

Phil-Mont Christian Academy

Student-Parent Handbook



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Foreword

Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy is committed in all matters of faith and life to the Bible as the inerrant and infallible word of God. The Academy foundationally subscribes to the Reformed system of doctrine that acknowledges Christ as the creator and sustainer of all things, sovereign ruler over all of life, and the redeemer of His people.

Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy focuses on preparing students for college through its academic instruction. Throughout each course of study, students are challenged to articulate a Christian world-and-life view. Students are expected to perform to the best of their God-given abilities. The Academy promotes an atmosphere characterized by loving relationships and emphasizes leading through serving.

The Academy does not function in place of Christian parents; rather, it functions in voluntary cooperation with them. Thus, as parents desire their children to develop fully in every part of their lives, the academy supports this endeavor through educating and training children to lead them into a deeper awareness of Jesus Christ as the Lord of culture, as well as the Lord of their lives.

Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy desires to be the school of choice for Christian families within Philadelphia and southeastern Montgomery County and its demographic diversity. The Academy ultimately desires to bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, through all its actions, words, and deeds.

This handbook serves as a guide to the students and parents / guardians of Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy. By signing the enrollment contract, parents / guardians agree to abide by the rules and policies contained in this handbook, as it may be amended from time to time.

Other Sources of Information

Tuition and Fee Schedule – Tuition and fee amounts.

Directory – Included are the listings of Board of Trustees, faculty, staff and parents, and class rosters.

Phil-Mont's [Website](#)

History, Corporate Status, and Organization

Brief History

From its inception, Phil-Mont has sought to provide an outstanding Christian education, founded on the conviction that all truth and learning find their ultimate source in the Word of God. The faculty and administration have been and remain self-consciously Reformed in Christian tradition, supporting Phil-Mont's mandate to nurture, inspire, train, and challenge the children of Christian families for lives of stewardship, service, and scholarship.

Phil-Mont was established and is maintained and directed by a Board of Trustees. It draws students from Bucks County, Montgomery County and Philadelphia, as well as international students. It is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, is a member of the Association of Christian Schools International, and is a member of Christian Schools International.

In the early 1940s, respected theologian and scholar Dr. Cornelius Van Til met with a group of parents and Westminster Seminary faculty to discuss the beginning of a Christian elementary school. The Willow Grove Christian Day School opened for classes in the fall of 1943. Seventeen students enrolled, spanning kindergarten through eighth grade; one teacher taught in one room at Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Willow Grove.

Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian High School was founded in 1955 by a group of concerned parents of high school-aged children; it opened its doors in 1956. It met in the basement of the First Reformed Church of Stenton Avenue in Philadelphia, for the 1956-57 school year. The following year, the school bought its own building on Greenwood Avenue in Wyncote. The first class was graduated in 1959. The second class, graduating in 1960, was the first class to go all the way through the High School. Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian High School remained at Wyncote until the purchase of the Dresher facility.

In 1964-65 the two schools merged and became Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy, hereafter referred to as Phil-Mont. Within four years, a new school building was built on a recently purchased twenty-acre site in nearby Dresher. For the first time both schools were "under the same roof."

In 1975 Phil-Mont assisted a group of parents in forming Roxborough Community Christian School, an institution which became an official campus of the Academy in 1982. Meeting in the Roxborough Presbyterian Church, the Kindergarten through sixth grade school of twenty-seven students expanded quickly, making use of nearby Leverington Presbyterian Church to house preschool and kindergarten classes.

Ten years after its construction, the Dresher facility was nearing capacity, so the former Hillcrest Junior High School in Springfield was purchased to house Phil-Mont's middle and high schools. Classes began at Hillcrest in the fall of 1979. The Hillcrest campus continues to house all school operations.

In 2001, the Leverington campus consolidated with the Roxborough campus and in 2002 the Roxborough campus consolidated with the Dresher campus bringing all the elementary students together. In 2006 the Dresher campus consolidated with the Hillcrest campus, uniting all students at Hillcrest for the 2006-2007 school year.

Our Purpose: Covenantal Christian Education

The Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy is formed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining covenantal Christian elementary and secondary education for children who meet admission standards and who come from Christian homes (Phil-Mont's definition of a Christian home is: a home with at least one parent/guardian who is a professing Christian and an active member in a local church) within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and engaging in such other educational activities as shall promote and support the primary aim.

The purpose is further defined by the following declaration of principle:

1. The Bible, the inerrant Word of God, is the supreme norm for all Christian faith and life and therefore for the educational enterprise of this corporation. Further, the Bible presents a coherent pattern of teaching centered upon the saving Lordship of Jesus Christ. This pattern, as it has been summarized in such confessional statements as the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Philadelphia Baptist Confessions, and the Heidelberg Catechism, provides the unified basis for the Christian view of education adhered to by this corporation.
2. The educational goal of the Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy is to prepare Christian youth for the fulfillment of the calling of God. This vocation or calling is first defined by the creation of man in God's image as lord of the world, heir of life, and son of God. Through sin man became incapable of fulfilling this calling, but God has renewed His calling in saving power through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit, applying the finished work of Christ, renews the people of God in the image of Christ to fulfill the calling of a redeemed humanity in work and worship, and in particular to fulfill the calling to mission with which Christ has charged His church. This goal of preparation for God's vocation unifies the Christian educational purpose and process. Since all wisdom is from God, the illuminated understanding of His special revelation in Scripture is necessary for the proper understanding of His revelation in nature and history. Further, the understanding of God's revelation confronts the child of God with his or her calling in Christ: to perceive God's plan in the world and to realize God's will in life are one calling. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
3. In fulfillment of this purpose and to implement these principles, the Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy seeks to furnish an education of more than academic excellence, shaped by values more ultimate than humanistic ideals, for goals higher than individual development or social service. It seeks to train young people dedicated to God who will serve their neighbors, their country, and the world for Christ's sake. This obligation is assumed by Christian parents, united with other members of the Christian community, to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Although Scripture requires this specifically of parents, it is proper that they associate with others in the task, enlisting the help of Christians especially equipped with the gift of teaching to aid them and share their authority. Respect for the gifts and calling of Christ to the pupils who are being educated also requires that the Philadelphia-Montgomery Christian Academy follow educational procedures designed to develop to the full the potential and initiative of these Christian young people in their own growth toward Christian vocation.

4. **The mission of the Academy** is to provide excellent academic education from a consistent Christian world-and-life view for the children in Christian families. **The vision of the Academy** is to train ambassadors and disciples of Christ who are thoughtful, responsible, and biblically literate stewards of God's gifts and callings.

Article 1 Section C of the Phil-Mont By-Laws gives a summary of Phil-Mont's educational philosophy.

Organizations

Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). Phil-Mont is a member of ACSI. ACSI provides a highly regarded accreditation program for secondary, elementary, and standalone and attached preschools. ACSI has partnerships with all of the U.S. regional accreditation agencies. ACSI schools seek accreditation to validate their quality and verify that they are striving for excellence based on a solid Christian philosophy of education foundation. Accreditation and school improvement assist schools in changing for the better in an orderly and systematic way. They bring a vigorous dynamic into the school by engaging every school constituent in a process of organizational appraisal.

Christian Schools International (CSI). Phil-Mont is a member of CSI, an international service organization. CSI provides services in the areas of curriculum, teacher recruitment and placement, school evaluation, government relations, teacher health and pension benefits, promotion of Christian education, and teacher/board workshops. A convention is held each summer for board members and administrators. Phil-Mont is a member of District 1 of CSI.

Mid-Atlantic Christian School Association (MACSA). Phil-Mont is a member of MACSA, a regional association providing services in the areas of curricular and co-curricular development.

Accreditation

Phil-Mont is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (*MSA*), the regional accrediting association for Mid-Atlantic States. This is the highest regional accreditation a school can receive. It is entitled to all the privileges and scholastic recognition resulting from accreditation.

Certification

Phil-Mont is certified through the state of Pennsylvania as a nonprofit corporation whose charters and brochures evidence that the primary purpose in establishing the school is to insure that school children will receive a Christian education at the hands of Christian instructors who are required to accept, teach and practice Biblical beliefs and apply them in their teaching to all subjects of the curriculum.

Legal Status

Phil-Mont is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and authorized to operate in Pennsylvania. It is recognized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as an organization exempt from Federal Income Tax and to which charitable contributions may be made under Section 501 (C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Corporation and Board of Trustees

Phil-Mont was established and is maintained and directed by a Board of Trustees that meets together for the purpose of setting and protecting the vision and mission of the school. The Board of Trustees establishes and implements the policies of Phil-Mont.

Parent Involvement Opportunities

Families for Phil-Mont (FFPM)

The purpose of Families for Phil-Mont is to assist and support the school's students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees in keeping with the FFPM Christian principles and precepts upon which the school is founded and in accordance with the policies of the school as implemented by the administration.

Care of School Property

All students are expected to use the building as carefully as they would any other public or private building. Abuses of the building, its equipment, or its fixtures will demand immediate correction. Parents are responsible for damages to the school property caused by their children.

Cleaning

God has given us wonderful facilities, and we are all responsible for keeping our school clean. Because custodial work is a big project requiring hours of work each day, students are reminded to take every opportunity to aid in keeping the school neat and clean. Taking pride in our building by picking up scraps of paper and making sure all waste is disposed of properly helps make our campus a pleasant place.

Screening: Employees, Volunteers, etc.

A preliminary screening form is to be completed by existing employees and all applicants for any compensated position. It is also to be completed by board members and part-time volunteer workers who will supervise or have custody or have the probability of frequent contact with minors. This screening also includes coaches, student teachers, substitute teachers, chaperones, drivers, custodians, or those doing similar work. This screening form is in addition to an employment application form.

General

Generally all adult volunteers working with or transporting three or fewer children are required to have children who have attended Phil-Mont classes for a minimum of six months. All adult volunteers participating in an overnight activity with children are required to have children who have attended Phil-Mont classes for a minimum of one year and have had frequent school contacts with the faculty sponsor of the event or with another faculty member who can vouch for their suitability to chaperone such an activity. Adult volunteers should observe the "two adult" rule. This does not prohibit an adult from working with children in an open area in view of another screened volunteer or staff member, or from driving on field trips.

The law requires adults (teachers or adult volunteers) to immediately make an oral report of suspected child abuse via the statewide toll-free telephone number ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313. The recent amendments to the [Child Protective Service Law](#) (CPSL) allows mandated reporters to make a written report online.

School Procedures

Fire / Emergency Drills

Student safety is of utmost importance to us. It is important in the event of a fire that the building is vacated quietly and safely. Escape routes are posted and addressed in each room. Other emergency drills are designed to protect students if danger is imminent. Drills and inspections, both announced and unannounced, are held regularly in accordance with local ordinances.

Gymnasiums / Athletic Facilities

The gymnasium and other athletic facilities are intended for Phil-Mont activities. Students can use the facilities with appropriate faculty or staff supervision. Supporting community activities are to be given second consideration and must be approved through the business office. Any activity must have supervision and conform to the Phil-Mont policy on use of facilities by outside groups. There is a form to be filled out in order to reserve any part of the building. The school may charge a fee for outside groups.

Van Til Library

The Van Til Library is available for Phil-Mont students to use for research, doing homework, studying, and/or pleasure reading. A student may use the computers in the library if a signed Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is on file. Secondary students from study halls or flexes may use the library when they have an authorized pass from their study hall teacher.

Research Manual

Phil-Mont has an official *Research Manual* which is available in the library and on the school website. Phil-Mont subscribes to several web interface programs such as *NoodleTools* for our students to use in their research. Phil-Mont invests significant time in training the students how to search for, evaluate, use, and cite material which is scholarly and reputable.

Books and other Library Tools

Students are expected to take excellent care of books and other materials that are loaned to them through the classrooms and the library. Any student who loses a book or periodical is responsible to pay for it. A notice will be sent to the student stating how much is owed to pay for the loss. If that fee is not paid before the end of the year, then a letter will be sent home to the parent(s). If the lost book and/or periodical is found prior to replacement by the school, all monies previously paid will be returned.

Periodically throughout the year, notices regarding unpaid fines and overdue books will be sent home to parents reminding them of the following policy: *All books and other library materials must be returned by the end of the year before report cards will be given out.* The student's report card is held until payment is made.

