-cut tops, etc.
- No exposed undergarments
- No clothing with offensive printed material
- Footwear is required at all times

Ask the administrator or student liaison if you need more clarification. Should a student's attire be deemed immodest or inappropriate by a teacher or administrator, the student may be asked to change clothing before attending class or supplementary clothes may be loaned to the student and parents will be notified.

Building Use

- Requests for the use of Centreville Baptist Church for any CHESS related activity must go through the administrator.
 - The church property and all its amenities must be treated with respect. If a student damages classroom materials, lab equipment, white boards, chairs, or other articles of property owned by CHESS or Centreville Baptist Church, his/her parents will be fined for the damages.
 - While in the lunch room, students are expected to promptly clean up all trash and crumbs for which they are responsible which includes running the vacuum when necessary
 - Students should notify administration if they spill a fluid other than water, so appropriate cleaning materials can be used
 - Bottled water only is allowed in rooms other than the lunch room
 - White boards are for teachers' use only
 - Students must walk at all times while in the building
 - Items such as lighters, matches, fireworks, weapons, toy weapons, and obscene/offensive printed or electronic media are prohibited. The administration reserves the right to determine obscenity or offensiveness.
 - Additional rules specific to the lunch room also apply and will be posted in the lunch room
- Please be aware that the lunch room is a privilege and not a right.

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices/Internet Use

Cell phones must be turned off in class. Outside of class, listening to music is OK, but no one else should be able to hear it. Electronic media content should be respectful to others and suitable for all ages. If a student chooses to access, share or view material of questionable content while at CHESS, or if their use of an electronic device becomes questionable or burdensome to others, the student may:

- Receive a warning
- Lose the use of electronic device(s) while at CHESS for the year
- Lose the privilege of staying on the premises when not in class, the student's parent would have to supervise them during any free periods

Dropping Off and Picking up Students

Do not park or wait in the fire lane while waiting for students. If parents expect any kind of delay when they drive up to the building, they should park their car in the parking lot, wait for their student to exit the building, and then drive around to pick them up or come in to get them. Please pick up your students promptly when their classes are over.

Sign In and Church Premises

We are guests of Centreville Baptist Church and have limited access to the building. Please enter and exit the building using the designated entrance (TBA). Each student must sign in upon arrival (no earlier than 9:15 a.m. on Mondays, 11:40 a.m. on Wednesdays). • Students have access to the assigned classrooms, lunch room, study hall, and courtyard (with permission from the lunch room monitor) only

Students are expected to remain on the CHESS hallway, the study hall or lunch room during CHESS class hours. Students may enter other parts of the building only with permission from an administrator or her helpers, must also sign out noting their location, and sign in upon their return. If a student wants to temporarily leave the premises for any reason, he/she must obtain permission from an administrator, sign out noting their location, and sign in upon their return. Students are to sign out when they leave for the day. No student is to leave the church property without obtaining consent from the administrator. Students should never leave the premises with someone other than their parent or their parent's designated driver.

Visitors

Visitors must obtain prior approval from the instructor and administrator before visiting a class. Parents are always welcome to observe classes when space permits. Only students that are registered for a class on a given day should be on the premises. Unsupervised siblings of students are not permitted on the premises.

Classes Meeting Off Premises

If a class meets outside of normal class times and is a teacher-led event, the policies that govern CHES apply to the event.