

OKCS Flexible Learning Grade 5-8 Handbook



Introduction:

OKCS is excited to offer its second year of a Flexible Learning hybrid program. In 25/26, the program will have around 60 students in it from Grade 1-12 who attend in person at OKCS twice per week and learn from a distance three times per week. We are humbled and excited to be able to serve this group of students and their families. Please read through this handbook and familiarize yourself with the routines and procedures. The handbook will be updated periodically and resent to you. From all of the staff at OKCS, welcome, and we hope you have a wonderful year!

1) What is OKCS?

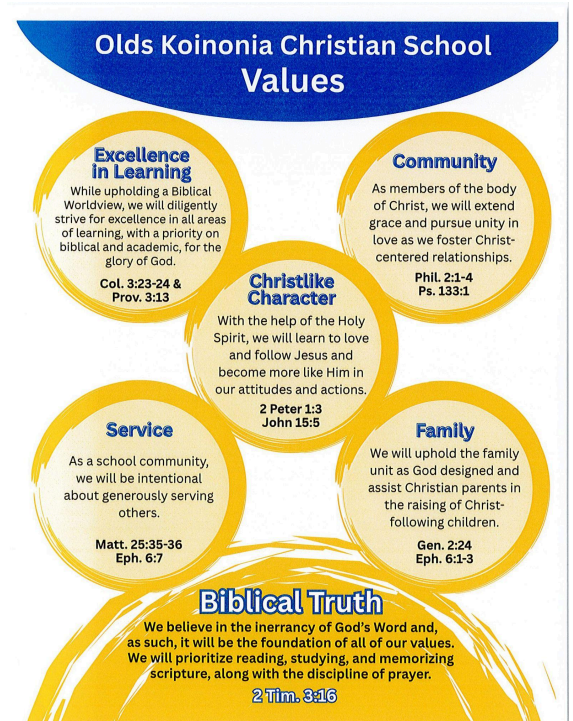
Olds Koinonia Christian School was founded in 1982 as an independent Christian school and joined Chinook's Edge School Division in 2005 in a unique mutual agreement. OKCS continues to have a board-run society that owns and oversees the property and school building, and oversees all hiring of staff and admission of students. Since that time, OKCS has been a flagship Christian Alternative school for CESD and gained God appointed favour in the eyes of the school division and families. Through its partnership with CESD, OKCS can offer affordable Christian education for its families while still retaining unique control over the operations of the school.

2) What are the core values of OKCS?

Built upon the foundation of Biblical Truth, OKCS has 5 core values that guide and dictate every aspect of our school community. The central value of *Christlike Character* informs the way our staff lead and teach, as well as how we train our students to love and follow Jesus in their attitudes and actions. From that centre flow the other four core values of *Excellence in Learning*, *Community*, *Service* and *Family*. If you are a current or new family to OKCS, you will hear us reference these values, feel how they inform our decision making and assist us in holding these values unwaveringly with our students. For more information, [click here](#).

3) What is "Flexible Learning" at OKCS, and why is this program growing?

OKCS has a growing school community for various reasons: the population growth in the geographical areas it serves, more families interested in Christian



education, the excellent reputation of OKCS in the Chinook's Edge community, and more. In the past few years, OKCS has seen waitlists built in most grades and an increasing number of families asking about home education, online, or hybrid education options. As the educational landscape evolves, more families are interested in alternative learning options while still desiring to be connected to a local school community.

With the support of Chinook's Edge School Division, OKCS launched its first version of the Flexible Learning approach, known as the “Hybrid Learning” option for Grades 7-12 in 24/25. As the number of interested families increased, the decision was made to expand the program to Grades 1-12 and rename it “Flexible Learning”. The goal is that these students and families connect in the OKCS community including taking classes alongside the full time students, allowing a furthering of the OKCS mission to *“assist the Christian family, in cooperation with the local church, in training their children intellectually, physically, socially and spiritually toward maturity and responsible independence.”*

In 25/26, the Flexible Learning program will have around 60 students in Grades 1-12 attend in person at OKCS two days/week and complete the rest of their learning at a distance three days/week. Those students will be able to integrate into the OKCS school culture by joining their grade level classes in PE, Bible, Music/Options and Chapel, as well as the opportunity to participate in sports, clubs, and field trips.