Secondary School Circulation Policy

Each middle school student is allowed to check out a maximum of eight books and periodicals. Each high school student is allowed to check out a maximum of twelve books and periodicals. For middle school and high school students, books are circulated for fifteen school days (weekends do not count in the fifteen days) and may be renewed twice. Two holds/reserves may be placed on books at any one time.

After a 3-day grace period, a fine of 10 cents per day is levied. Two reference books may be taken out for one day only with no grace period after which a fine of \$1.00 per day will be levied. Periodicals may circulate for 1 week. Journals do not circulate, but a student may make a copy of an article for educational purposes.

Elementary School Circulation Policy

Each elementary student is allowed to check out a maximum number of books according to his or her grade level. In other words, second graders may take out a maximum of two books; fifth graders may take out a maximum of five books.

Books are circulated for seven days (weekends do count in the seven days) to students in Kindergarten through second grade, and fourteen days to students in third through fifth grade. Elementary students are not assessed fines. Two reference books may be taken out for one day only with no grace period. Periodicals may circulate for one week to *fourth and fifth graders only*.

Lockers

Students will be assigned a locker to use while at school. Lockers must be kept clean and free of anything that cannot be easily removed, such as stickers or transparent tape. Lockers are school property and may be inspected by the administration at any time. Students may not change lockers without office approval. Students may purchase a lock for their locker, but must provide the office with a key or a combination to the lock. Phil-Mont is not liable for anything missing or taken from lockers. Any items or decorations that are offensive or cause distractions will be removed at the discretion of the administration.

Lost and Found

Items misplaced (lost) at school are placed in Lost and Found. After a period of time unclaimed materials are disposed of in appropriate ways.

Lunch

Phil-Mont does not provide a meal plan for students. However high school classes regularly sell food (pizza, Chick-fil-A sandwiches, etc.), and FFPM sells pizza once a week during middle school lunch. Students can, of course, bring their own lunch to school each day. Students may bring their own drinks in non-breakable containers. Students are to eat in the locations designated for eating lunch and are responsible for the proper disposal of litter.

Office Use by Students

Students should check with the receptionist to see anyone in the office complex. Students enter the guidance office through the office door. Areas reserved for faculty and staff use are the Copier/Mail room and the Faculty Lounge.

Vandalism, Pranks, or Unauthorized Entry

Unauthorized entry into the school building for the purpose of committing an unauthorized prank, any form of vandalism to the buildings, grounds, or any contents therein, or any actions that disrupt the normal function of the school will be dealt with appropriately. Both participants and accomplices will be subject to discipline that may include suspension from school or expulsion. In addition, a fee of \$200.00 is payable to the school when a school official is summoned to Phil-Mont by the security agency or the

police because of an unauthorized prank or other inappropriate activity. The costs and labor required to clean and/or repair facilities and the \$200.00 fee will be shared by all involved.

Visitors

Prospective students are welcome at Phil-Mont. Visits require permission from the admissions office at least one day in advance as well as a request from the parent or guardian of the prospective student. All student visitors must sign in and are required to abide by Phil-Mont's standards during their visit. Host students are asked to introduce their visitor to as many faculty members as possible. All other visitors must receive permission from the administration.

Visitors coming to the building for any purpose must be let in through the main entrance, sign in and obtain an identification badge at the front desk. Parents wishing to talk to a teacher should call for an appointment. Student visitors may be accommodated occasionally by special arrangement with the administration.

Phil-Mont alumni are invited to return to campus for visits as long as they sign in, agree to abide by Phil-Mont standards of conduct, and do not permit their visit to be a disruption of the instructional process.

Transportation and Trips

Bus Service

Phil-Mont is served by several local school districts.

High School, Middle School, and Elementary School

1. It is important for all children to understand that riding the school bus is a privilege and that they are directly responsible to the driver for their behavior on the bus. When there is disobedience, the driver may issue a warning to the pupil, reminding him or her that continual disobedience may result in withdrawing the privilege of riding the bus for a period of time.
2. The driver will report continual disregard for authority to the administration and the parents will be notified. Should a third report, or any initial report of a more serious nature, have to be made, the school district may inform the parents that the child may not ride the bus for a specified period of time. Such action would take effect on the day after the parents are notified. No child will ever be put off the bus for disciplinary reasons without prior notification to the parents. The administration can defer to the authority of the bus driver in disciplinary cases.
3. Children must be picked up, transported, and delivered in accordance with the published schedule. Most school districts will not allow children from outside their district to ride their buses in order to go home with a friend.
4. If a child misses the bus at the end of a school day, the parents will be notified immediately.
5. If your elementary child is going home in a manner different from his or her usual routine, a note or telephone call to that effect must be presented to the school office by no later than 2:00pm
6. School personnel will not release elementary school students to anyone other than parents, legal guardians, or approved bus personnel, unless there is verification from a parent or guardian.

High School Students Riding SEPTA

1. Students are required to exit the bus in the morning at the Montgomery Avenue stop and enter the building through the student entrance.
2. Students are required to board the bus in the afternoon at the Montgomery Avenue stop.
3. Students may pick up free bus passes for Philadelphia or purchase tokens in the school office. The "L" bus serves the Hillcrest area.

Bus Rules

1. No standing while the bus is moving. Stay seated at all times.
2. Talk quietly to your neighbor; no yelling, screaming, teasing, or mocking.
3. No eating on the bus.
4. No throwing of any items whatsoever at others or out the bus windows.
5. Dispose of trash properly—not on the bus floor.
6. Keep arms and heads inside the bus at all times.
7. Be responsible for your own property. Keep backpacks and other items out of the aisle.
8. Always keep your hands to yourself.
9. Obey, cooperate with, and respect the bus driver.

Students Arriving in the Morning

Elementary School

Students should enter the elementary hallway immediately after arriving at the school and drop their backpacks in front of their locker before proceeding to the gym or the playground. All entrances and drop-off locations will be supervised by Phil-Mont staff.

1. Bus riders will be dropped off in the front circle, enter the building through the student entrance (to the right of the main entrance), go up the steps and into the elementary hallway.
2. Students arriving by car should be dropped off in the designated area at the basketball court. Parents will enter the student parking lot at the end of Hillcrest Ave. and proceed around the lot to the drop-off. The student will walk up the back steps to the elementary hallway from the back entrance.
3. Students arriving late to school are to be accompanied by a parent directly to the main desk where the student will receive a pass and then proceed to his or her class either by himself or with an office aide. Please use the main center entrance.

Middle and High School

Students in middle and high school are to wait in the cafeteria until 7:45 each day, at which time they may proceed to their first period classroom.

1. Bus riders will be dropped off in the front circle, enter the building through the student entrance, and proceed down the steps into the cafeteria.
2. Students arriving by car should be dropped off at the basketball court where the elementary students are dropped off and proceed up the path to the student entrance. Parents should enter the student parking lot at the end of Hillcrest Ave. and proceed around the perimeter to the drop-off.
3. Student drivers and their passengers should park in one of the perimeter parking spaces around the student parking lot at the end of Hillcrest Ave., walk around the perimeter of the lot, up the front walkway to the student entrance and down to the cafeteria.
4. SEPTA riders should get off at **Montgomery Avenue only**, carefully cross the street, proceed up the path to the student entrance of the school, and go down the steps to the cafeteria.
5. Students arriving late to school should proceed immediately to the main desk to obtain a pass to class. Please use the main center entrance.

Students Departing in the Afternoon

All pick-up locations will be supervised by Phil-Mont staff.

Elementary

1. Bus riders will be lined up according to specific bus lines and then escorted out to the appropriate bus upon its arrival in the front circle.

2. Students leaving by car will be accompanied to the basketball court next to the lower parking lot to be picked up. Staff members will assist with this; parents are asked to wait in the line for their children.
3. Students departing early from school are to meet a parent at the main desk to be signed out and escorted to the car by an adult.

Middle and High School

1. Bus riders will stand in the waiting area just outside the student entrance until their bus is ready to load. An adult will announce the loading of each bus.
2. Student drivers and their passengers should proceed to their vehicle in the lower parking lot.
3. SEPTA riders should proceed across the path to Montgomery Ave. and enter the bus across the street.

Motor Vehicles

School-Hours Parking

We encourage visitors during the day to park in the lower parking lot. The upper lot will normally be full. **Spaces on the outside of the front circle** will be available **only between 8:15 am and 1:30 pm** to accommodate the arrival and departure of school buses.

Off-Hours Parking

During off-hours, please feel free to park wherever you like, observing the parking restrictions stated below. Pick-up for after school practices is in the upper parking lot.

Parking Restrictions

Please observe the following “No Parking” areas at all times.

1. **Front circle next to the building** – by order of the Fire Marshall.
2. **Along Hillcrest Ave** – out of respect to our neighbors
3. **Any areas not designated as parking spaces in the parking lots** – to ensure a proper flow of traffic.

Student Drivers

Students driving motor vehicles to school are expected to adhere to the following driving regulations.

1. All vehicles must be registered with the school receptionist.
2. Driving on the school property is to be done with due regard to the lives and safety of others. Student vehicles are to be parked immediately in the area designated for student parking, and the occupants are to leave the vehicle promptly and enter the school building. Loitering in the parking lot is prohibited. Student drivers should not speed, spin tires, play loud music, race the engine, or perform any other unsafe or disruptive vehicle practice. Failure to operate a vehicle responsibly will result in denial of permission to bring it to school.
3. Vehicles should be locked. All vehicles are off-limits during the school day. No one, including the driver of a vehicle, is permitted in them or around them without permission

- from the office.
4. The traffic signs in the area, including the one-way sign on Hillcrest Avenue, must be obeyed.
 5. Students should park in the student parking lot only.
 6. If a student driver is consistently late, the school may suspend campus driving and parking privileges.

Ridesharing Services (e.g., Uber and Lyft) and Taxis

Phil-Mont does not permit students under the age of eighteen to use ridesharing or taxi services for transportation to and from school unaccompanied by a parent, primary caretaker, or legal guardian. The limited training and background checks required of rideshare and taxi drivers before they are cleared to carry passengers does not meet Phil-Mont's safety and accountability standards. Therefore, students eighteen or older are strongly discouraged from using ridesharing or taxi services to and from school. However, a student of eighteen or older is allowed to use rideshare or taxi services if his or her parent, primary caretaker, or legal guardian signs a waiver releasing Phil-Mont from its duty of care once the student is picked-up.

Rideshare and taxi drivers are expected to follow Phil-Mont's drop off and pick up procedures. For example, rideshare and taxi drivers need to wait in the car line, and student passengers must wait for their rideshare or taxi driver to pick them up in the lower lot. It is important that student passengers communicate these expectations to their rideshare or taxi driver through a phone call, PICKUP NOTE, or SMS well before their rideshare driver arrives to pick them up.

Trips and Excursions

As part of the school program at Phil-Mont, some activities and projects occur away from the school on non-school property. These may include one-day field trips or extended trips for two or more days. The administration is responsible for oversight of all of these school-sponsored trips, which are carefully planned and part of the curriculum. The primary purpose of any school-sponsored trip or excursion is the educational experience in a nurturing and safe environment. Students must participate in these trips unless unusual circumstances prohibit them.

Parental knowledge and consent of all school-sponsored trips and excursions is required. For any such trip parents shall receive in advance a consent form which shall include the date, time, cost, and educational purpose of the trip. This must be signed by the parent and returned to the school in advance of the trip. Any child who does not have a properly signed consent form will remain at the school.

Unless a trip meets the above criteria, it shall be considered to be non-school-sponsored and all responsibility and liability, for the trip shall be borne by the organizer and participants.

Curriculum and Grading

Chapel

Phil-Mont Christian Academy believes that the practice of Christian piety by a community of Christians who study together is important and helps fulfill the mission of the Academy. Chapel is one part of this practice of Christian piety. Phil-Mont students attend chapel, or another assembly, weekly, unless there is some schedule disruption. Elementary classes meet together in the auditorium for chapel, and a combined middle school and high school chapel is held there separately. Faculty members selected by the Head of School supervise chapel. They are assisted by students who are part of chapel leadership and music teams. Sometimes they select a theme for the school year, and Chapel speakers are asked to speak to this theme. Chapel formats vary, and sometimes include student skits and performances; several times a month, chapel consists simply of a song, speaker, and prayer. Speakers include area ministers, faculty members, and, on occasion, representatives of service organizations. In addition, individual faculty members lead small groups of middle school and high school students, called “pods,” as they discuss and engage in activities related to the chapel theme.

