Christchurch School
Curriculum

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**School Mission, Values, and Aspirations**

**Our Mission:**

Christchurch inspires and guides each student’s unique journey to self-confidence, purpose, and identity. Within a caring, structured community, students discover their infinite value and develop the skills to become compassionate, successful, and engaged global citizens.

**Who Are We?**

Every parent and child has their own unique story and reasons for considering secondary school options.

*At Christchurch School, we combine 100 years of tradition, community, and relationships with a dynamic and innovative approach to learning that meets each child where they are and prepares them to succeed in a rapidly changing world.*

**How Do We Do This?**

*100 Year-Old Community Based in Affirming Relationships*

We know that true learning arises out of the stability of positive relationships. Here, students live in a supportive community of adults and peers. Teachers teach, coach, advise, and serve as dorm parents, so that students build positive connections with the adult mentors in their lives. Students also learn through forming relationships in the communities of our region.

*Unique and Infinite Value of Each Child*

We believe deeply in the infinite value of each child, and our entire program, whether it be in the classroom, the field, the stage, or the river, meets each child where they are and helps them realize their full potential on the path to independence.

*Inclusive Episcopal School Built on Our Core Values*

In an increasingly interconnected and complex world, we guide our students in using reason to reflect on purpose, beliefs, and values within a community larger than themselves. As an Episcopal School we welcome students of all backgrounds and we want them to develop a sense of their own purpose and identity, in the context of our community’s core values of curiosity, acceptance, integrity, respect, kindness, and self-confidence.

*Innovative and Dynamic Teaching and Learning*

Today young people are entering a world that is changing at an unprecedented rate. We help students master the competencies they will need to succeed not only in college, but in any new situation. Learning at Christchurch is both dynamic and directly related to real challenges, both local and global. Students learn to solve problems across multiple disciplines, and learning extends from the classroom to athletics, the arts, and the river.

**Our Core Values**
Curiosity

We seek knowledge and wisdom in all forms, that we may become lifelong learners and teachers.

Acceptance

We foster and celebrate the diversity of individuals, our community, and our world.

Integrity

We are honest as we grow into whole selves who act out of a sense of identity and purpose.

Respect

We value the persons and the property, both physical and intellectual, of others.

Kindness

We show charity to one another.

Self-confidence

We persevere in the face of our own limitations and those of others.

Our Aspirations:

As a community, we aspire:

To engage in lifelong learning and the critical use of information. To this end, we are committed to a college preparatory curriculum that is integrated, place-based, and differentiated, designed to enable students with diverse learning styles to be active learners who make meaning out of the world around them.

To lead lives of transformation, both for ourselves and for others. As an Episcopal school, we are committed to fostering self-confidence, purpose, and identity in ourselves as well as spiritually and communally informed responsibility toward others.

To have an integral sense of environmental stewardship and sustainability. To this end, we integrate care for the river and the natural world into all that we do.

To lead lives of physical, psychological, and creative integrity based on the awareness of and development of individual strengths. To this end, we are committed to developing active lifestyles, healthy minds, and creative and artistic expression through co-curricular programs that offer breadth of experience and the choice of depth.

To engage in personal reflection as well as relation with one another. To this end, we are committed to providing time and opportunity to support meaningful interaction.
To be aware of and actively engaged with the international community. To this end, we are committed to building curricular and co-curricular programs that foster a global understanding of learning and living.

**Our Community Expectations**

Every community’s story yields values: what is most important to the community. For us, it is relationships. Our expectations of one another foster a community of *relationship*.

**We show up**
> We attend our community obligations like assembly, chapel, class, advisory and co-curriculars and we are on time.

**We are present**
> We unplug, and we show the community through outward signs that we are engaged.

**We work**
> We fulfill our obligations to ourselves and our community by doing what we say we will do and finishing our tasks.

**We learn**
> We are open to the challenge of discovery.

**We pause**
> We stop to reflect and to attend what needs attention from us, as individuals or as a community.

**We play**
> We play to reenergize our lives and build relationships

**We care**
> We recognize the value and worth of every person in our community and so we take care of each other and our campus.

**We respond**
> When someone is in need, we work together to help.

**We trust**
> We assume positive intent and believe the best of one another.

**We lead**
> We lead through service and through personal example. We believe in servant leadership.

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**Curricular and Co-Curricular Competencies**
Christchurch has identified core competencies, both academic and non-academic, which students will master as they engage in our curricular and co-curricular programs. The various academic disciplines include additional discipline specific exit skills, detailed in the various departmental curricula.

The competencies are divided into Foundational and Advanced, the Foundational representing competencies that all Christchurch Students master, and Advanced representing areas of choice for greater student mastery. The competencies are further divided into the broad categories of Doing, Thinking, Creating, and Engaging. More details are available in Section C. of the academic curriculum.

**Foundational Competencies**

1. Doing – Be productive  
2. Thinking – Acquire and analyze content  
3. Creating – Practice the creative process  
4. Engaging – Understand individual and community growth

**Advanced Competencies**

1. Doing – Sustain focused and ethical productivity  
2. Thinking – Evaluate and create content  
3. Creating – Use the creative process to represent ideas and construct solutions  
4. Engaging – Facilitate community growth and change
Curricula

To fulfill our mission, values, and aspirations, Christchurch School offers a place-based academic curriculum as well as artistic, athletic, experiential, and community life co-curricula. These curricula allow students to identify and develop their strengths as well as key college-preparatory and life skills as they grow in self-confidence, purpose, and identity.
The Academic Curriculum

A. Academic Curricular Philosophy

As a community, we aspire:

To engage in lifelong learning and the critical use of information. To this end, we are committed to a college preparatory curriculum that is integrated, placed-based, and differentiated, designed to enable students with diverse learning styles to be active learners who make meaning out of the world around them.

College Preparatory

The academic curriculum is college preparatory, facilitating student learning experiences that prepare students for both college and life-long growth in a changing, interconnected world. Our approach to curriculum and teaching, grounded in current research, tangibly benefits students of all learning styles. We assert that learning is foremost about making connections--between disciplines, with others, and with the broader world.

To achieve this goal, the curriculum has three foci:

Competencies
Meaningful content
Authentic teaching, learning, and assessment.