OKCS is excited and humbled to pilot the Flexible Learning model for Chinook's Edge and continue to work towards improving the program to suit the needs of the enrolled families as well as uphold the mission and values of the school.

4) Theme Verse:

Our Biblical theme for this year is **“And the truth shall set you free.” John 8:32**. We will focus much of our devotional, Chapel, prayer and scripture memorization on this theme and look forward to how the Spirit will transform the minds of our staff and students as we look to become more like Christ.

5) Dates & times to remember:

Orientation Day: Friday, August 29, 2025 - 1-3 pm

First Day of In-Person School: Tuesday, September 2, 2025

Start time: 8:45 am (please arrive 5-10 minutes early)

End time: 3:16 pm

6) Staff

Grade $\frac{5}{8}$ Core Courses- TBD

Grade $\frac{7}{8}$ Core Courses- Mr. Schuler

Grade 5-8 PE - Mr. Terpstra & Mr. Miller

Grade 5-8 Bible, Music & Options: OKCS Teachers

7) Who to contact

General questions: Jason Schuler - jschuler@cesd73.ca

Course questions: Your child's teacher (all teacher emails are firstinitiallastname@cesd73.ca)

8) Schedules

Students have in-person class days on Tuesday and Thursday each week at OKCS (see timetable). They will have core classes, Bible, Options, PE and Chapel times each week. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays are regular school days from a distance (at home). While students can work on a flexible schedule on the distance learning days, teachers are available for Google Meet and Email questions at specific times during school hours. We highly recommend students work on their studies between the hours of 8:45-3:15 pm.

9) Homeroom & Morning Devotions:

At OKCS, each homeroom class starts the day off with morning devotions. This is a time to read the Bible together, pray together, and orient our heart posture to God and His goodness prior to each academic day. We considered many factors and pros and cons to Flexible Learning students being in their grade level homeroom, and we decided we will be doing a Flexible Learning homeroom and devotion time from Grade 5-8 in the upper level Art classroom on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. We expect students to be there each week and be on time. On Thursdays we will head down to the chapel together for our 1st period chapel.

10) Language Arts & Math

We will spend the majority of our in-person instructional time focusing on Language Arts and Math due to the complexity and rigor of those subjects. Language Arts will be mostly done together as a double grade group ($\frac{5}{8}$ and $\frac{7}{8}$) while Math will be taught separately.

11) Science & Social Studies

While the majority of the in-person learning time will be spent on Language Arts and Math, OKCS is still responsible for the teaching and assessment of Social Studies and Science. This will be delivered primarily through a distance learning package to be completed at home, with instructions and marking completed by the teacher. Occasionally, we may spend time in person on a Science or Social Studies project or activity. For the 25/26 school year, we will focus our attention on the *even* grade number's content for the combined grade groups (grade 6 and grade 8) to ensure no students are repeating content. In subsequent years, we will alternate back and forth between the content from the two grade levels. You will see

more details of the Grade 6 & 8 Science and Social Studies programs of studies in the course outlines or teacher Google Classroom shells.

12)Expected Hours of Coursework

Middle school courses equate to approximately 3-5 hours of coursework per week for the school year. With a few hours of that covered during the in person learning days, you can expect 1-3 hours of coursework per week per subject to be required to be done at home on M, W and F. We highly recommend you build a routine where this school work is completed during a regular schedule in day time hours where you have maximum accessibility to your teachers.

13)Synchronous Learning & Coursework Deadlines

OKCS's Flexible Learning program is a "synchronous" program, meaning that there is live teaching weekly and coursework due dates and deadlines weekly or biweekly. Middle school courses are paced to be completed in a full year. Students are expected to keep up with coursework and deadlines, as we will *not* accommodate an "asynchronous approach (no deadlines until the end of the year)" to teaching and learning.

14)Bible & Scripture Memory

Students will join their grade level of OKCS Bible class twice per week and attend Chapel weekly. In keeping with the Biblical exhortation to "hide God's word in our hearts", students will be joining their OKCS classmates in memorizing a selection of Scripture each month from September-May, followed by a review of all scriptures again in the month of June to achieve Scripture Mastery. We highly value the word of God and expect all students to participate.