Students are required to attend Chapel, and behave respectfully and attentively while there, although they will not be forced to pray, sing, recite, or make public confessions or profession of their faith, as those are matters of the heart better dealt with in the home and at church.

School Chapel may sometimes look different than your church’s Sunday morning worship services. In part this is because Phil-Mont is a Christian community, but it is not a church. However, we know that we are joining with you to train young worshipers! You can expect that what is said and done in our chapels will reflect the Reformed standards espoused by the school. But we recognize that students and families of Phil-Mont come from many different churches, with a variety of worship practices; as Christian brothers and sisters this can be both enriching and challenging. Please pray with us that Phil-Mont Chapel will encourage our youth to love Christ and walk with Him.

Assembly

Assemblies may be planned by the administration, faculty, Student Council, and/or various student organizations. They must be approved and scheduled through the administration.

Curriculum

While the focus of the Phil-Mont academic program is primarily college preparatory, it seeks to meet the needs of all students. Scriptural truth is always the foundation of our academic program, and is the basis for developing character and fostering social, emotional, and physical growth. The integration of Scripture from a Reformed perspective into each area of the curriculum is a characteristic unique to the Phil-Mont program.

Textbooks

Phil-Mont uses a number of textbooks through the state purchased under Act 90/195. These books will have "Act 90/195" stamped on them. They do not belong to the school but are on loan to us from the state. State law requires that the users of these books be held financially responsible for any damage or loss. The same applies for textbooks owned by Phil-Mont. All books must be covered, but students should

not use contact paper as a cover or fasten covers to the book with sticky tape. Students should not write in or deface these books. The cost of replacing damaged or lost books is the responsibility of the parent.

Bibles

All students are encouraged to have an English Standard Version (ESV) Bible for classroom use.

Textbooks, Library Books, and other Instructional Materials

Principles

1. The selection of instructional materials is under the direction of the Head of School based upon appropriate needs assessments, goals and instructional objectives, and appropriateness to task.
2. The search for useful books or other media includes those works of men and women who are not Christian. Use of such books or media is based on the following assumptions:
 - a. God in His grace reveals truth to all men, Christian and non-Christian, through general revelation. Thus, a non-Christian author may have much truth to share with the reader.
 - b. One of the goals of a Christian education is to prepare students to be discerning observers and participants in their culture. This can be achieved by a careful analysis of selected products of the culture, including films, books, speeches, events, and people.
3. All materials selected for use in the library or the classrooms must meet a majority of the following criteria:
 - a. Appropriateness
 - b. Potentiality
 - c. Value

Procedure for Questioning Media Selection

1. Questions about any book or other instructional material should be directed to the teacher or administrator responsible for the selection and/or use of the media.
2. If the questions cannot be resolved by a conference with the teacher and administrator, the issue will be referred by the administration to the Board of Trustees. The decision of the Board of Trustees will be final.

Information Technology

The use of technology is the use of tools. In contemporary society, the rise of the computer has spurred the development of tools that impact society in dramatically different ways than in previous generations. Even so, the function of technology is the same—to assist people in accomplishing tasks with both improved efficiency and effectiveness. For the academic community, technology enables more comprehensive research, a wider audience for such scholarship, and the ability to teach and reach a greater diversity of students.

As an educational institution, Phil-Mont is committed to keep up with mainstream technology. Students must graduate with the facility to meaningfully engage and claim for Christ all facets of a society that communicates using contemporary technology.

While acknowledging technology's potential for good, we are also aware of the avenue for sin paved by these contemporary tools. Students must be taught when to simply flee from sin and how and when—by God's grace—to rebuke and redeem the practices of evil that surround and inhabit them.

The presence of technology at Phil-Mont is therefore a tremendous responsibility. As such, in order for any student to be given access to contemporary tools and media, the following are required:

1. Parental consent (a contract signed by parent);
2. Student acceptance of responsibility (a contract signed by student);
3. Ongoing adherence to both the specific obligations and the spirit of the contract.

Any student in violation of the contract is subject to having his or her access to Phil-Mont's technology revoked or suspended, regardless of any academic obligations that may be affected. At the discretion of the administration, standard disciplinary procedures may also be enforced, including legal action and prosecution by authorities.

Risks

Technology is a powerful educational tool that enables users to access information from around the world. It is imperative that students and parents recognize and accept the risks inherent in the use of technology at Phil-Mont. Just as all powerful tools must be handled responsibly, users of technology must recognize guidelines and dangers.

1. **Technical difficulties.** Every effort is made to install and maintain reliable technology, but no guarantee is expressed or implied regarding the accessibility of technology or the preservation of data. Specifically, there may be times when technical problems or inaccessibility may interfere with academic requirements. Students must accept the responsibility to plan ahead and to back up important data in multiple storage locations.
2. **Exposure to offensive media.** Internet filtering software and faculty monitoring are both implemented at Phil-Mont to reduce the likelihood of accessing or encountering inappropriate material; however, no guarantee is expressed or implied regarding the accessibility of offensive media. With enough expertise and desire, access to offensive media is always a possibility. The human heart is sinful, and the Spirit-led Christian still does daily battle with the temptations of the flesh. Parents must recognize that even Phil-Mont's most rigorous efforts cannot rule out the chance of students using technology improperly.
3. **Solicited or unsolicited contact with unknown users.** Internet communication is global in scope, and the monitoring of its participants is nearly impossible. This means that individual users must be thoughtful and careful as they communicate. In the same way that a student should not accept an automobile ride from a stranger, communication with unknown Internet users is inappropriate and should be avoided. Interacting with strangers via Phil-Mont technology carries the same risks as interacting with strangers at any other location, and appropriate personal responsibility for it must still be taken. Specific personal information (last names, addresses, pictures, etc.) should not be distributed via Phil-Mont technology. Under no circumstances should a student ever agree to meet an unknown Internet user in person. Students and parents recognize and accept that while Phil-Mont takes appropriate cautionary measures, it cannot guarantee the safety of those who use school technology.
4. **Unauthorized Use.** Secondary school students are provided access to Phil-Mont computers via a login identification name and private password. It is each student's responsibility to keep this password completely confidential. While breaking into a student's account without the password is virtually impossible, the possibility that someone could discover a private password certainly exists, and hence unauthorized access to a student's own documents could possibly occur. No guarantee is expressed or implied that a student's documents will always be secure.

5. **Waiving of Right to Privacy.** All use of technology at Phil-Mont is exclusively for academic purposes. Therefore, no documents stored on Phil-Mont computers should be of a personal nature, and all students using Phil-Mont technology waive the right to privacy. Specifically, Phil-Mont reserves the right to maintain a list of student passwords and to access the account history and stored documents of any student. While this right will seldom if ever be exercised, students and parents nonetheless accept the academic purpose of Phil-Mont’s technology and relinquish the absolute right of privacy.

The Academic Community

Contemporary technology is expensive and often relatively fragile. Students are required to exercise good stewardship with these valuable tools, recognizing that they are gifts shared by all community members. We are an academic community, and therefore use of resources is explicitly for educational purposes. In particular:

1. Students are not permitted to use school computers for games, other than those installed by the school for educational usage, or any non-academic purpose; this requirement applies at all times, irrespective of when school work is completed (study halls, lunch, after school, etc.).
2. Students are at all times prohibited from sending, receiving, checking, or soliciting email with Phil-Mont technology, except if a faculty member is physically present and intentionally supervising such activity for academic purposes.

Privacy and Security

Tremendous resources and labor have been (and continue to be) expended to establish and maintain the safety and reliability of technology at Phil-Mont. Students are required to accept the many responsibilities that come with school-wide access to technology. In particular:

1. Any student accessing any school computer must always use his or her own username and private password.
2. Passwords are absolutely confidential; each student accepts responsibility for all activity on his or her own account.
3. Students are prohibited from accessing the data of any other Phil-Mont user unless explicit permission has been granted.
4. Students are prohibited from any form of participation in Internet “chat rooms” or online forums.
5. Use of removable media (e.g., thumb drives) is exclusively for file (document) transfer; applications, utilities, or any other software may not be installed on, transferred to, or transferred from any Phil-Mont computer.
6. Though up-to-date anti-virus software is employed, reasonable precautions must always be taken to avoid infection.

A tremendous benefit of following the individual login procedures is that each student’s saved files are then separate and protected from other users—a secure data repository.

Ethical use and conduct

Access to technology provides outstanding opportunities—and powerful temptations. Responsible use of technology requires not only competency with contemporary media and redemptive discernment, but also the willingness to flee from evil. In particular:

1. Plagiarism and all forms of cheating are expressly prohibited.
2. Offensive material must be intentionally avoided*; this includes text, images, or any media which: 1) is pornographic, sexually explicit, or sexually degrading to the subject or the viewer, 2) advocates, enables, or encourages violence, 3) promotes any form of racial, class, gender, or ethnic animosity or inequality, or 4) is incompatible with any of the moral and ethical norms of biblical Christianity.
3. Phil-Mont Internet access is filtered in order to reduce the potential of encountering unacceptable material; however, filtering can in no way substitute for a Spirit-led conscience and personal commitment to access only information that is honoring to God. By signing the Technology Contract, parents and students acknowledge and accept the personal responsibility required for ethical use of the Internet and contemporary media.
*NOTE: Exception to the avoidance of offensive media may be made only if a faculty member is physically present and intentionally supervising such activity for legitimate academic purposes. Such activity requires that a system administrator temporarily reconfigure the Internet filtering software.

Supplies

Elementary

Some of the necessary supplies will be provided by the school for the students. A list of additional materials, to be provided by families, will be sent home prior to the beginning of the year and/or when the need arises.

Middle and High School

In general students are expected to purchase their own supplies. It is mandatory that students in grades sixth through eighth grade carry with them to each class the assignment book, which is provided by Phil-Mont, to record all assignments and their due dates.

Counseling (Middle School and High School)

General Information

Our Dean of Student Affairs offers a variety of resources for students. Students can receive assistance with academic planning, academic pre-college planning, personal counseling, and referral advice.

It is the Dean of Students Affairs' responsibility to enter all pertinent information on transcripts and to maintain each student's file. The Dean of Students Affairs assumes responsibility for communicating and organizing the needs of students on probation.

The Dean of Students Affairs keeps student's cumulative files. Each file has the following information:

1. a transcript of all courses taken and the grades received
2. attendance records
3. all standardized test results, including PSAT, ACT, SAT, and Achievement Test Scores
4. all Phil-Mont entrance and admissions information

Registration/Scheduling of High School Courses

High school students register for the next year's classes by selecting courses through RenWeb's Parent Portal. A schedule of courses will be given to each student before the school year begins.

Phil-Mont offers a variety of required and elective courses. The courses required for graduation fulfill state requirements. Elective courses are offered to enhance student gifts and enjoyment.

Advanced Placement (AP) or honors courses are offered in some subject areas. These courses are designed to challenge the academically gifted student. The course expectations differ from the college preparatory courses. The text may be different, the projects changed, the research more complex, and greater emphasis will be placed on thinking skills and outside reading.

Course Placement

In high school, specific levels of subject offerings (college prep, honors, AP) are determined by prescribed criteria. New students at the high school level are required to take tests in both English and mathematics to determine placement. We do not require placement tests in other subject areas. The final decision on placement will remain the responsibility of school administration.

Records

Phil-Mont does not release any information to outside agencies without the authorization of the parents or of the student graduate. Parents may inspect their child's files with permission from the administration.

All student records are the direct responsibility of the school and will be handled with educational, professional, and ethical care. A school record is of lifetime importance. Only copies of the file are released. The permanent file is kept in a secure place at Phil-Mont. Records released by request will contain information on attendance, academics, health, and activities only.

Advising

Faculty members are assigned to serve as advisors for each grade level. Class sponsors attend class meetings and assist the class officers as needed. They serve as the link between the class and the administration. Each sponsor's primary role is to help the class with class projects, programs, and problems.