The connection between competencies, content and learning is one of relationships, relevance, and richness:\n
Relationships: the products of learning should reveal the relationships and connections that cross disciplines, communities, and the world, and emerge from the quality of relationships between members of the learning community
Relevance: That engagement needs to be meaningful, building skills and experiences relevant to students and to the world
Richness: students should be challenged by a rich and in-depth process of engagement with content arising out of relationships and the relevance they create.

Relationships lead to relevance, which in turn builds richness.

Competencies:

Competencies are the abilities students must demonstrate mastery of to be prepared for college and the ever more complex world they are entering. Competencies may be demonstrated through in-depth work with content, but depending upon specific discipline curricula, may be themselves independent of content.

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\(^1\)While we arrived at the three concepts of rigor, relevance, and richness independently, these concepts are definitely part of a larger discussion. See, for instance, Tony Wagner's commentary in Education Week for November 27, 2002: "Secondary School Change: Meeting the Challenge with the '3R's' of Reinvention."
Students find meaning because we emphasize experiential learning and curriculum content, not as ends in themselves but as means to the mastery of the competencies students need for success.

Content

Content consists of the discrete areas of knowledge evolving and occurring across specific times, places, cultures, and disciplines, including topics and issues to be analyzed and evaluated, which students need for success. Our students do meaningful, in-depth work with content, in the context of interdisciplinary inquiry, skill-building, and problem solving and application.

Authentic Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

Our teaching and assessment embrace a threefold approach that nurtures authentic process, content, and product in learning:

Process: Students engage in meaningful work with knowledge, not just reproduce it

Content: Students gain in-depth understanding and communication of content across disciplines

Product: Students apply that understanding to problems of value beyond the classroom

Learning is most powerful when students attain these ends by going beyond basic competencies. Accordingly, we provide choices to explore more deeply opportunities that incorporate both teacher-guided inquiry and self-motivated investigation.

We ensure that we meet these standards of authentic instruction through use of the Authentic Intellectual Work framework².

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²See Fred M. Newmann, M. Bruce King, and Dana L. Carmichael, Authentic Instruction and Assessment (Des Moines, The Iowa Department of Education, 2007).
**Integrated**

We integrate our curriculum in order to help students not only see connections but also learn to analyze and act upon them. Integration helps students make connections between data and disciplines in a meaningful way, so that they can see why we study a topic, they can understand its real-world application (value beyond school), and they stimulate their curiosity by applying their knowledge to problems. "Connections make meaning . . ."

Integration should be **natural** and organic, not artificial or forced on teachers by the curriculum, but fits naturally with their discipline, unit and content, and allows them to facilitate connections for students that cannot happen in isolation.

Integration occurs in three primary ways:

*Between academic disciplines:* both through grade level integrated initiatives and through organic connections made by individual teachers, students work to discover intersections between traditional areas of learning and thus to help them to think beyond the limiting categories of disciplines. Each grade level has initiatives specifically designed to help students make connections and to build these skills. These are the day-to-day ways in which we integrate our curriculum by collaboratively implementing these initiatives from the perspective of different disciplines. Typically these initiatives integrate around concepts, themes and points of conflict. Below are descriptions and objectives for each. In addition, teachers are encouraged to collaborate organically and informally through the discipline content in their classes, finding points of connection and relevance and developing them collaboratively wherever possible.

*Between the classroom and the world and within the world:* through place-based opportunities, students discover not only how what they learn in the classroom connects with real-world issues, but also how events and issues in the world intersect with one another. These may occur within individual classes, in units planned between teachers, or part of grade-level wide initiatives such as immersion trips.

*Between different program areas of the school:* between areas such as academics, spiritual life, co-curriculars or residential life, students develop similar or complementary skills and may work with issues that transcend these areas of the school.

**Place-Based**

The Rappahannock River, its diverse watershed, and the Chesapeake Bay estuary provide unparalleled opportunities for our curriculum, both physical and thematic. Physically, our place provides resources for place-based education in and across all disciplines. Thematically, the river and its connection to the Chesapeake Bay and the broader world serve as a metaphor for the growth our students experience as they navigate the journey to self-confidence, purpose, and identity. These resources provide place-based learning opportunities which allow for local, regional, and global focus, so that place-based education is not just about the local region but also about understanding place as a concept and how issues surface and interact.

Place-based education takes two forms:

*Within the classroom,* student deliberately engage in units of study that examine local, regional, or global issues with a particular focus on the interaction between the issues studied and the people and location as well as on the parallels between different places.
Outside of the classroom: experiential education. Experiential educational opportunities allow students to have immediate, high-impact experiences with local people and issues that help them to vividly understand issues of study. Some examples of this powerful approach are our immersion trip program and our Place-based Extensions of the Academic Classroom program. Experiential education is not limited to academics; there is great potential for experiential education in weekend activities, residential life activities, and co-curriculurs to build skills in our students.
Differentiated

We are committed to the differentiation of instruction and assessment to meet the learning needs not only of students with different learning styles but also of students with learning differences.

By differentiation, we mean that teachers know their students and their subject, and adapt teaching to maximize student potential. This entails using a variety of instruction and assessment techniques, so that we make connections with past student experience and create meaningful educational experiences in the present. Connections and engagement make meaning!

Differentiation begins with having a clear sense of objectives in teaching, and then matching the methods chosen to the objectives and to the students. Our teachers apply the Authentic Intellectual Work rubric to assess the validity of various teaching and assessment methods. Using the AIW framework allows the use of a variety of approaches to ensure relevance and rigor:

*Multi-modal teaching*: classroom teaching using a variety of methods and strategies so that students with different learning styles can connect with material. There is no one correct teaching method, but our teachers use many methods to match objectives and student skills and learning styles.

*Experiential education*: An important aspect of multi-modal teaching is experiential education. Having students make immediate, emotional connections with issues studied is a powerful way to help students of different learning styles master concepts. Experiential education may take the form of hands-on learning within the classroom or it may be place-based, creating experiences with our local resources (cultural, economic, environmental, historical, etc.) in order to create opportunities for connections and meaningful learning. The opportunities that place-based education provides students to experience relevant concepts in real-world settings is a natural force for the differentiation of instruction, allowing different types of learners with different strengths to thrive.

