

Dear Parents,

One of the goals that we strive to accomplish here at Covenant Christian Academy is the building of Christian community. This means growing closer together as we grow closer to Christ. In an effort to promote the Christian community and provide unique elements in a Covenant Christian Academy education that build tradition and a healthy pride in the school, we are preparing to introduce a house system next week. Borrowing heavily from other classical schools (particularly the Geneva School in Boerne, TX) and the English boarding school system, the Covenant Christian Academy house system will be constructed using the following guidelines and rules.

The Covenant Christian Academy School House System

Reminiscent of traditional British schools, all Covenant Christian Academy students' grades 9-12 (and all faculty) will be divided into Houses. In the traditional boarding schools the students actually lived in and with these houses, but our system is a bit less ambitious. Besides the natural fun that comes along with such a system, the house system affords additional opportunities for

- Nurturing relationships across grade levels
- Leadership, friendly competition, and service
- Faculty involvement with students on a different relational level
- Positive peer pressure and mentorship

As a classical school, Covenant Christian Academy delves into the works of antiquity, learning that all truth is God's truth. CCA's curriculum connects them with the ancient world of Rome and with the medieval church. In both cultures, virtues were highly praised and sought after. In developing the crests for the houses, the Student Council and faculty advisors sought to exemplify a few of the virtues that were, and are, important character traits for all people to demonstrate in their lives.

The Covenant Christian Academy School Houses will include the following:

Fidelitas House. Fidelitas is the Latin name for loyalty or faithfulness. Faithfulness is a particularly important virtue for Christians who are called to hold fast to Christ in the face of the temptation and the allure of the world. In addition to the loyalty to which we are called in Christ, the Bible speaks repeatedly of the loyalty demonstrated by those who are part of the body of Christ. "There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24b). Fidelitas is represented by the Celtic knot. Celtic knots were used extensively by monks in Ireland, most notably in the illuminated manuscript *The Book of Kells*. The intertwining design can represent many things, but is often used to illustrate the unending nature of friendship or mankind in relationship with one another and with God. Christian faithfulness, like the Celtic knot, calls us to be always connected with God's people through our love of and commitment to our Lord.

Integritas House. Integritas is Latin for honesty or integrity. Christians are instructed throughout scripture to be men and women of integrity. The psalmist says that to be people of integrity we must watch: who we are and where we go; we must make sure our word is our bond and be obedient to God's word.

The Bible promises that “He who does these things will never be shaken” (Psalm 15:5). If these things become our way of life, our practice, our lifestyle, we will live solid, stable and dependable lives. This is why the Integritas crest displays a Corinthian column at its center. The column represents the stability and resolute firmness that characterize a person of integrity.

Aequitas House – Aequitas is Latin for justice. It is the root word from which we derive the term equity, meaning fairness and balance. Scripture repeatedly advises us to be people who are marked by a spirit of justice, reflecting the justice and righteousness of the God we serve. Proverbs 28:5 reminds us, “Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the LORD understand it fully.” Leviticus 19:15 teaches us what it means to practice justice: “Do not pervert justice; and do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.” The Aequitas House’s crest depicts a pair of crossed swords. These swords represent the willingness that Christians should have to fight against evil wherever it arises, but also represent the victorious Lord who has already won the battle against Satan and the powers of darkness.

Veritas House - The Latin Word Veritas means, truth. As people of the Word, Christians are called to stand for God’s truth at all times in all places. Jesus reminds us of the importance of truth during his trial before Pilate when he says, “The truth will set you free.” When we come to understand the overwhelming importance of being united to the truth of God’s Word through the gospel we are truly free indeed. The Veritas House is represented by a flaming torch, symbolizing the burning light of truth that illuminates our path. As Psalm 119:105 states: “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” The Veritas torch reminds us always to keep the truth of God’s Word burning in our hearts and minds.

Student Placement in Houses: To insure that houses are not “stacked,” an anonymous placement committee of faculty places the students into their houses, doing their best to insure an equal distribution of students. Placements are determined solely by the committee and their decisions are final. Factors considered when placing students in houses include academic aptitude, athletic ability, extracurricular engagement, gender, and personality. As in traditional British house systems, family members are in the same house. All faculty members are placed in a house as well. For students, once a member of that house, always a member of that house. Because we have chosen to place family members in the same house, students who have siblings in a house already know their future house affiliation. Incoming 9th graders discover their house affiliation in the spring of their 8th grade year at a special House Placement Assembly. In the future we will have uniform accessories to distinguish members of houses.

House Organization: There are two basic levels of organization: student and adult. Students elect one upperclassman (11th or 12th grader) from their house to serve as prefect. Prefects serve as student senate representatives, thus affording each house one representative in the student government. Each Prefect is supervised by and accountable to his or her head of house, and subject to the by-laws of the Student Council. The heads of houses will meet with prefects as needed for encouragement and advice. Further house organization is left to individual houses (most go with traditional student council officer positions), thus affording even more avenues for student leadership. One full-time faculty member is chosen to be the House Dean. The prefect (with the House Dean’s input and supervision) presides at all house meetings which are held on an as-needed basis as called by each house. Most are planning meetings for the various responsibilities/activities of the houses, but meetings are also used to decide a house motto, spirit cheers, slogans, etc.

Competition Between the Houses: Of course, much of the impetus behind the system is ongoing friendly competition. Houses earn points towards the “House of the Quarter” honor. All faculty and administration are involved in the constant rewarding or docking of points based on individual student behavior and attitude. To help curb system manipulation, students should be mindful of the following:

- A teacher may ask you to do something for house points, but asking for points from the teacher because you think you’ve done something noteworthy can actually cost you points.
- When you actually ask for points, “selfless” acts become selfish.
- Grumbling about who got points or how they have been given or taken is the surest way to lose points.
- The best points are awarded when you are not aware of it.

House point totals are posted on a weekly basis so that students know where they stand; however, final point tallies for determining the House of the Quarter must await final report card, service hour reporting, and the like. The point system operates as follows:

- Each quarter, the houses start fresh with 500 points
- Daily behavior and attitude points or deductions are tallied on a weekly basis and these ongoing point standings are posted
- Any special house competition points are awarded as needed on an ongoing basis
- Quarter-ending house points are awarded on the following scale:

Category	1 st place pts	2 nd place pts	3 rd place pts	4 th place pts
Highest House GPA	600	550	500	450
Most Faculty Commendations	500	450	400	350
Most Service Hours	400	350	300	250
Adopt a hallway	400	350	300	250
Uniform	300	250	200	150
Fewest Tardies	200	150	100	50

The house with the most points becomes the “House of the Quarter” for the subsequent quarter. This house receives special privileges which include extra free dress days and occasional priority treatment. At the end of each year, one house will win “House of the Year.” This award will be given out using the point totals from the whole year. It will be announced at the academic awards ceremony in April.

House Responsibilities, Events, and Competitions: House responsibilities include helping STUCO in sponsoring social events, planning and sponsoring service projects, and possible campus duties. House competitions will include several events to be announced over the course of the year.