Formal Counseling

Guidance and counseling services are carried on in a more formal way through the Dean's Office. In addition to helping students with personal or academic problems, the Dean provides beneficial services to the students by guiding their choice of occupations and careers; by helping students better to understand themselves and the world in which they will be employed after high school; and by guiding them in college choices, entrance examinations, and financial aid.

College Representatives

College representatives visit Phil-Mont in the fall and early winter. Eleventh and twelfth grade students are invited to meet with them during flex time. Visits are advertised in the monthly Junior and Senior Newsletter and during morning announcements.

Academic Support Program

The Learning Center

Phil-Mont's low student to teacher ratio (11:1) means that classroom teachers are generally able to work with students of varying interests, abilities, and learning styles. However, at times students require additional learning support. When such support is needed, students are often referred to the Learning Center. The goal of Phil-Mont's Learning Center is to offer appropriate support while maintaining high expectations for students. For struggling learners at the high school and middle school level, the Learning Center provides:

1. testing accommodations (particularly for those who need an alternative environment, modified tests, or extended testing time).
2. assistance with time management and study skills, homework, projects, and test prep.

Elementary

Phil-Mont offers either learning support for the student who struggles academically or challenge for the accelerated learner. This is done through the Learning Center. Parents interested in enrolling their children for learning support should contact the Business Office for a fee schedule and enrollment form. Teachers, working with the Head of School and/or Dean of Students Affairs, may also refer their students who struggle to receive assistance through the Learning Center, in collaboration with their parents. Students who are ready for an accelerated academic experience can participate in The Learning Center's Academic Plus Program. Recommendations for Phil-Mont's Academic Plus Program are made by teachers in June for the following year.

Middle and High School

Phil-Mont offers learning support during study hall periods for students who struggle academically in the middle and high school.

All tutorial assistance is intended to support the learning of students and is not intended to remediate. Phil-Mont does not offer a specific curriculum for learning disabled or physically disabled students. Phil-Mont seeks to work with students and families who have learning difficulties, however, Phil-Mont does not provide IEP's for students.

The Learning Center (grades K-12) may provide support for students with atypical academic needs or for those who have a psychological assessment on file at the school. Phil-Mont does not provide comprehensive psychological, medical, or educational testing or programs for children with serious behavior or learning problems, but they may be referred to the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit for a psychological educational evaluation. This evaluation is free, although it may take some time to get scheduled. Parents can also seek such testing through outside agencies. It may be necessary to ask students whose needs we cannot meet or accommodate to seek their education at another school.

Study Hall

Study Halls (Middle School)

Study halls are held during the last period of the school day. Middle School clubs and groups (i.e. Reading Olympics, Mythology Club, Jazz Band) meet during ninth period study hall. Study halls are to be silent and used to get assignments done. Students also may arrange to meet with teachers regarding questions they might have about a particular subject.

Study Halls (High School)

Study halls are for completing daily assignments, preparing for tests or for reading. Study halls are quiet, "no-talking" times, conducive to study. A student may request permission from the study hall teacher to work somewhere else if he or she has made *prior arrangements* properly with the librarian or another teacher.

Home Schooling

Phil-Mont welcomes home school families who share our commitment to academically rigorous Christian education and want to partner with us. Information about multi-class discounts is available from the admissions office. The library can be used throughout the day for those home school students who have a one or two period gap between classes or before extracurriculars. If there is a larger gap, the student should contact the Dean of Student Affairs about ways to fill it, or the student should make arrangements to leave campus. Home school students must be enrolled in at least two full-credit classes in order to be eligible for co-curricular activities. Because high school students are subject to the rules and regulations of our member athletic conference, home school students who wish to play sports must be enrolled full time in their senior year.

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses (High School Only)

AP courses are for advanced students who accept the challenge, have the discipline for college-level work, and meet subject requirements. College credit may be earned from these courses, saving students and parents both time and money. In May the high school Dean of Students Affairs administers standardized exams developed by the College Board. The student's score on each exam is the criterion used by colleges to determine how much college credit may be granted. All students enrolled in an AP course are required to take the AP examination for that course. The fee is not covered by tuition.

Grading

Students are evaluated in course work to provide an understanding of their achievement. Students and parents are invited to discuss grades with their teachers and/or the Dean of Students Affairs.

Elementary School

Report cards are issued four times a year for grades one to five. Kindergarten reports are given at the end of each semester in the form of a performance checklist. Students in grades one to five receive letter grades providing information on academic achievement, conduct, effort and attendance. Report cards must be signed by a parent and returned. Final report cards are mailed in June and should be retained by the parent.

Middle School and High School

Official report cards are issued four times a year. The report card gives information on grades and attendance. Parents should retain the report cards.

In addition to report cards, progress reports are emailed home at mid-quarter for those students who are doing poorly or demonstrate a lack of self-discipline in that their work is consistently late or incomplete.

An incomplete (I) for work not completed may be given at the discretion of the teacher. In order to receive credit, all work must be completed within two weeks of the end of a marking period. Any Incomplete grade remaining beyond that time normally will result in a failing grade.

Online Learning Management System

Students and parents have access to student grades, as well as many assignments, through [Canvas](#), Phil-Mont's online learning management system. Through Canvas, students and parents have the ability to communicate with teachers, track student academic progress, and even access some course content (depending on the teacher and course).

Homework

Elementary

Homework is an expected part of our academic program and should be done neatly and completely according to the standards given.

Parents may give guidance to their child in homework and assigned projects, but must remember that it is the child's work, not the parents'.

Our guidelines for time spent on homework by grade level are:

1 st grade:	10-15 minutes
2 nd grade:	20-25 minutes
3 rd grade:	30-40 minutes
4 th & 5 th grade:	50-60 minutes

If a parent finds that a child is consistently spending more time than suggested on homework the issue should be discussed with the child's teacher.

Middle School and High School

Most teachers assign homework to be done outside of class on a regular basis. It is necessary for students to stay current with homework assignments. Homework is an important part of our academic program for several reasons. It provides:

1. practice time to thoughtfully go over what they have heard in class.
2. time to go beyond the class lecture and to seek further information about the subject.
3. time to prepare for tests.
4. an important way for all students to establish disciplined study habits.

Make-Up Work

Elementary School

Parents are responsible to oversee all make-up work from student absences. Parents may request make-up work to be made available when they notify the school office of their child's absence. Teachers will make every effort to provide work and materials, but we cannot guarantee that work will be available in advance of planned absences or the same day as excused absences.

Middle School and High School

Students are required to make up work missed during either an excused or planned absence. It is the student's responsibility, not that of school personnel, to determine what assignments were missed and to complete them. Teachers will not be asked to re-teach any material missed. Teachers are available to provide missed quizzes or tests. It is the student's responsibility to obtain all make-up work immediately upon returning to school. Failure to obtain make-up work will not be accepted as an excuse for not doing the work. When tests or exams are missed due to an absence, they are to be taken at the teacher's convenience.

For tests and work assigned during an excused absence the student must arrange with the teacher a time to take the test within a period not to exceed the number of school days missed. The student is responsible to make the necessary arrangements. Missed work not properly dealt with may be counted as a zero and averaged into the final grade.

Athletes are to speak to their teachers ahead of time if they are going to miss class, in order to take tests in advance or turn in homework in advance.

Students leaving early are not excused from homework due or assigned, tests or quizzes unless they have made arrangements with the teacher.

Parents or students can send an email to teachers requesting the work to be made up or check "Canvas" on the website.

Grading and Course Registration

Grading System

Grade%	Letter Grade	College Prep.	Honors	AP
99-100	A+	4.15	4.65	5.15
94-98	A	4.00	4.50	5.00
91-93	A-	3.67	4.17	4.67
88-90	B+	3.33	3.83	4.33
84-87	B	3.00	3.50	4.00
81-83	B-	2.67	3.17	3.67
78-80	C+	2.33	2.83	3.33
75-77	C	2.00	2.50	3.00
72-74	C-	1.67	2.17	2.67
69-71	D+	1.33	1.83	2.33
67-68	D	1.00	1.50	2.00
65-66	D-	0.67	1.17	1.67

All courses that meet every day for the whole year are worth one credit.

Class Rank (High School)

The grade point average of a student is based only on grades earned from courses taken at Phil-Mont, including any online courses offered as part of the Phil-Mont curriculum. Students are ranked in their respective classes accordingly; grades earned from other schools appear on the student's permanent transcript but are not figured into the cumulative GPA. Students transferring during ninth, tenth, or eleventh grade receive a class rank following the completion of their second academic semester at Phil-Mont. Senior transfers do not receive a class ranking. Students transferring to Phil-Mont do not have grades from a prior school considered when determining the semester grade. Their entire grade is determined by marks earned at Phil-Mont.

Classes Replaced (no failure) from Other Schools

If a student transfers to Phil-Mont with credit from a course Phil-Mont does not require, the student receives an elective credit for that course on the Phil-Mont transcript. It should be noted, however, that such an elective credit does not exempt a student from taking a similar course that Phil-Mont requires for graduation.

Summer Make-Up Courses (Middle and High School)

Students whose final grades are below 65% may participate in a twenty-four hour make-up summer session with a school-approved tutor. Financial arrangements are worked out on an individual basis with each tutor. Transcripts of pre-approved courses from public or parochial school summer programs and school approved learning centers or online opportunities also may be accepted as make-up credits. (Call the Guidance Office for a list.) Make-up credits may not be used more than twice in any one subject throughout grades 9-12 and only two subjects may be made up in this manner per summer.

The course credit is not figured into the GPA. However, the previous "F" is struck through and the student is given credit for the course. The advantage to this is that the student's overall GPA is refigured without the "F." If the course is retaken at Phil-Mont, the higher grade is reflected on the transcript, the "F" struck through, and the GPA is refigured to reflect the higher grade.

Dropping and Adding Courses

Dropping a course during the school year must be arranged through the guidance office with the approval of the classroom teacher and the student's parent. In general, a student is given two weeks at the beginning of the semester to drop a course and add another without penalty. Exceptions to this are made for students taking an honors course without a study hall. These students may drop one elective course offering in exchange for a study hall up to the end of the first nine weeks of school. A student who must drop at a date beyond the second week of classes (10th school day) will receive a WITHDREW FAILING on his or her transcript. Sometimes teachers recognize a student's need to change to a different level in the same subject. A teacher-initiated change such as this will be viewed as a student need rather than a dropped course.

Adding a course also must be accomplished within the first two weeks of a semester. A student who adds a course is responsible for all work missed during that period of time.

Graduation Requirements and Service Hours

A student is required to successfully complete 23.5 credits to graduate. One credit equals two semesters of coursework. All required courses, listed below, must be successfully completed (passing grade) in order to graduate.

Service Hours

Students in grades 9-12 are required to complete 15 hours of community service for each year of high school. Hours spent working for most community organizations, most non-profit organizations, and some school-sponsored activities would satisfy the requirement.

Course Requirements for Graduation

Twenty-three and one half (23.5) units of credit in grades 9-12 to include:

English	4 credits
Social Studies	4 credits
Science	3 credits (students must take at least one physical science course)
Mathematics	3 credits
Phys. Ed.	1 credit (taken over at least 2 years)
Health	.5 credit
Fine Arts	2 credits in Gr. 9-12
Bible	4 credits*
World Language	2 credits (consecutive)

* One credit for each high school year at Phil-Mont; transfer students make up total with electives from previous school. Failed Bible, English, and history classes must be made up during the summer before a student may enter the next grade level.

Graduation Exercises (High School)

The Head of School chooses the commencement speaker. Special awards may be given during commencement exercises. All graduation requirements must be met in order to participate in graduation activities and exercises.

Promotion

Elementary School

The child's academic development, ability, physical development, emotional stability, and social maturity determine promotion. Parents will be notified if it becomes evident that their child may need to be retained.

High School

Grades 10 to 12: To be classified for a certain grade level you must have earned the following credits:

10th grade 6 credits

11th grade 11 credits

12th grade 16 credits

A course which meets 4 days a week all year yields one credit.

Current students are promoted by administrative recommendation when reenrolling in either sixth or ninth grade. Students' academic records and behavioral records are the primary considerations in determining promotions. Students not matching the desired academic and behavioral standards desired by Phil-Mont may not be invited to attend the middle school or high school.

Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and other Academic Honors

Graduating with high honors is achieved by receiving a 3.9 or better at the end of seven semesters. Graduating with honors requires that students have a grade point average of 3.5 or better at the end of seven semesters. Honors recognitions are noted in the commencement program. Salutatorian and Valedictorian are Phil-Mont's highest academic honors and are awarded to students who have attended Phil-Mont at least four semesters before the award is determined.

Specifically, the criteria are:

1. The Valedictorian and Salutatorian awards go to the first and second ranked student according to a weighted GPA of a selected core of academic classes. The academic "core" consists of the following classes: English, math, science, history, Bible, and world language for students attending Phil-Mont 9th-12th grades.
2. Generally, students entering Phil-Mont for their junior year are not eligible to be Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

Fine Arts Programs

The arts are an integral part of Phil-Mont from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Children at the elementary level have many opportunities for artistic expression, both within their classrooms and in performances for their parents and friends. Instrumental and vocal music and visual art instruction begin in the elementary grades with performances at all levels. Band, choir, visual art, and theatre are available for students in the middle and high school.

Off-Campus Education

Special consideration is given to off-campus education when another institution can work in concert with Phil-Mont to provide the best educational opportunity for a student. The following are considerations regarding decisions to allow off-campus education:

1. To receive a diploma from Phil-Mont (and to participate in graduation ceremonies) all graduation requirements must be met.
2. Transfer credits are acceptable for classroom courses and accredited correspondence and/or online courses. Periodically, students want to take a college course while they are in high school. Phil-Mont allows students this privilege with electives which are not part of our curriculum. Unless given special permission, students may not take required courses at an institution other than Phil-Mont, and electives taken off-campus must not interfere with the courses being taken at Phil-Mont.

Physical Education

Physical education classes are conducted several times per week for elementary, middle, and high school students. A Phil-Mont PE uniform for all students, including non-marking athletic shoes, is required.

There are occasions when students have legitimate reasons for not participating in the regularly scheduled program. The following policy is approved by the administration for such non-participation:

1. Parental excuse requests covering a minor ailment or injury will be accepted for up to three consecutive class periods. Thereafter, a doctor's note is required.
2. The students will be expected to attend class to listen, watch, and keep up to date.

Approved keyed/combination gym locks may be rented from the athletic office for the school year (or any portion thereof) for \$5. This money is returned when the lock is returned.

Testing Program

Phil-Mont is committed to developing and administering purposeful assessments that are designed to help children demonstrate what they have learned rather than show what they have not learned. Tests are not given on Mondays in an effort to encourage students to rest on the sabbath, and to encourage student engagement in corporate worship on Sundays. Furthermore, teachers are encouraged to schedule tests so that ideally no student has more than two major evaluations per day.

In addition to tests and semester exams in regular courses, students will participate in standardized testing. Second through ninth grade students take the IOWA Assessments. The results of the IOWAs are evaluated for learning patterns, evidence of student growth, and areas of concern. At tenth and eleventh grade students must take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude-National Merit Scholar Qualifying Test (PSAT-NMSQT). Students in grades eleventh and twelfth grade take the SAT I and SAT II subject tests or the ACT for college admissions. The IOWA test and PSAT are administered at Phil-Mont. Students register for the SAT or ACT online and take them at various testing centers.

Exams (High School)

All students are required to take first and second semester exams with the exception of graduating seniors. A graduating senior meeting the following criteria may be exempt from the spring semester exam:

1. Grade average of 96% or above for the first and second semester.
2. Any teacher approved extra credit work for second semester must be completed and submitted PRIOR to the fourth quarter Progress Report date.
3. If a senior student is exempted from a final exam, then the earned average will serve as the final grade for the course.

Schedule and Attendance

School Calendar

The school calendar is distributed to each family at the beginning of the school. The calendar is available on the Phil-Mont web site, www.phil-mont.com.

School Hours

Elementary School

- 7:45 - Arriving students supervised on play areas or inside during inclement weather
- 8:05 - Enter building
- 8:15 - Class begins for Kindergarten through fifth
- 12:00 - Half-day Kindergarten dismissal
- 2:45 - Dismissal for all full-day students

Recess

1. At the elementary level, children have a morning and afternoon recess break. All students are expected to go outside unless it is determined that the weather is unfavorable. Your child should be dressed appropriately for weather conditions. If your child has any condition, either temporary or permanent, that would hinder normal play, please notify the school. If your doctor advises that your child remain inside during recess after an illness, please send a note to the teacher to that effect.
2. Children may bring a snack to eat during recess. We strongly encourage that snacks such as fruit, fresh vegetables, or whole grains be brought, especially for morning recess.
3. Send suitable clothing with your child for outdoor play. Boots are encouraged when the grounds are wet or snowy. When there is snow, you should send snow pants or a change of clothing, including socks.

Middle School and High School

Students should arrive at school by 7:45 a.m. Classes begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at 2:50pm. Teachers remain in the building until 3:15 to give extra help or to assist with make-up work. If students are not participating in an after-school sport or activity, they are expected to leave school grounds by 3:15pm. Students should have all of their books and bags packed and be out of the building by that time.

Break (Middle School)

Students will have a ten-minute break during the morning. At this time students may gather books for classes for the rest of the morning, go to the restroom, and have drinks and snacks.

School Closing

If school is to be closed because of inclement weather your primary means of information should be viewing the school's website at www.phil-mont.com. It will also be announced on radio stations

WCAU and KYW as well as on a variety of other sources, but your most reliable source of information is the school website which will be updated first and then repeatedly in the case that additional information is required. The school's closing number is Montgomery County #365. If our number is not called on the radio stations, we will be having school that day. Please *do not* call the school or school personnel at their homes. Parents will also receive a notification via email from the school in the case of a snow day.

If we are in session for the day and need to have an emergency dismissal, we will post the early dismissal on our website and also call local television and radio stations as soon as we know we are closing. Parents calling the school greatly hinder the efficiency of the dismissal and tie up the phone lines, although we understand that it may be unavoidable at times. We need everyone's cooperation in order for this procedure to run quickly and smoothly. Regardless of the reason for the dismissal, the website, www.phil-mont.com, will be updated as frequently as necessary to provide information for parents.

Attendance

When students are absent, parents should call the school office by 8:00 a.m. to alert the school of the absence. If parents do not call, it will be necessary for us to call the home. Without a contact from home, absences are unexcused. An extended period absence (i.e. five days), requires a doctor's excuse or special permission from the administration.

Absences

Absences are classified in the following three ways:

1. Excused Absence: includes but is not limited to: personal illness, death in the family, and doctor's appointments.
2. Planned absence: It is expected that students are in regular attendance. We do recognize there are events that may cause a student to be out of school, such as family trips and college visits. Juniors and seniors are encouraged to visit colleges in consultation with the Dean of Students Affairs. Students should obtain a Planned Absence Form from the receptionist a week prior to the absence. The Planned Absence Form is used to notify teachers and request the student work that will be missed during the planned absence. Students will be responsible for getting and accomplishing all work.
3. Unexcused absence:
 - a. High school and middle school. An unexcused absence is an absence of which the parent(s) were unaware. Unexcused absence(s) will be treated as skipping school. Students skipping school are subject to suspension or expulsion, at the discretion of the administration.
 - b. Elementary school. Unexcused absences will be handled at the discretion of the administration.

Excessive Absences

A student who accrues more than ten absences in a semester will be subject to review by school administration.

Co-Curricular Activities and Absences

Students who participate in co-curricular activities (e.g., athletics, drama) must be in school by 12:00pm in order to participate in the activity that day. The administration may grant exceptions if circumstances warrant.

Tardies

By being prompt, students demonstrate Christian discipline and responsibility. There is no classification of excused and unexcused tardies; a student is either on time or not on time.

1. Elementary school: Students are expected to be in the building by 8:05 a.m. and required to be in their seats with the materials needed for class by 8:15 a.m. If a student is tardy, he/she is to go directly to the reception desk to obtain a pass. Continued or recurring tardiness will be cause for a parental conference with the teacher and/or administration to explore reasons and solutions to the problem.
2. High school and middle school: Students are expected to be in the building at 7:45 a.m. and required to be in first period class at 8 a.m. each day. Students tardy to school in the morning must go directly to the reception desk to obtain a pass. If tardiness is an ongoing problem, action will be taken. Generally every tardy after three, per quarter, will result in a detention, five will result in a meeting with the administration.

Late Arrival

Middle school and high school students arriving after 8:20 a.m. are considered a late arrival. The student should be accompanied by a parent or guardian to the office for admittance.

Leaving School

Students needing to leave early for an appointment must bring a parental note to the reception desk or have a parent make a phone call to the receptionist that morning. A parent or guardian must sign a student out at the reception desk in order for that student to leave the building. If returning to school the same day, a student must sign in at the reception desk and get a pass to class.

If a student wishes to leave school, he or she must have permission from the administration and a parent must confirm with the receptionist that the student has permission to leave.

Elementary students must be excused to leave campus by the teacher and the administration. If elementary students are to leave the building prior to the end of the day, the parents of these students must notify the office in advance and sign children out at the reception desk when they arrive to pick them up.

Seniors who have parental permission may leave campus during lunch only on designated days. This permission may be withdrawn for abuse of the privilege. Seniors assigned a last period study hall may, with parental permission, have early sign-out privileges.

Elementary Dismissal and After-school Care

Students are to remain in their bus or car lines until dismissed by the supervising teacher. Children who are still waiting in car line at 3:15pm will be taken to Extended Care and their parents will be billed accordingly. Extended Care is available from 3:00pm until 6:00pm each day. Billing is done on a monthly basis. Additional information and a fee schedule are available on the Phil-Mont website.

Illness

If a student should become ill during the day, he or she should report such illness to a teacher. The teacher will send the student to the reception desk. When necessary, the student's parent(s) will be called to provide transportation home, to a doctor, or to a hospital. Under no circumstances may a student leave the building because of illness without the permission of the administration. Parents will be called

for permission if a student is driving home alone or taking SEPTA. In cases of emergency, transportation will be provided to take the student to the hospital.

School Nurse and First Aid

The school nurse is in the building periodically. She is responsible for several areas including health records, vision and hearing tests, planning physical exams, etc.

Simple first aid is administered in the office for minor cuts and bruises. In case of severe injury parents will be called. A child should not be sent to school when parents suspect that he or she is ill. A child should not return to school until he is free from fever for twenty-four hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication. (A temperature of 100 degrees or higher is considered to be a fever.)

Medical Records

Medical information and health records are kept in the nurse's office and maintained by the local school district nurse from Springfield Township, Montgomery County. Phil-Mont does not release any information to outside agencies without the authorization of the parents or of the student graduate. Students and parents may inspect their files upon request with the knowledge of the administration and with the school nurse present. If a student transfers to another school, the original medical records are sent to the new school and copies of immunizations are retained.

Immunization

The school adheres to state public health laws regulating vaccinations for all school age children. The administration will exclude any child from school who is out of compliance with the required immunization schedule unless the child's parents have executed a valid waiver. One written warning will be given prior to exclusion. The school nurse will complete all immunization data including the necessary Immunization Program Forms.

The administration also has the authority to exclude from school a student who has a communicable disease or infection normally associated with childhood that is known to be spread by any form of casual contact and is considered a health threat to the school population. The Montgomery County Health Department may be consulted during this time.

If your child is exempt from immunizations, he/she may be removed from school during an outbreak.

Infectious Disease Control

Phil-Mont recognizes the importance of providing and maintaining a school environment which minimizes the risk of the transmission of any significant communicable diseases. It also recognizes the need to ensure that any student or staff member with a communicable disease remains eligible for the benefits of his or her educational services, as well as his or her rights and privileges provided by law. In order to balance these rights with the school's obligation to protect the health of all students and staff, the following policies and procedures have been developed regarding any student who has a communicable disease. This policy addresses, but is not limited to the following serious communicable diseases: diphtheria, measles, mumps, rubella, pertussis, chickenpox, respiratory streptococcal infections including scarlet fever, infectious conjunctivitis (pink eye), ringworm, impetigo contagiosa, pediculosis capitis (head lice), pediculosis corporis (body lice), scabies, trachoma, tuberculosis, Neisseria meningitidis.