*Strengths and learning styles assessments*: assessments that provide students and teachers with insight into student strengths and learning styles.

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**What is the goal of the academic journey at the river?**

*Connections make meaning*: our students find meaning in knowledge through in-depth engagement that has value across disciplines and beyond school.

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3 See Fred M. Newmann, M. Bruce King, and Dana L. Carmichael, *Authentic Instruction and Assessment* (Des Moines, The Iowa Department of Education, 2007).
Grade Level Teams

The Christchurch School educational philosophy is built on the premise that relationships (between students and teachers, between disciplines, and between the classroom and the real world) lead to relevance in learning, which in turn leads to true academic richness. That richness happens when students learn to apply competencies to a variety of challenges, both within and between disciplines and in the real world. We want our students to be able to transfer the competencies they master to new contexts, and to be able to engage with problems as they encounter them.

The primary goal of grade level integrated work is to guide students in integrating content knowledge from different fields of study and in demonstrating mastery of key competencies. Students and faculty practice cross-disciplinary inquiry, investigate big questions and topics, and make connections beyond any one classroom. While doing so, students develop products that allow them to demonstrate that integrative thinking as well as mastery of specific competencies. In short, grade level integrated work provides a platform for doing what we cannot accomplish, or cannot do as well, in individual disciplines.

Equally, we endeavor to help students discover and deepen a passion for the world around them. We recognize that rich relationships, experiences, and reflections are central to the development of a person’s sense of themselves in the world. The grade-level mentors are essential to that development as they help each mentee navigate their grade-level experiences, the integration of ideas, and their growing self-awareness.

To facilitate that integration and self-reflection, Christchurch School has developed a curriculum that is structured around grade-level themes, points of conflict and key competencies. Grade-level teams develop immersion trips, local and regional field experiences, academic common experiences and performance tasks which integrate what is happening in the classes in rich and purposeful ways. They are more than just rich experiences; rather they are the avenues by which students create products that allow them to integrate information and ideas from multiple disciplines and demonstrate mastery of identified competencies.
Themes and Points of Conflict

The theme of the overall curriculum is *The River Journey: Discovering Places, Selves, Citizens*. This provides a framework for the curriculum that uses the concept of place to help students understand not only themselves and their own place, but as they follow their journey, what it means to live in other places (both historical and contemporary) and ultimately what it means to be a citizen, locally, nationally, and globally. Each grade level team uses the broad theme of River Journey as a connecting metaphor and as a physical resource to explore place, self, and citizen.

Each grade level has identified an open-ended point of conflict (areas of competing needs and wants that have no black and white resolution) in its curriculum that will enable students to make connections across disciplines and between grade levels, and build critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, moral valuation, and other skills. These are meant to engage student interest and to draw out the complex moral dilemmas and implications of content studied. Teachers use specific issues and units to bring out these broad points of conflict.

Each discipline has identified thematic connections and essential questions which show how each course connects to the themes of the curriculum.

Each discipline has also identified broad content areas that the grade level teams use to coordinate content and teachers will use as starting points for building specific course content.

Finally, each discipline has identified specific exit skills that it believes its students need for success. All of these are detailed in **section IV**, below.

Grade Level Objectives

9:
Through interdisciplinary work focused on the local region, students build mastery of appropriate competencies, including social maturity, community responsibility, and awareness of place and identity.

**Theme:** Journey at the River: Our Place, Our Selves, Our Community

**Point of Conflict:** To what extent do individual, cultural, and community experiences influence how we interpret the world around us?

**Key Ideas around which to integrate:**
- Intersection of cultures in *this* place
  - Joining a new community
  - Coming from different places
  - Beginning intentional self-reflection and metacognition

**Key Competencies around which to design experiences, products, etc.**
- Work alongside others of different perspectives and abilities
- Practice the core values of the Christchurch community
- Build trust, resolve conflicts, and provide support for others
• Defend solutions using content and ideas from multiple disciplines
• Provide evidence for the impact of economic, social, and ecological issues on place

10:

Through interdisciplinary work focused on historical human experience, students build mastery of appropriate competencies, including the connection between students’ own experience and that of communities in human history.

**Theme:** River Journeys: Many Places, Many Selves, Many Communities

**Point of Conflict:** Throughout history and geography, to what extent do one community’s needs and wants outweigh another’s?

**Key Ideas around which to integrate:**
- Regional conflicts in many places
  - Comparing communities and selves in different times and places

**Key Competencies around which to design experiences, products, etc.**
- Detect bias and distinguish between reliable and unsound information
- Explain the impact of a particular place on people and of people on a particular place
- Develop corollaries between ideas and texts across different time periods and contexts
- Defend solutions using content and ideas from multiple disciplines
- Provide evidence for the impact of economic, social, and ecological issues on place

11:

Through interdisciplinary work focused on the U.S. national experience, students build mastery of appropriate competencies.

**Theme:** Ourselves, Our Nation

**Point of Conflict:** In the United States, to what extent do the needs and wants of the individual outweigh the needs and wants of the nation?

**Key Ideas around which to integrate:**
- The national experience
  - Relationship of self to regional and national communities
  - Relationship of communities to regions and nations

**Key Competencies around which to design experiences, products, etc.**
- Make reasoned and ethical decisions in response to complex problems
- Explain the connection of information and ideas across multiple disciplines
- Defend solutions using content and ideas from multiple disciplines
- Provide evidence for the impact of economic, social, and ecological issues on place
- Evaluate the impact of global history, politics, religion, and culture on life today
Through interdisciplinary work focused on the contemporary global experience, students build mastery of appropriate competencies.