15)Marking/Grades

Our courses will come with due dates that are firm deadlines. Please have your assignments in on time. Our teachers will be aiming to mark assignments within 2 weeks of the due date. Any late assignment will automatically be given a zero, until it's handed in and the teacher is available to mark it. We hold due dates to benefit the student, as learning continuously spirals upwards in terms of content, building on previous learning.

16)Student Email Address

Each OKCS student is assigned a student Gmail address. It is very important for students to access this email daily and to use it to contact teachers. We will send your child's email address as soon as we have it from CESD.

17) Learning Management System (LMS)

Each distance education program is mandated to have a Learning Management System (LMS), and the one we employ is Google Classroom. It is vital that students become comfortable with Google Classroom as soon as possible. All distance education coursework will be presented through GC, including videos, course assignments, resources, communication, announcements and video links to Google Meets with teachers. Students need to log into Google Classroom daily and complete the weekly coursework.

18) Field Trips & Junior High Getaway

Each grade class typically goes on 1-2 field trips per year. Flexible Learning students are invited to attend all grade-level field trips even though they may not fall on in-person learning days. We also have our Junior High Getaway for grades 6-8 scheduled for September 23. This day promotes building of friendships and helps build a strong spiritual foundation for the school year. More details to come.

19) Cell Phones

In compliance with AB Education's cell phone ban, cell phones will not be permitted in the school. If students bring them to school, they must be stored away in a locker, including during lunch and breaks (unless they are off campus). There may be occasions where teachers ask students to grab their cell phones for class work.

20) Office Hours

Our teachers are available on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for office hours. Please check on your Google Classroom course shells for the appropriate times to join on a Google Meet with your teacher. Teachers are always available via email and will do their best to answer any questions within 24 hours of receipt, from Monday through Friday, 8-6 pm. We highly recommend taking advantage of the office hours, especially in courses such as Math.

21) School Supplies

Every student should come equipped each day with the basic school supplies listed below. All course materials will be provided by OKCS. As the year progresses, students may be asked to bring specialized supplies for a certain project or activity.

- Backpack
- Pencil Case (pencils, erasers, sharpener, pens, pencil crayons)
- Water Bottle
- Indoor Shoes (non-marking)
- Lunch and Snacks
- Laptop
- Binder(s) with dividers
- Bible

22)Assessments and Reporting

Our teachers will be reporting marks into PowerSchool at least once per month. If you've never used the parent portal for PowerSchool before, we will send detailed instructions about it in September. Your child will receive a midterm (January) and final (June) report card with their course marks, and their marks are available live in PowerSchool at all times.

23)Attendance

When enrolled in the OKCS Flexible Learning, attendance is mandatory. We have limited days to cover the material. If your child is sick or your family will be away, please let their teacher know as soon as you can. Please note that your child is a full-time student, and the "flexibility" in the program is based on only having two in-person days. It does not mean that attendance, coursework, scheduling, pacing or assessments are flexible. We follow the CESD school calendar and hold to all OKCS pacing and school year flow.

24)Calendar

Please refer to the calendar on our school website for all holidays and scheduled breaks. We follow CESD calendars and encourage our families to plan their holidays around these breaks. Our teachers are not able to make exceptions to course deadlines outside of the scheduled breaks to accommodate your family's personalized vacation schedule.

25)Student Behaviour & Discipline

OKCS will not tolerate disruptive, rude, harmful or God-dishonouring behaviour. These types of situations will be dealt with quickly and could result in the removal of your child from that day or the program. Please refer to our student conduct policy for more details.

26)Communication

Parents are asked to communicate with their child's teacher via email first. Once email communication is established, there will be time allotted to set up a phone call or in-person meeting. Drop-off and pick-up times are not the appropriate time to have in-depth or private conversations with teachers about your child. Please set up a time outside of the Tuesday and Thursday teaching hours to have these conversations.

27)Classroom Issues

When an issue arises with your child in the classroom, please address it with your child's teacher first. According to Scripture, we shouldn't look to gossip, social media, or other forms of spreading information. Instead, we should look to deal with the situation with the person directly. If the situation cannot be resolved, please involve your OKCS Principal/Vice Principal at that time.

Please refer to <https://www.oldskeinonia.com/students/handbook> for the general OKCS student handbook and read through all of the information there.

This document will be updated and resent as required.