Phil-Mont will work cooperatively with local, county, and state agencies to enforce and adhere to health codes for prevention, control, and containment of communicable diseases in its schools.

Communicable Disease Review Panel

The Head of School will convene a Communicable Disease Review Panel as needed. The purpose of this panel is to serve as a resource and advisory body to the school for specific communicable disease instruction, and for input regarding issues of major concern with respect to epidemic control and any communicable disease occurrence. The panel normally will be comprised of the following:

1. Head of School
2. designated school nurse/Public Health nurse
3. other administrative staff
4. physician with expertise in the related disease
5. physician(s) treating the individual(s)
6. parent/guardian of the affected individual
7. pastors

If the need for a panel determination exists, the panel shall be convened promptly by the Head of School and should make every effort to complete its review and recommendation in a prompt and timely manner.

In addition to an initial evaluation, the panel shall review the student's condition and situation on a periodic basis, as it deems appropriate, to make any modifications to the original recommendation.

1. **Confidentiality.** The school recognizes the importance of confidentiality. Any student or staff member's medical condition shall be disclosed only to the extent necessary to minimize the health risks to the individual and others. The number of personnel aware of the individual's identity or condition will be kept at the minimum necessary to assure proper care of the individual and to detect situations in which the potential for transmission of the disease may be increased. The Communicable Disease Review Panel responsible for making initial evaluations and placement decisions also will determine which personnel need to be informed of the condition. Such determination will be in accordance with existing state laws.
2. **Medical Evaluation.** If a student or staff member has a communicable disease, or if there is reasonable cause to believe that he or she does, the parent or guardian of the student or the affected individual will provide to the school upon request documentation or an appropriate medical evaluation. Refusal to provide such information will result in the individual being excluded from school until the requirement is met. If a communicable disease is present, the information in the medical evaluation will be made available to the Communicable Disease Review Panel.
3. **Placement.** The administration may exclude students and/or personnel from school who are suspected of having a communicable disease, pending the completion of an appropriate medical evaluation. If such a condition is confirmed, continued exclusion shall be dependent on the nature of the condition and the decision, if applicable, of the Communicable Disease Review Panel. In most instances, return to school will be dependent on the written recommendation of the individual's own physician.

Policy on Health Procedures and Administration of Drugs

The Pennsylvania Department of Health mandates that school personnel, including the nurse, may not administer medication of any sort except as prescribed by a physician who has submitted the required

authorization forms. *This directive includes over-the-counter medicines.* Permission forms, which must be completed *in advance*, require the original doctor's order and parental permission signatures.

It is preferred that no medication be sent to school. If at all possible a child should be given needed medication before and after school. If that is not possible, please abide by these guidelines.

1. All medications must be brought to the reception desk at the beginning of the school day. No student may have any medication, prescription or non-prescription, in his or her possession during school hours. If your child needs to carry an inhaler on him/her, proper paperwork must be filled out.
2. Medication prescribed by a physician must detail the name of the *drug, dosage, and the time intervals* at which the medication is to be given and be in the original, non-breakable container, labeled by a licensed pharmacy and/or physician.
3. Written permission from the parent/guardian of the pupil, requesting that the school comply with the physician's order, must include a provision releasing school personnel from liability. Forms are available in the school. *We will not dispense any medicine without this form.*
4. Any non-prescription medication (including Tylenol, allergy medicine, etc.) must be sent to school in its *original* container in a sealed baggie with the child's name on it and a spoon if necessary. Sending in one capsule or five Tylenol etc. in a baggie is unacceptable. The directions on the original container must be readable.
5. Any medication brought to school in any manner not in accordance with the above guidelines will be retained in the school office and sent home at the end of the day. We will not allow any child to take medicine without the proper authorization and instructions.

Students Who Become Expectant Parents:

Continued attendance of expectant parents will be considered on an individual basis. Each decision will be made on the basis of Christian concern for the welfare of each student and family involved and for the welfare of the student body. This policy will apply equally to male and female students.

When the administration becomes aware of a pregnancy, contact will be made with the student's parents to investigate. Factors contributing to continued attendance may include:

1. Submission to biblical principles in regards to the sanctity of human life.
2. Submission to the parents' authority.
3. The health of the mother.
4. The effect on the school community.

Honors

Grades 6-12

1. High Honor Roll: Students must maintain a grade average of 93% with no grade less than 84%.
2. Honor Roll: Students must maintain a grade average of 88% with no grade less than 74%.
3. The official Honor Roll will be determined at the end of each quarter.

In order to be eligible for, Honor Roll, students must be full-time students (taking at least six courses, or at least five and a half credits).

National Honor Society (High School Only)

Membership in the National Honor Society is one of the highest honors that can be earned by a student. It is a mark of scholarship, character, leadership, and service that adds significantly to an individual's credentials. All students should do their best to live up to this standard. To qualify for membership in the NHS, a student must maintain a 3.5 cumulative grade point average and be in grade eleven or twelve. A faculty council must approve every candidate. Students are approved on the basis of their leadership abilities, participation in school life, community service, exemplary character and positive attitude. The last five characteristics are as essential as the academic requirement. Dismissal from the NHS may occur if a student fails to maintain these requirements. It is possible for students to qualify academically for the Phil-Mont NHS but be turned down for membership by the faculty council because they have not met the criteria in areas beyond the academic requirement.

Co-Curricular *Activities*

Middle School Organizations and Co-Curricular Activities

List of Organizations and Activities

There are many enriching activities open for student participation in middle school. Students should acquaint themselves with the various organizations and their functions. Students are encouraged to join one or more of the organizations. Some of the organizations and activities are as follows:

1. Clubs/Enrichment Opportunities
 - a. Bible Study
 - b. Art Club
 - c. Reading Olympics
 - d. Mythology Club
 - e. Service Committee
 - f. Choir
 - g. Jazz Band
 - h. Chess Club
 - i. Ping Pong Club
2. Special Events
 - a. Battle of the Books
 - b. Fine Arts Festival
 - c. Greek Fest
 - d. Science Fair
 - e. Reading Olympics
 - f. Medieval Feast
 - g. ACSI Competitions
 - h. Winter and Spring Concerts
 - i. Fall Musical
3. Class Trips
 - a. Sixth and seventh grade: Assorted and changing, but typically including Valley Forge, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Glencairn Museum
 - b. Eighth grade: Whosoever Gospel Mission Service Trip

High School Organizations and Co-Curricular Activities

List of Organizations and Activities

Likewise, high school students are enriched by participation in school organized clubs and activities. Students are encouraged to join one or more of the organizations. Some of the organizations and activities are as follows:

Chess Club

National Honor Society

Robotics Club
Drama Club
Fine Arts Festival
Black Culture Club
Interact Club
Writer's Workshop
Video Club

Jazz Band
Student Government
Chapel Worship Team
Chapel Leadership Team
Winter Tennis
Gospel Choir
Ping-Pong Club

Co-Curricular Activities Eligibility

To participate in co-curricular activities, students must be in good standing academically, must not have disciplinary issues, and cannot have a financial hold on their family account (*cf* Financial Contract section of this handbook). Students who participate in co-curricular activities must be in school by 12:00 noon the day of the activity. The administration may grant exceptions if circumstances warrant.

Student Council and Class Officers

Class officers and student council representatives are elected every school year. Class officers consist of president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. These officers work with the faculty sponsor(s) on behalf of their class. Student council consists of up to three representatives from each class. They serve the general high school population along with their faculty sponsor(s). Both class officers and student council serve to provide leadership in planning and coordinating spiritual and social activities.

Elections are held near the end of each school year for the following year. Interested students will meet for instructions and qualification sheets. A majority vote will be required to secure the position. If there is a vacant position, those elected will share the responsibility of that position. After the election period, names may be submitted to the administration for consideration to fill any empty positions. The Student Council elects their own officers from among those elected to the student council.

Yearbook

Students taking an elective course in the high school produce the annual yearbook, *The Philotheon*, published in the late spring.

Junior-Senior Banquet/Prom

Each year the junior class sponsors a junior-senior banquet/prom in honor of the graduating seniors who come as their guests. The juniors also provide for the program and dance following the dinner.

School Sponsored Dances

Up to three dances per school year may be offered for high school students, including a dance accompanying the Junior-Senior Banquet/Prom. The Special Events Dress Code applies to these dances. Students not dancing in an appropriate manner may be asked to leave. Middle school students are not permitted at any high school dances.

Drama

All students participating in non-course related dramatic productions must meet satisfactory academic and behavioral standards as determined by the administration.

Student Pictures

Early in the school year individual photos of each student are taken. During the second semester class group photos are taken.

Athletics

Interscholastic Athletics

The vision of Phil-Mont is to train ambassadors and disciples of Christ who are thoughtful, responsible, and biblically literate stewards of God's gifts and calling.

The athletic program at Phil-Mont provides an important context for training students to be those disciples and ambassadors. Students are given opportunity to put into practice these principles taught within their homes, school, and local churches. Athletics offers another means to bring glory to God (I Cor. 10:31), preeminence to Christ (Col. 1:18), and dependence upon the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16).

Interscholastic athletics are not just recreational, they are extended curricula. Education through athletics is not only possible, but necessary. Athletic activity helps students grow in the decisional dimension of learning - the realm of options, choices, and commitments. Because students learn by precept and practice, a Christ-centered athletic program guides students to understand, choose, and practice personal integrity, cooperation, self-respect, responsibility, and perseverance.

In order for a student to be **eligible for participation** in any sport the following requirements must be met.

1. A PIAA Comprehensive Physical Form on file
2. Adherence to all PIAA eligibility requirements and additional Phil-Mont eligibility requirements as found below
 - a. Student must sign and deliver the Athletic Code of Conduct
 - b. All team uniforms must be cleaned and returned after the last game of the season.
 - c. Students may not play another sport until the uniform is returned or paid for based on replacement cost.
 - d. Students must maintain academic eligibility requirements (*cf* Co-Curricular Eligibility Policies section of this handbook).

Athletic League

Phil-Mont is a member of the Bicentennial Athletic League, which is affiliated with the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletics Association (PIAA). The following sports teams are usually offered in the secondary school:

Fall

Boys

Cross Country (HS & MS)
Soccer (HS & MS)

Girls

Cross Country (HS & MS)
Soccer (HS & MS)
Tennis (HS)

Winter

Boys

Basketball (V, JV & MS)
Wrestling (HS & MS)

Girls

Basketball (V, JV & MS)

Spring

Boys

Girls

Track & Field (HS & MS)
Baseball (HS & MS)

Track & Field (HS & MS)
Softball (HS & MS)

Further information about the athletic program is found in the *Athletic Handbook* (under separate cover), which details training rules, attendance, etc.

Co-Curricular Activities Eligibility Policies

Phil-Mont is a member of the PIAA, which requires that each student's academic progress be monitored on a weekly basis. Each student-athlete will have his or her academic performance evaluated each Friday, as a cumulative quarter/semester average, while he or she is active in an interscholastic athletic activity. If a student is declared ineligible, his or her period of ineligibility will begin on Sunday morning and will conclude at the close of the following Saturday.

The PIAA requires that for participation in any interscholastic athletic activity, a student must be passing four full credit courses. In addition, Phil-Mont guidelines state that if any student is receiving an F in any course, he or she may become ineligible for one week. If a student-athlete appears on the weekly academic eligibility report with a combination of two or more Ds, he or she will have a one-time two week "grace period" to bring the grades up in those courses to C- or better status. Failure to bring those grades to a C- or better status after the initial two-week "grace period" may then result in his or her being ineligible on a week-to-week basis. During the time in which a student is ineligible, he or she will not be allowed to participate in games and may not be able to practice until the period of ineligibility has been lifted. The second time a student-athlete is declared ineligible will result in a meeting among the student, parents, teacher(s), and an administrator.

If a student becomes ineligible on three separate occasions during either the fall or spring season (equivalent to one-quarter of the season), or four separate occasions during the winter season (equivalent to one-quarter of the season), the administration, the parents, and the athletic director will confer to determine if it is in the student-athlete's best interest to continue with membership on the team.

If a student is declared ineligible with two or more Ds based on first semester grades, he or she may be ineligible at the beginning of the second semester for a period of one week. If a student is declared ineligible with any grade of an F based on first semester grades, he or she may be declared ineligible for a period of two weeks beginning the first school day of the new or second semester.