**Theme:** Ourselves, Our World

**Point of Conflict:** In the world today, to what extent do one community’s needs and wants outweigh another’s?

**Key Ideas around which to integrate:**
- Understanding one’s identity in the contemporary world
  - College process and self-presentation
  - Urban places
  - Who is right?
- Preparing for the contemporary world and a changing future

**Key Competencies around which to design experiences, products, etc.**
- Examine the identity you portray with your online presence
- Explain the impact of a particular place on people and of people on place
- Evaluate the impact of global history, politics, religion, and culture on life today
- Cultivate an independence of spirit to explore new ideas, roles and experiences
- Defend solutions using content and ideas from multiple disciplines
- Provide evidence for the impact of economic, social, and ecological issues on place

**Grade Level Initiatives**

**Immersion Trips**

Each grade level has one three-day off-campus immersion experience during the school year. These integrate skills and content from across academic disciplines, enable hands-on experiences to reinforce connections and learning, and build reflection and problem solving around points of conflict. Each grade level immersion trip moves further from campus, with the 9th being local and the 12th visiting locations in the watershed that highlight international connections. The immersion experiences use the grade level's theme and point of conflict to integrate the various disciplines' work in a way that builds the relevance of topics studied and relationships between students and the resource, students and teachers, and students and students.

**Local and Regional Field Experiences** (Grade level Placed-Based Extension of the Academic Classroom)

Objective: Whether virtual or physical, these experiences (either grade level-wide or between a few classes) expose students to interdisciplinary issues and problems facing a place, investigating the way the people in a specific place grapple with the point of conflict and facilitate classroom work before and afterwards to build critical thinking, reading, writing, problem-solving and other skills. These exercises may be within a period of the school day or may be a day long trip. Students should be using analytical and synthetic reasoning, applying skills and content from various disciplines to propose solutions to the issues they encounter.
ACE (Academic Common Experience)

Objective: These short, on-campus experiences (either grade level-wide or between a few classes) expose students to interdisciplinary issues through a variety of media (articles, movies, podcasts, books, etc., that reflect the work of different fields) and to facilitate discussion to build critical thinking, reading, writing, problem-solving and other skills. These may encompass the entire grade or only some classes. Students should be using synthetic skills to recognize how content and issues from various disciplines are relevant to the examined piece.

Performance Tasks

Objective: Performance tasks may be combined with any of the integrated initiatives to allow students to learn how to take information from multiple sources, assess it, and use it to perform a specific task, thus demonstrating their level of mastery of intended skills. These exercises thus help develop skills and familiarize students with the format of the College Work and Readiness Assessment.

Student Support

The grade level teams will meet biweekly to coordinate academic assignments as well as academic and emotional support of students in their grade level. Representatives from LSP are on each team.

Nautilus Project

A. Overview

Christchurch School seeks to empower its students to become active participants in the world around them. The school’s mission is to help students develop competencies that will enable them to become compassionate, successful, and engaged global citizens. To that end, all students at Christchurch will participate in a four-year project through the grade-level structure of the curriculum. While most of the grade-level work is intended to highlight the integration of content, the Nautilus Project’s purpose is to allow students to understand themselves better, develop passion and purpose, and to delve deeply into a particular area of interest. Equally, this four-year project will allow each student to have a practical and purposeful way in which to demonstrate some of the school’s competencies. Through this project, our students will have a better understanding of themselves, how to collaborate with others, and how to engage in the world around them using their passions and talents.

The capstone of this project will move students beyond just an intellectual exercise. They will participate in projects that tackle a particular problem and endeavor to collaborate and develop a practical solution. We envision topics that are connected to a particular place so that students understand the relationship of issues to specific people in a specific place. By defining the place in which their topic, problem, or solution exists, students will identify real variables, constraints, resources, and connections. This does not necessarily mean that each student will produce a product that exists in a physical place but that each project will be by definition relevant. We encourage our students to develop a product that contributes to the world in which we live. We use the term “product” loosely in that we want students to imagine a range of opportunities. In the end, our goal is to help our students understand that they can do good through their intellect, passions, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit.
A. Process

The Nautilus Project gives students the opportunity to practice applying their education in concrete ways using the grade level themes and points of conflict as guides. Throughout the four years at CCS, students build competencies, learn to identify their own interests, and follow their curiosity ultimately to create something with value to others. At each grade level students produce artifacts that allow them to answer the following questions.

Grade 9:
Who am I/Who are we?

Grade 10
How do I work with others?

Grade 11
What do I care about?

Grade 12
How can I engage?

At each grade level, students will produce material of two types: 1) a public piece that demonstrates their work associated with the key question of the grade level, and 2) a metacognitive reflection on the key question and experiences of the year (immersion trip, local and regional field experiences, academic common experiences, and performance tasks, integration of content from classes, etc.).

In grades 9 and 10, students begin to practice integrative work and learn more about themselves. While the ultimate goal of the Nautilus Project is to engage in a substantive capstone project, students do so more effectively after they first learn more about themselves and how to work with others. Products in the freshmen and sophomore years seek to provide that opportunity.

By their junior year, students will begin to expand their facility with different research techniques and narrow those research methods on topics of interest. To do this, we teach students the design thinking process and help students move from a vague interest towards applying knowledge in a new and unique manner. Students reach the end of this phase of the project when they are able to make a proposal that outlines what they have learned and what they hope to do with that knowledge. While we do want to have flexibility for those students at different levels of engagement, the investigation phase, generally, will encompass the entirety of their junior year. By the end of their junior year, students will make proposals for how they hope to move their area of interest forward. Out of those proposals, the best will be chosen as the projects for the senior class.

Successful proposals will have some common key attributes:
- They will be integrative by nature and require knowledge and skills from multiple disciplines for the final product.
- They will not be theoretical but will have real stakeholders from which the individuals or group will need to solicit input.
- They will have a clear and manageable timeline.
- They will include specific roles and tasks needed.
In their senior year (or after their proposal has been approved), students move into the product design, prototyping, and implementation part of the project. This phase of the project may include students learning how to secure funding sources, development of the medium in which they are going to deliver the product, and meeting with various stakeholders and constituents. Students will do this work not in the theoretical but in the context of a real place with real stakeholders. Those individuals or teams will present their work to the public in the spring of their senior year and each member of the team will produce a metacognitive piece that examines not just the work in their senior year but will also reflect on all of their grade-level work while at Christchurch.