Communication

Communication

The *Signet* is mailed to parents, alumni, and friends of the school three times each year. Approximately once a month, an article is posted on the *Falcon Flyer*, the school blog, found on our website. An email newsletter called “News You Can Use” is sent to all parents every Friday. Regular communication from elementary classroom teachers is sent home as well. Important communications are sent home with middle school and high school students in envelopes when necessary.

Announcements (Middle School and High School)

Announcements are read every day and posted online daily. An administrator, teacher or staff person must approve student announcements.

Bulletin Boards (Middle School and High School)

An administrator must approve any poster or advertisement.

Cell Phones

Students are not permitted to use their cell phones during the school day; they are to be turned off. Students may use the office phone or their cell phone in the office with permission from an office staff person.

Parents, please do not contact your child directly by cell phone during the school day. If there is an emergency, contact the office and we will get your child immediately. If you need to speak with a teacher, leave a message for him or her to contact you. Please phone teachers at home only if the situation must be handled before the next school day.

Parent-Teacher Communications, Relationships, and Conferences

All parents are encouraged to attend parent-teacher conferences. Scheduled conferences occur once a year in the Fall. We also urge parents to contact teachers to discuss any academic or school behavior problems concerning their child. Parents are encouraged to request a conference when they deem it necessary. The administration should be consulted on a problem only after a conference with the teacher failed to resolve the issue. This approach follows the biblical direction of Matthew 5:23-24 and Matthew 18:15-16 and works effectively for the development of proper relations.

Parents are encouraged to use email or Canvas to communicate with teachers (*cf* Online Learning Management System section of this handbook). As such, it is important that parents provide the school with an email address that is regularly checked by them, and update the school whenever that email address is changed.

Back to School Nights

Back-to-School Nights are scheduled near the beginning of the school year. These evenings are planned to make parents aware of what will be taught during the school year and to provide an opportunity to see classrooms, become acquainted with classroom procedures, meet the teachers and meet other parents who have children in the same class.

Non-Custodial Parent(s)

The term *parent* or *parents* used in the Parent-Student Handbook shall refer to the custodial parent(s). All custodial parents who have, through court order in any divorce, adoption, or other proceeding, been granted custody of a student, shall furnish a copy of said order to the school. It shall be kept in the student's file. No school official shall permit a change in the physical custody of a child at the school unless the person seeking custody of the child presents the school official with a copy of a valid court order placing custody of such child with such person. The person seeking custody also must give the school official reasonable advance notice of his or her intent to take custody of such child at the school. The school attorney shall be consulted and furnished with a copy of any such order prior to any change of custody.

It is not the responsibility of the school to interpret, enforce, or mediate disputes over the meaning of divorce decrees or other court orders. In such cases the school will follow, subject to school policies, the wishes of the custodial parent.

Non-custodial parents, unless prevented by court order, shall have a right to be placed on the school mailing list, attend announced events and request and receive a copy of their child's report cards, notice of school attendance, names of teachers, class schedules, standardized test scores and any other records customarily available to parents. Report cards and transcripts will be withheld until all financial obligations have been met as provided in the Enrollment Contract. Phil-Mont will not furnish transcripts or other records, suitable for use in admitting a child to another school, to a non-custodial parent without the written consent of the custodial parent.

It is the responsibility of the custodial parent(s) to arrange transportation for their children. The school cannot verify the identity of each person seeking to pick up a child.

Conduct and Discipline

Concepts of Discipline

Discipline is about responsibility, self-regulation, respect, and discipleship. In order to minimize the stress and confusion that can arise in the area of discipline, the following concepts and procedures have been constructed.

A Christian school has a unique opportunity to develop a deepened sense of community among its students and faculty. We are part of God's family, the Christian community, and the Kingdom of God. Our community is developed through our adopted mission and values. Discipline exists for the purpose of maintaining these values and enabling us to accomplish our mission.

As Christians, we should understand and uphold the worth of each individual person. This is part of unconditional love, which has been given to us. However, we also are aware of the destructive results and the residual effects of sin. All of the above serves to direct our view and procedure of discipline.

Phil-Mont understands discipline to be more discipleship than punishment. Our goal is to guide students into self-discipline and help them develop good decision-making skills. We believe the Scripture is clear that God's desire is for our heart. Therefore, we seek to win the student's heart; which will in turn change his or her life.

Phil-Mont reserves the right to implement disciplinary procedures for infractions occurring off campus. Cyber-bullying, parties with alcohol or drugs present, and any other serious infractions not occurring on school property but affecting the school community or giving negative attention to the school will be within the purview of Phil-Mont's disciplinary procedures.

Student Conduct and School Atmosphere

The following categories serve as principles of conduct:

1. **Respect:** Students must exhibit respect for their teachers, fellow classmates, and themselves. Respect may best be summed up in Matthew 7:12; "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." Everyone is to treat others, in word and in action, as they themselves would like to be treated.
2. **Responsibility:** Students must be honest. They need to take responsibility for their school work, attitudes and actions. They are to do their own work whether it is homework, project, quiz, or test. They are always to speak the truth.
3. **Relationship:** Students must live in a community relationship. This means that they will defer to others, cooperate with others, and serve others. Every student must do his or her part to create a safe and healthy school environment, and to foster a learning community.

Expectations of Student Attitudes and Actions

What follows seeks to clarify some specific attitudes and actions that are unacceptable at Phil-Mont. This list is not exhaustive, but is to serve as a principled guideline:

1. Students are expected to arrive at school and at each class on time.

2. With the exception of school approved calculators, electronic devices are not expected to be used or seen during the school day (8:00 am - 2:50pm). These include but are not limited to cell phones, ipods, handheld games, smart watches, and the like.
3. Chewing gum is not permitted during the school day.
4. Students are expected to arrive at school in proper dress code attire.
5. Students should never handle another student's property without permission. This includes taking items from a locker, a desk, the hallway, or any other location.
6. Conversations, private or public, are expected to be positive, constructive, and respectful. Jokes, pranks, offensive symbols, pornography, gossip, derogatory remarks, degrading names and putting others down, misuse of God's name or spiritually meaningful terms, vulgar language, suggestive stories or drawings, horseplay, hiding book bags, invading private property, acts of intimidation, and invading private space are examples of what is offensive. If at any time a student believes he or she is being harassed, he or she should immediately see the Dean of Student Affairs.
7. Students are not to be disruptive in class. This includes repeated talking or moving around in class.
8. Students are to respect and obey their teacher.
9. Copying from someone else's test paper and/or copying homework is cheating. When a student gives or obtains any information in a manner which jeopardizes the integrity of the academic process, this is considered cheating.
10. Plagiarism in all forms is forbidden.
11. Smoking on school grounds is prohibited.
12. The use, possession, sale, or distribution of over-the-counter, prescription (other than as described is the Policy Regarding the Use of Medication), or illegal drugs including alcohol and tobacco on campus is prohibited.
13. All forms of fighting are unacceptable.
14. Phil-Mont is committed to addressing all reports of bullying and relational aggression seriously. Bullying is any intentional physical or psychological intimidation that occurs repeatedly over time with an imbalance of power. Any and all forms of bullying and relational aggression are unacceptable. Any student who believes he or she is being bullied should report this immediately to a teacher, parent, or administrator.
15. Public displays of affection are not permitted at school.

Discipline Procedures

Phil-Mont seeks to utilize a range of disciplinary measures in conjunction with the gravity of the offense and the developmental level of the child.

1. Parents will be alerted to any serious or continuing behavioral problems. When a student is disciplined, the teacher or administrator will call or email the parents to alert them of the incident and the course of action. Generally, any discipline that is more than a brief conversation with the student will be reported to the parents.
2. No member of the faculty and staff of Phil-Mont is permitted to administer any form of corporal punishment at any time. However, faculty or staff may be required to physically restrain a student who they feel poses an immediate threat to anyone's (including the student's) safety,
3. The administration maintains records of detentions, suspensions and probations.
4. Any disciplinary action may be appealed to the Dean of Students by the parent or guardian within seven school days of the disciplinary action.

Phil-Mont Dress Code

Dress Code Philosophy

At Phil-Mont we desire to have a biblical approach to dress. While there is no one “Christian” way to dress, we believe there are sound reasons for providing sensible guidelines for school clothing. Our dress code is designed to:

1. help develop Christian character in our students through modesty, cleanliness and appropriateness of dress;
2. allow clothing to enhance, not detract from, the learning atmosphere;
3. be affordable;
4. be easily followed;

Responsibility

Adherence to Phil-Mont’s Dress Code starts in the home. A significant responsibility rests upon parents to give students proper guidance regarding their clothing decisions. Dress Code infractions can result in detentions and/or missed class time (as much as a full day) while students wait for appropriate clothing to be delivered from home. The Phil-Mont administration and appointed faculty and staff retain the sole discretion as to whether a student’s appearance is appropriate.

Comportment

We also recognize the importance of not just what we wear, but how it is worn. Following are a few guidelines regarding comportment:

1. Shirts must be tucked in (except polo shirts).
2. All buttons must be buttoned on shirts (except the top collar button).
3. Skirts must fall no more than two inches above the knee (MS & HS only).
4. Turtlenecks must be worn under another approved shirt.
5. An approved shirt must be worn under a uniform sweater.
6. Clothing must be modest, neat and clean, properly sized and fitted, without holes, rips, patches, or frayed or ragged ends.
7. Girls tights, socks, stockings, and leggings must be white, light blue, navy, black, or flesh toned.
8. Boys may wear uniform shorts during the months of August, September, October, April, May, and June.
9. PE uniforms are required and may be worn during PE class only, with the following exceptions:
 - a. Elementary students may wear gym uniforms on days they have gym class.
 - b. Kindergarten students may wear the gym uniform any day of the week.
 - c. Students may wear team colors on Blue and White Day.
10. PE uniform is:
 - a. **Elementary:** Gray t-shirt with navy logo and navy shorts. Navy sweatpants and sweatshirts with logo are optional.
 - i. **MS & HS:** Gray t-shirt with royal blue logo and royal shorts.
 - ii. All pieces of PE uniform are available at Lands End.

- b. Accessories (rings, bracelets, necklaces, earrings) which are in good taste and not distracting may be worn.
- c. No body piercing other than ears.
- d. No garments that allow bare midsections while bending in any direction.
- e. No visible undergarments.
- f. No head coverings, outerwear, sweatshirts, or hoodies inside the building during school hours.
- g. No heavy wallet or neck chains.
- h. No leg warmers.
- i. No slippers, shower shoes or flip-flops (shoes with a thong between two toes and no other straps).

Approved Vendors

All clothing must be purchased through *Lands' End or the Phil-Mont Consignment Shop* with the following exceptions:

- 1. Chino pants
- 2. Turtlenecks
- 3. Oxford shirts

Note: Clothes must be of the same style, color, and cut as that from our approved vendors.

Special Events

There will be particular times when students will be asked to adhere to the following minimum standards for a dress code (e.g., Junior-Senior Banquet, Prom, graduation, academic/athletic award ceremonies, NHS induction).

Boys required attire:

- 1. A collared shirt with a tie.
- 2. Solid-colored dress slacks (no jeans or denim pants).
- 3. Dress shoes with socks.

Girls required attire:

- 1. An appropriately modest dress, skirt/blouse, or dress pant/blouse combination (dresses and skirts must fall no more than two inches above the knee).
- 2. Dress shoes (flats or heels).
- 3. No jeans or denim pants.

Admissions

General Statement

Attending Phil-Mont is a blessing and a privilege for children of families who demonstrate commitment to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ and to the principles of Christian education on which Phil-Mont is founded. Parents and children are expected to demonstrate their commitment through such things as the practice of family devotions and active involvement in an established church.

Phil-Mont admits students without regard to race, color, gender, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the Academy. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, and national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial aid programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Admissions Policies and Procedures

The Admissions Office

The admissions office and a team of educators have the responsibility to screen and approve lists of new applicants and continuing families. The Head of School has appointed the admissions office to receive applications, interview parents and students, interpret scores, and make recommendations for acceptance. The decisions of the admissions office are based on the mission of Phil-Mont, competitive qualifications, and the number of vacancies available.