Those who engage in an independent or group project in their senior year will be exempt from fall and spring exams pending continued and purposeful engagement.
A liberal education has a rich and important place in world and American history. Its foundation rests on the idea that to be free, one needs to be able to think. In learning how to think, an individual is able to live, create, and engage more successfully in the world around them. At Christchurch School, we follow that tradition. While credit at Christchurch School is still tied to a particular number of hours in a particular class, we are working towards a system in which we award credit based on those competencies that allow students to be productive thinkers and creators in a global world. So we hope that students will not earn credit just by passively participating in the curriculum; instead, they will earn credit by demonstrating those competencies through the development of a rigorous portfolio. These competencies are categorized by what we believe to be the central purpose of a liberal education: the ability of students “to do,” “to think,” “to create,” and “to engage.” Further, we outline those competencies at the foundational level (those competencies all students will attain for graduation from Christchurch School) and the advanced level (those competencies that allow for choice as a student finds their individual passion and purpose).

“Doing” competencies revolve around the ability of a student to develop personal habits that allow productive participation in the world. At the advanced level, the “doing” competencies put a greater emphasis on the student’s awareness of how those habits impact others as well as the sustaining of intention and purpose. “Thinking” competencies at the foundational level require a student to demonstrate the ability to acquire and analyze information. At the advanced level, a student must demonstrate focused and discipline specific analysis and evaluation.

We believe that it is not enough to simply learn how to manage daily life and to be able to think about discipline content and ideas. Indeed, a liberal education is not an end unto itself, but an avenue in which an individual can become a productive member of a community. Accordingly, “creating” competencies emphasize a student’s ability to propose solutions to problems; while art is an important part of these set of competencies, it is more than just being artistic. At the foundational level, students need to demonstrate their ability to explain how the creative process works and make initial attempts at using that creative process to propose solutions or representations of ideas. At the advanced level, “creative” competencies focus on the ability to use those creative processes to build, develop, and persuade others. Similarly, competencies that focus on the ability of a student to “engage” expect all students to begin to explain how individuals and communities develop, while those at the advanced level require students to develop and implement action plans based on concepts like trust, empathy, and moral courage.

The various academic disciplines include additional discipline specific exit skills, detailed in the various departmental curricula.

**Foundational Competencies**

1. **Doing – Be productive**
   a. Examine the identity you portray with your online presence
   b. Follow instructions
   c. Set attainable goals
   d. Develop a habit of punctuality in life and work
   e. Break long-range projects into discrete and manageable tasks
   f. View failure as an opportunity to learn, and acknowledge that innovation involves small successes and
frequent mistakes
g. Work alongside others of different perspectives and abilities
h. Enlist help and share credit
i. Develop habits of physical and social-emotional well-being

2. Thinking – Acquire and analyze content
   a. Formulate meaningful questions to solve problems
   b. Explain the connection of information and ideas across multiple disciplines
c. Read confidently and purposefully in multiple disciplines
d. Communicate effectively and purposefully in multiple modes and disciplines
e. Understand and express ideas in two or more languages
f. Detect bias and distinguish between reliable and unsound information
g. Navigate digital and physical library spaces to investigate academic issues
h. Use textual evidence to support claims
i. Explain and model the scientific method
j. Use quantifiable data to analyze and support claims
k. Explain a mathematical truth
l. Explain the dynamic relationship between humans and technology in our daily life

3. Creating – Practice the creative process
   a. Practice collaborating on creating solutions
   b. Use artistic media for self-expression
c. Use digital technology to create compelling products
d. Practice design thinking process as an aid in creating compelling products and solutions

4. Engaging – Understand individual and community growth
   a. Reflect on personal spirituality and spiritual practices of others
   b. Provide evidence for the impact of economic, social, and ecological issues on place
c. Explain the impact of a particular place on people and of people on a particular place
d. Practice giving back to communities
e. Practice the core values of the Christchurch community

Advanced Competencies

1. Doing – Sustain focused and ethical productivity
   a. Evaluate the capabilities and ethical issues inherent in emerging technologies
   b. Evaluate the capabilities and the effects of mass media on individuals and groups
c. Practice open-mindedness, particularly regarding the values and traditions of others
d. Prioritize tasks and responsibilities effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities
e. Initiate and implement work of significant depth and purpose
   f. Develop entrepreneurial literacy

2. Thinking – Evaluate and create content
   a. Defend solutions using content and ideas from multiple disciplines
   b. Engage in extended and complex reasoning in a particular discipline
c. Explore a body of literature, historical analysis, or artistic genre and evaluate impact of context on its meaning
d. Develop corollaries between ideas and texts across different time periods and contexts
e. Participate in ongoing, independent, and meaningful scientific research
f. Use quantitative thinking to represent abstract and intangible constructs

3. **Creating – Use the creative process to represent ideas and construct solutions**
   a. Implement solutions to complex problems
   b. Employ prototyping to devise and test solutions
   c. Design and build products that have value in the world
   d. Produce code, machines, or computational thinking that impacts the dynamic relationship between humans and technology in our daily life
   e. Use various artistic media for complex self-expression
   f. Persuade others through various artistic media
   g. Collaborate with individuals from diverse backgrounds to create solutions to complex problems
   h. Develop unique sense of “voice” in communication

4. **Engaging – Facilitate community growth and change**
   a. Evaluate the impact of global history, politics, religion, and culture on life today
   b. Build trust, resolve conflicts, and provide support for others
   c. Communicate in two or more languages
   d. Lead in a commitment to sustainability
   e. Cultivate an independence of spirit to explore new ideas, roles, and experiences
   f. Cultivate and sustain an empathetic outlook and engagement with others and communities
   g. Exhibit moral courage and reasoned decision-making in confronting unjust and complex situations
D. Academic Disciplines

Thematic Connections, Essential Questions, Content Topics, and Exit Skills

The following pages present a grade level break down of discipline specific curricular connections, essential questions, content topics, and exit skills. At each grade level, the skills and content noted indicate not all that students may or will do, but are the basic competencies we hope to provide students through our curriculum and teaching. We intend this delineation to be a guide to our teaching, planning, and coordination. These are not rigid standards of learning but are guidelines within which our teachers can use their creativity and talent to develop skills in our students. They are also intended as a help to us to make sure that we are in fact teaching what we say we are teaching.
Computer Science Department

Computer Science Skills Summary

Students will...
1. Develop and express problem solutions through algorithms.