Enrollment Procedures

1. Parents are to complete an application form (one for each child) and submit it to the admissions office with a non-refundable application fee (*cf* Application Fee section of this handbook).
2. When applicable, the following are required before an application may be processed and submitted to the Admissions Committee:
 - a. Parent Interview - representatives of Phil-Mont will meet with parents of applicants to share the purposes and program of the school, to discuss the parents' desires for their children's education, and to determine the mutual compatibility of the two.
 - b. Secondary school student interview and placement tests (arranged through the admissions office).
 - c. Completed New Student Information form for students applying for the secondary school.
 - d. Elementary school student placement tests (arranged through the admissions office).
 - e. Copies of the student's most recent report card from the current school year and final report card from the previous year.
 - f. Copies of the student's most recent standardized/achievement test results.
 - g. Any pertinent information about the student (e.g., learning disability assessment, psycho-educational or speech evaluation, IEP or remediation report).
 - h. Pastoral Reference form.
3. The admissions office will act on the application and make a recommendation.
4. Parents will be notified in writing of the decision to accept or refuse the applicant.
5. Students are considered officially enrolled when:
 - a. All forms required by the school have been completed and submitted.

- b. The Enrollment Contract form is completed and signed by the person responsible for the payment of tuition and fees, and the form is received by the school.

Age Requirements and Grade-level Placement

To enter kindergarten, a child should be five years old on or before September 1. To enter first grade a child should be six years old on or before September 1. Students entering kindergarten and first grade must participate in the Phil-Mont school readiness assessments. These assessments are scheduled through the admissions office.

The grade level of a candidate transferring from another school will be determined after a review of recent school records, standardized test scores, and an admissions test. Where test results make it appear likely that our classes cannot meet the needs of a student, the student will not be accepted. At the high school level, grade-level placement involves determination of what level of course in which to place a student (e.g., college preparatory level or honors level).

Waiting Pool

When grade levels reach enrollment capacity, applicants who have been approved for acceptance are placed in a waiting pool. As soon as space becomes available, applicants in the waiting pool are evaluated by the admissions office, and the student whose family best meets the desired mission of the school is selected.

International Students (non-nationals)

International students are welcome at Phil-Mont. Our international students add to our already richly diverse student body. We believe that having a racially and ethnically diverse student body deepens the educational experience for all of our students. We believe this, in large part, because we believe that having an ethnically diverse student body reflect both the character, as well as the Kingdom of God. An international student is defined by Phil-Mont as one who requires the issuance of an I-20 for admission to the United States.

Policies for Admittance of International Students

1. Phil-Mont will accept only those international students who are entering seventh through eleventh grade.
2. All steps of the admissions process must be completed by May 1.
3. Parents should choose to send their child to Phil-Mont only if they specifically desire an integration of education and Protestant Christian faith.
4. International students must begin their studies on the first day of classes in September of the academic year, and are required to attend Phil-Mont for the full year, with the intention of continuing at Phil-Mont through their graduation from grade 12.
5. Parents of international students must complete all admissions paperwork..
6. All application materials must be completed and on file before an admissions interview will be scheduled.
7. All international students must live with a host family while attending Phil-Mont if their parents do not plan to reside in the U.S. with them. Finding a host family is the complete responsibility of the student's parents and must be established before an I-20 will be issued. The host family must be able to communicate in English. Phil-Mont can not assume responsibility for finding a new host family if a student desires to change host families.

8. The host family must follow the same criteria for admission as the prospective family (see below) and is required to have an admissions interview. Phil-Mont must be notified immediately if the student intends to change host families, and the new host family must be interviewed and adequately meet the admissions criteria in order for the student to continue at Phil-Mont.
9. An I-20 form will be issued only after the full admissions process has been completed and acceptance to Phil-Mont has been granted to the student.
10. The parents or host family must inform the school as soon as they know that the student's visa has been either approved or denied. A copy of the F1 Visa must be mailed or faxed to the school. An appointment must then be made with the Admissions Office for the family to come in to sign the contract and pay tuition. At that time a meeting will also be scheduled for the student to meet with the Dean of Students Affairs to select courses.
11. All International students are required to participate in at least one co-curricular activity. (Example: sports, theatre, clubs, band).
12. International students are expected to speak English while in the classroom, and are encouraged to speak English in the hallways of the school.
13. Tuition for the entire year is due along with the signed contract before a student may begin classes in September. Tuition for the school year will not be refunded should the student discontinue schooling at Phil-Mont for any reason.

Translators

Use of electronic translators is permitted at the discretion of each classroom teacher. Translators must be used only in accordance with the purposes outlined and agreed upon by the individual instructor.

Withdrawal Procedure

Student withdrawals begin with and are administered through the admissions office. After contacting the admissions office, withdrawal from classes is required. Class withdrawals are directed to the Dean of Students Affairs. Requests for withdrawal must be written; telephone withdrawals cannot be accepted. A Withdrawal Form, available from the Office of Admissions, or a letter stating the reason for withdrawal, must be submitted by the parent(s). No records will be released until a formal withdrawal from classes is completed and all fees are paid.

Any student who withdraws from Phil-Mont is required to pay the fee or tuition balance according to the Withdrawal Fee schedule shown in the tuition contract and described in the Withdrawal Fees section of this handbook. After the required tuition or withdrawal fee is paid any remaining prepaid tuition will be refunded to parents whose children are withdrawn according to this procedure.

Students Dismissed from School

Students who are dismissed from Phil-Mont for academic or behavioral reasons will generally not be considered for readmission through the application process for a twelve-month period from the date of dismissal.

Tuition and Fees

Financial Information

(See the *Tuition and Fee Schedule* for additional information or revisions.)

Together with the church and home, the school works toward a shared vision of being Christ-centered. This effort requires a deep commitment of both time and money by all involved. Tuition and fees do not cover the total cost of running our program; a significant portion, of the budget must come from parents, grandparents, friends, alumni, FFPM projects, and our annual fundraisers. Making gifts, serving on committees, and volunteering as needed are all ways in which parents can contribute to Phil-Mont.

Tuition

(See *Tuition and Fee Schedule* for amounts.)

Tuition Payment Schedules

Tuition payments are made using one of the following options:

1. One (1) payment—due on August 1 (payable directly to Phil-Mont).
2. Two (2) payments—due August 5 and January 5 (through FACTS).
3. Eleven (11) equal payments payable July 1 through May 1 (through FACTS).
4. For enrollment after June, call the Business Office for payment options.

Enrollment Contract

Each year parents must update their online information if necessary.

Upon acceptance of a new student, Phil-Mont encloses an Enrollment Contract with the acceptance letter. Parents complete and sign this contract and return it to the admissions office. By signing the agreement, parents and students also agree to abide by the rules and policies contained in the *Parent-Student Handbook*, which is available online.

Phil-Mont believes that parents have a legal and moral duty to pay all tuition and fees when they are due as agreed to in their Enrollment Contract. Phil-Mont cannot extend credit to parents; however the parent is responsible to contact the school in advance of the due date if they are unable to make the payment in order to make alternate arrangements to pay the account. Any parent who does not pay tuition and fees when due, or fails to make alternate arrangements in advance, is in default.

The following conditions apply to students and families who are in default:

1. Students will not be permitted to start school in September if tuition is not reconciled.
2. The family will be contacted by the Business Office after their FIRST failed tuition payment to reschedule.
3. When the account is two month behind on payments, the Head of School will send out a notification that students in the family may not participate in co-curricular activities and trips (sports practices/games, drama productions, Chapel Worship Team, Gospel Choir, Jazz Band, Chess Club, Drama Club, Improve, Robotics Club, Video Club, Writers

Workshop, Ping Pong Club, Black Culture Club, prom, all class trips, graduation) regardless if failed payments occur after an activity or season has begun.

4. When the account is three months behind on payments, all students in the family will not be permitted to attend school. The Head of School will contact the family to schedule a meeting to discuss plans to resolve their account.
5. Report cards and transcripts will be held for all students whose account are delinquent.
6. If there is unpaid tuition from the previous school year after June 30th, the student will be placed in a waiting pool regardless of prior enrollment status.
7. If, despite school efforts to resolve the matter, an account is still delinquent from the previous school year after June 30th, Phil-Mont may pursue other collection efforts through the legal system of through a collection agency.

Variable Tuition

Phil-Mont supports variable tuition through the Annual Fund by providing an adjusted tuition price to families who demonstrate need. Because these funds are limited, it is crucial that current and new families meet the established variable tuition application deadline set by the administration (usually in March). Families will continue to complete an online FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment application. The Variable Tuition Committee will receive those recommendations and work with an established guideline to adjust tuition for families on an annual and case-by-case basis. Admissions decisions are made separately from variable tuition decisions to maintain the integrity of our admissions procedures.

Note: Families who are awarded financial aid from any of our programs are strongly encouraged to complete fifteen hours of volunteer service at Phil-Mont per family per year.

Tuition for Home-Schooling Families

Phil-Mont welcomes home schooling families who wish to send their middle and high school children to select classes. These families will follow the same application process as full time students. The tuition for each class is calculated for the year based on the annual rate divided by seven. Although home school students are not eligible for variable tuition or other financial assistance, they can take advantage of multi-class tuition packages. Payment plans may be set up using the same options as for full time students. In addition, as a demonstration of our commitment to Christian education, students who take three academic classes may add Bible for free.

ES Extended Care & MS Homework Club

Extended Care / Homework Club billing will be processed monthly through FACTS. You will receive an electronic statement via email at the beginning of the month for the previous month's services rendered. Your invoiced amount will be withdrawn through FACTS on the fifteenth of the month.

The cost is \$6 per child per hour. Everyone who uses the program will be billed for the first full hour; after 4 pm, you will be billed to the next half hour. Hours are from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Any pickup after 6:00pm will be charged at the rate of \$8.50 per half hour.

Families who do not make their payments for two consecutive months will not be allowed to use the services of Extended Care / Homework Club.

Gifts and Donations

Each year Phil-Mont needs a sizable amount of gift income for operating purposes and capital improvements. This is a tremendous need and requires the support of everyone. Please consider prayerfully what you can do for your school. It is an outstanding challenge and opportunity.

Fees

(See *Tuition and Fee Schedule* from the business office for amounts.)

Application Fee

1. There is a non-refundable application fee for all new student applications.
2. This fee covers administrative costs for processing an application and is paid each time a family fills out a new student application.
3. The application process for admitting a new student proceeds only upon payment of the application fee and receipt of the application.
4. If a family is applying for admittance of several children at the same time (on one application) then only one fee is required.
5. The application fee is non-refundable.

Trip Fees

Tuition rates cover local field trips. Special trips at the secondary level may involve additional fees.

Other Fees

1. Graduation Fees: Seniors pay for caps and gowns when they pick them up in June.
2. Damaged Book Fees: Students returning damaged books have their grades withheld until payment of the required damage charge. Lost or destroyed books must be replaced at student expense (see Textbooks on page 21.)
3. Extra Yearbook Purchase: Additional yearbooks may be purchased (one yearbook per secondary school family is covered by tuition).
4. Materials: In general, curriculum materials are included in tuition rates. There may be extra expenses for materials in some classes.

5. Check Returned Fee: There is a fee for all checks which are returned by the bank as not collectible.

Withdrawal Fees

Any enrolled student who is withdrawn from Phil-Mont is required to pay a fee or tuition balance according to the schedule shown below (see Tuition and Fee Schedule from the Business Office for any changes in amount). After the required tuition or withdrawal fee is paid, any remaining prepaid tuition will be refunded to parents whose children are withdrawn according to the procedure detailed in the Admissions Withdrawal Procedure section of this handbook.

* The withdrawal fee is 15% of the total annual tuition due for each month starting the first day of August (August = 15%, September = 30%, October = 45%, etc.).

Revision History

8-24-2017: Major Revision Process

9-27-2017: Ridesharing Services (e.g., Uber and Lyft) and Taxis

Philadelphia Montgomery Christian Academy may make corrections, deletions, or additions to this handbook from time to time - before, during, or after the school year - as required by law, circumstances, or a change in policy. Students, parents, and guardians are encouraged to consult the online version of this handbook at www.phil-mont.com where changes will be published. In addition, questions about the handbook and school policies may be addressed to the head of school.