Critical thinking
Students will...
2. Represent information through abstract data structures of varying complexity.
3. Use systematic abstraction to reduce information and focus on relevant concepts.
4. Test systems and isolate errors through critical analysis.

Collaboration
Students will...
5. Collaborate to create complex systems comprised of smaller abstract units.
6. Design programs that are understandable, adaptable, and reusable.

Production
Students will...
7. Implement algorithmic solutions through programs in at least one language.

Historical and ethical analysis

Students will...
8. Investigate the history and ongoing development of computing technology.
9. Explore the ethical implications raised by various forms of computing technology.
10. Recognize the legal issues of ownership and intellectual property in computer systems.

Social analysis
Students will...
11. Contrast the social differences between geographical and technological connection.
12. Analyze shifts from place-based to technology-based social behavior.
English Department

The following skills serve as objectives for student mastery in their study of English. Teaching and assessment methods should be designed to meet these objectives in general alignment with the principles of Authentic Intellectual Work.

PART I—ENGLISH SKILLS SUMMARY

Students will . . .

1. READ: Develop critical reading strategies for reading and responding to a wide range of print and non-print texts*

*An explicit goal in teaching these reading skills is that students develop an independent enjoyment of reading

- Develop active reading strategies to comprehend the meaning of a variety of texts and components of texts (paragraphs, pages, chapters, etc.)
- Identify the larger context in which works are created (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject)
- Apply an understanding of texts in conversation, in writing, and in reflection
- Read a range of genres (exposure)
- Critically analyze and evaluate texts as part of the reading process
- Express concrete interests to pursue through reading, and make connections in reading to those interests
- Develop stamina to read increasingly challenging, age-appropriate books in a range of genres

2. COMMUNICATE: Communicate effectively (Write and speak in a well-developed and well-reasoned way for a variety of formal and informal contexts)

- Follow the writing process (brainstorm, thesis, outline, paragraphs, draft, revision, oral proofreading, final revision) as appropriate to various forms of writing
- Demonstrate and apply an understanding of language structure and style to write varied, coherent, and purposeful sentences and paragraphs that logically support a thesis
- Support writing through sufficient, logical, and accurate use of sources
- Develop and exercise a personal voice appropriate to various forms of writing
- Cite works appropriately, following the school citation guide
- Engage in passionate, sustained conversation: substantial, analytical, and evaluative
- Speak publicly in a variety of formats appropriate to the context and audience

3. REFLECT: Within reading, writing, and conversation, confront the universal human condition

- Demonstrate an awareness of the role of circumstances in shaping the self
- Confront the tension between one’s own values and circumstances and the diverse values and circumstances of others
• Demonstrate an awareness of the potential of various genres to illuminate the human condition

PART II—GRADE LEVEL SKILLS PROGRESSIONS
(showing progressions for each skill objective across grades 9–12)

Students will . . .

1. READ: Develop critical reading strategies for reading and responding to a wide range of print and non-print texts*

*An explicit goal in teaching these reading skills is that students develop an independent enjoyment of reading

• Develop active reading strategies to comprehend the meaning of a variety of texts and components of texts (paragraphs, pages, chapters, etc.)
  o 9—Note new vocab words, questions, predictions, connections, and “interesting things” while reading
  o 10—Note new vocab words, and develop increasingly sophisticated questions, predictions, connections, and “interesting things” while reading; practice returning to texts to seek further understandings
  o 11—Note new vocab words, and develop increasingly sophisticated questions, predictions, connections, and “interesting things” while reading with an aim of engagement in substantial conversation; return to texts to seek further understandings
  o 12—Note new vocab words, and develop increasingly sophisticated questions, predictions, connections, and “interesting things” while reading with an aim of fluent engagement in substantial conversation; return to texts to seek further understandings

• Identify the larger context in which works are created (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject)
  o 9—Identify and practice applying the SOAPS process to analyze works
  o 10—Practice applying SOAPS process to analyze works
  o 11—Fluently employ the SOAPS process to analyze works
  o 12—Fluently employ the SOAPS process to analyze works

• Apply an understanding of texts in conversation, in writing, and in reflection
  o 9—Practice applying results of active reading in substantive conversation, writing, and reflection
  o 10—Apply results of active reading in substantive conversation, writing, and reflection; practice returning to texts in light of conversation, writing, and reflection
  o 11—Apply results of active reading in substantive conversation, writing, and reflection; return to texts in light of conversation, writing, and reflection
  o 12—Fluently apply results of active reading in substantive conversation, writing, and reflection; evaluate how further reading enhances understandings of texts

• Read a range of genres
  o 9—Identify, read, and evaluate the contributions of various genres, including novels, short stories, poetry, non-fiction essays, and drama
  o 10—Read and evaluate the contributions of various genres, including more sophisticated novels, short stories, poetry, non-fiction essays, and drama
  o 11—Read and evaluate the contributions of various genres, including increasingly sophisticated novels, short stories, poetry, non-fiction essays, and drama
  o 12—Read and evaluate the contributions of various genres, including increasingly sophisticated novels, short stories, poetry, non-fiction essays, and drama

• Critically analyze and evaluate texts as part of the reading process
• Understand texts: Identify themes, tone, authorial techniques, and the difference between various voices in texts (author, narrator, character); analyze texts: identify assumptions, implications, theses, and connections within and beyond the text; evaluate texts: assess validity and applicability to themes, points of conflict, self, and the wider human condition

• With increasing sophistication, understand texts: Identify themes, tone, authorial techniques, and the difference between various voices in texts (author, narrator, character); analyze texts: identify assumptions, implications, theses, and connections within and beyond the text; evaluate texts: assess validity and applicability to themes, points of conflict, self, and the wider human condition

• With increasing sophistication, understand texts: Identify themes, tone, authorial techniques, and the difference between various voices in texts (author, narrator, character); analyze texts: identify assumptions, implications, theses, and connections within and beyond the text; evaluate texts: assess validity and applicability to themes, points of conflict, self, and the wider human condition

• With increasing sophistication, understand texts: Identify themes, tone, authorial techniques, and the difference between various voices in texts (author, narrator, character); analyze texts: identify assumptions, implications, theses, and connections within and beyond the text; evaluate texts: assess validity and applicability to themes, points of conflict, self, and the wider human condition

• Express concrete interests to pursue through reading, and make connections in reading to those interests

• Follow the writing process (brainstorm, thesis, outline, paragraphs, draft, revision, oral proofreading, final revision) as appropriate to various forms of writing

• Develop stamina to read increasingly challenging, age-appropriate texts in a range of genres

• Demonstrate and apply an understanding of language structure and style to write varied, coherent, and purposeful sentences and paragraphs that logically support a thesis

2. COMMUNICATE: Communicate effectively (Write and speak in a well-developed and well-reasoned way for a variety of formal and informal contexts)

• Follow the writing process (brainstorm, thesis, outline, paragraphs, draft, revision, oral proofreading, final revision) as appropriate to various forms of writing

• Demonstrate and apply an understanding of language structure and style to write varied, coherent, and purposeful sentences and paragraphs that logically support a thesis

Back
• 10—With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the language structure and style rubric for writing (including the production of a five page essay)
• 11—With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the language structure and style rubric for writing (including the production of a ten page essay)
• 12—With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the language structure and style rubric for writing (including the production of a ten to fifteen page essay)

• **Support writing through sufficient, logical, and accurate use of sources**
  o 9—As appropriate to genre, follow the content rubric for writing (including the production of multi-paragraph essays)
  o 10—With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the content rubric for writing (including the production of a five page essay)
  o 11—With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the content rubric for writing (including the production of a ten page essay)
  o 12—With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the content rubric for writing (including the production of a ten to fifteen page essay)

• **Develop and exercise a personal voice appropriate to various forms of writing**
  o 9—Identify and practice writing with an appropriate and effective voice depending upon genre and audience
  o 10—With increasing sophistication, identify and practice writing with an appropriate and effective voice depending upon genre and audience
  o 11—With increasing sophistication and independence, identify and write with an appropriate and effective voice depending upon genre and audience
  o 12—With increasing sophistication and independence, identify and write with an appropriate and effective voice depending upon genre and audience

• **Cite works appropriately, following the school citation guide**
  o 9—Practice following the school citation guide as appropriate to genre
  o 10—with increasing independence, follow the school citation guide as appropriate to genre
  o 11—with increasing independence, follow the school citation guide as appropriate to genre
  o 12—Independently follow the school citation guide as appropriate to genre; distinguish between different systems of citation

• **Engage in passionate, sustained conversation: substantial, analytical, and evaluative**
  o 9—Practice constructive participation in sustained conversations about subject-related topics
  o 10—Practice constructive participation in increasingly analytical and evaluative sustained conversations
  o 11—Practice constructive participation in increasingly analytical and evaluative sustained conversations
  o 12—Engage constructively in analytical and evaluative sustained conversations

• **Speak publicly in a variety of formats appropriate to the context and audience**
  o 9—Appropriately to context, speak to an audience, including role-playing and reporting the positions of both one’s group and one’s self
  o 10— Appropriately to context, speak to an audience, including reporting the positions of both one’s group and one’s self, a project presentation, and response to questions and criticism
  o 11— Appropriately to context, speak to an audience, including reporting the positions of both one’s group and one’s self, presentations, and response to questions and criticism
  o 12— Appropriately to context, speak to an audience, including a more sophisticated project presentation and an all-school speech

### 3. **REFLECT: Within reading, writing, and conversation, confront the universal human condition**

• **Demonstrate an awareness of the role of circumstances in shaping the self**
  o 9—Describe the role of specific circumstances in shaping one’s own identity through looking at the development of characters in literature
1. Describe and analyze the role of specific circumstances in shaping one’s own identity and the identity of characters in historical literature
2. Describe, analyze, and evaluate the role of specific circumstances in shaping one’s own identity and the identity of characters in national literature
3. Describe, analyze, and evaluate the role of specific circumstances in shaping one’s own identity and the identity of characters in global literature
4. Confront the tension between one’s own values and circumstances and the diverse values and circumstances of others
5. Demonstrate an awareness of the potential of various genres to illuminate the human condition

PART III—SKILLS PROGRESSIONS BY GRADE
(showing skill objectives broken down by individual grade level)

Grade 9

1. READ: Develop critical reading strategies for reading and responding to a wide range of print and non-print texts
   - Note new vocab words, questions, predictions, connections, and “interesting things” while reading
   - Identify and practice using the SOAPS process (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject)
   - Practice applying results of active reading in substantive conversation, writing, and reflection
   - Identify, read, and evaluate the contributions of various genres, including novels, short stories, poetry, non-fiction essays, and drama
   - Understand texts: Identify themes, tone, authorial techniques, and the difference between various voices in texts (author, narrator, character); analyze texts: identify assumptions, implications, theses, and connections within and beyond the text; evaluate texts: assess validity and applicability to themes, points of conflict, self, and the wider human condition
   - Identify and explore possible texts through the lens of personal interests, and make connections between relevant texts and personal life
   - Identify and read a variety of texts at an age and skill appropriate level

2. COMMUNICATE: Communicate effectively (Write and speak in a well-developed and well-reasoned way for a variety of formal and informal contexts)
• As appropriate to genre, follow the process rubric for writing (including the production of multi-paragraph essays)
• As appropriate to genre, follow the grammar and technique rubric for writing (including the production of multi-paragraph essays)
• As appropriate to genre, follow the content rubric for writing (including the production of multi-paragraph essays)
• Identify and practice writing with an appropriate and effective voice depending upon genre and audience
• Practice following the school citation guide as appropriate to genre
• Practice constructive participation in sustained conversations about subject-related topics
• Appropriately to context, speak to an audience, including role-playing and reporting the positions of both one’s group and one’s self

3. REFLECT: Within reading, writing, and conversation, confront the universal human condition
• Describe the role of specific circumstances in shaping one’s own identity through looking at the development of characters in literature
• Explore and reflect on the connections between the circumstances (including place and culture) and values of peoples in our region and the potential conflict with one’s own values
• Practice analyzing the strengths of various genres to illuminate the human condition

Grade 10

Students will . . .

1. READ: Develop critical reading strategies for reading and responding to a wide range of print and non-print texts
• Note new vocab words, and increasingly sophisticated questions, predictions, connections, and “interesting things” while reading; practice returning to texts to seek further understandings
• Practice applying SOAPS process (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject) and employing it to analyze works
• Apply results of active reading in substantive conversation, writing, and reflection; practice returning to texts in light of conversation, writing, and reflection
• Read and evaluate the contributions of various genres, including more sophisticated novels, short stories, poetry, non-fiction essays, and drama
• With increasing sophistication, understand texts: Identify themes, tone, authorial techniques, and the difference between various voices in texts (author, narrator, character); analyze texts: identify assumptions, implications, theses, and connections within and beyond the text; evaluate texts: assess validity and applicability to themes, points of conflict, self, and the wider human condition
• With increasing independence, identify and read texts of personal interest and make connections between relevant texts and personal life
• With increasing independence, identify and read texts of increasing challenge

Back
2. COMMUNICATE: Communicate effectively (Write and speak in a well-developed and well-reasoned way for a variety of formal and informal contexts)

- With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the process rubric for writing (including the production of a five page essay)
- With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the grammar and technique rubric for writing (including the production of a five page essay)
- With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the content rubric for writing (including the production of a five page essay)
- With increasing sophistication, identify and practice writing with an appropriate and effective voice depending upon genre and audience
- With increasing independence, follow the school citation guide as appropriate to genre
- Practice constructive participation in increasingly analytical and evaluative sustained conversations
- Appropriately to context, speak to an audience, including reporting the positions of both one’s group and one’s self, a project presentation, and response to questions and criticism

3. REFLECT: Within reading, writing, and conversation, confront the universal human condition

- Describe and analyze the role of specific circumstances in shaping one’s own identity and the identity of characters in historical literature
- Explore and reflect on the connections between circumstances (including place and culture) and values of peoples in differing times and places and the potential conflict with one’s own values
- Continue analyzing the strengths of various genres to illuminate the human condition

Grade 11

Students will . . .

1. READ: Develop critical reading strategies for reading and responding to a wide range of print and non-print texts

- Note new vocab words, and increasingly sophisticated questions, predictions, connections, and “interesting things” while reading with an aim of engagement in substantial conversation; return to texts to seek further understandings
- Fluently employ the SOAPS process (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject) to analyze works
- Apply results of active reading in substantive conversation, writing, and reflection; return to texts in light of conversation, writing, and reflection
- Read and evaluate the contributions of various genres, including increasingly sophisticated novels, short stories, poetry, non-fiction essays, and drama
- With increasing sophistication, understand texts: Identify themes, tone, authorial techniques, and the difference between various voices in texts (author, narrator, character); analyze texts: identify assumptions, implications, theses, and connections within and beyond the text; evaluate texts: assess validity and applicability to themes, points of conflict, self, and the wider human condition
- With increasing independence, identify and read texts of personal interest and make connections between relevant texts and personal life
- With increasing independence, identify and read texts of increasing challenge
2. **COMMUNICATE:** Communicate effectively  *(Write and speak in a well-developed and well-reasoned way for a variety of formal and informal contexts)*

- With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the process rubric for writing (including the production of a ten page essay)
- With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the grammar and technique rubric for writing (including the production of a ten page essay)
- With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the content rubric for writing (including the production of a ten page essay)
- With increasing sophistication and independence, identify and write with an appropriate and effective voice depending upon genre and audience
- With increasing independence, follow the school citation guide as appropriate to genre
- Practice constructive participation in increasingly analytical and evaluative sustained conversations
- Appropriately to context, speak to an audience, including reporting the positions of both one’s group and one’s self, presentations, and response to questions and criticism

3. **REFLECT:** Within reading, writing, and conversation, confront the universal human condition

- Describe, analyze, and evaluate the role of specific circumstances in shaping one’s own identity and the identity of characters in national literature
- Explore and reflect on the connections between circumstances (including place and culture) and values of peoples nationally
- With increasing independence and sophistication, analyze the strengths of various genres to illuminate the human condition

**Grade 12**

*Students will . . .*

1. **READ:** Develop critical reading strategies for reading and responding to a wide range of print and non-print texts

- Note new vocab words, and increasingly sophisticated questions, predictions, connections, and “interesting things” while reading with an aim of fluent engagement in substantial conversation; return to texts to seek further understandings
- Fluently employ the SOAPS process (Speaker, Occasion, Audience, Purpose, Subject) to analyze works
- Fluently apply results of active reading in substantive conversation, writing, and reflection; evaluate how further reading enhances understandings of texts
- Read and evaluate the contributions of various genres, including increasingly sophisticated novels, short stories, poetry, non-fiction essays, and drama
- With increasing sophistication, **understand texts:** Identify themes, tone, authorial techniques, and the difference between various voices in texts (author, narrator, character); **analyze texts:** identify assumptions, implications, theses, and connections within and beyond the text; **evaluate texts:** assess validity and applicability to themes, points of conflict, self, and the wider human condition
- With increasing independence, identify and read texts of personal interest and make connections between relevant texts and personal life
- With increasing independence, identify and read texts of increasing challenge
2. COMMUNICATE: Communicate effectively  (Write and speak in a well-developed and well-reasoned way for a variety of formal and informal contexts)

- With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the process rubric for writing (including the production of a ten to fifteen page essay)
- With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the grammar and technique rubric for writing (including the production of a ten to fifteen page essay)
- With increasing independence and as appropriate to genre, follow the content rubric for writing (including the production of a ten to fifteen page essay)
- With increasing sophistication and independence, identify and write with an appropriate and effective voice depending upon genre and audience
- Independently follow the school citation guide as appropriate to genre; distinguish between different systems of citation
- Engage constructively in analytical and evaluative sustained conversations
- Appropriately to context, speak to an audience, including a more sophisticated project presentation and an all-school speech

3. REFLECT: Within reading, writing, and conversation, confront the universal human condition

- Describe, analyze, and evaluate the role of specific circumstances in shaping one’s own identity and the identity of characters in global literature
- Explore and reflect on the connections between circumstances (including place and culture) and values of peoples internationally
- With increasing independence and sophistication, analyze the strengths of various genres to illuminate the human condition.