



## ***Christian Homeschoolers' Association of South Carolina***

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# **Parent Handbook**

## **About our Association**

**Christian Homeschoolers' Association of South Carolina, CHASC**, is a Christian Association. No Statement of Faith or religious information is required of our members. However, our board members are Christians and we operate under Christian principles. Prayer and scripture may be included in our emails, workshops, and ceremonies.

The association was initially formed in 2003 and continues to provide accountability for families throughout South Carolina. The director is Wendy Graham. She is supported by a board consisting of Lisa Nichols, Assistant Director, Donna Autry, Treasurer, Lisa Arnold, Webmaster, and Staci Chronister, Board Member at Large.

We are all experienced homeschool moms, not legal or educational experts. Information and guidance is provided as support and not to be taken as expert advice. CHASC will provide the accountability required under the law and will not ask more than is required by the law. We do recommend that members find a support group as well to enhance their homeschool journey.

## **South Carolina Homeschool Laws**

It is important for all homeschool families to be knowledgeable about the homeschooling laws and statutes for their state. The laws applying to homeschooling can be found on our website at:

<http://www.christianhomeschoolersassociationofsouthcarolina.com/sc-homeschool-laws>

Parents in South Carolina have three options for accountability

1. Under the direction and with the approval of the district board of trustees of the district in which the children reside.
2. Under the auspices of the South Carolina Association of Independent Home Schools, (SCAIHS).
3. Under the auspices of a "third option" group, an association for home schools which has no fewer than fifty members and meets the requirements of Section 59-65-47.

CHASC is a third option accountability group that operates under Section 59-65-47. Briefly:

1. The teaching parent must hold at a minimum, a high school diploma or General Educational Development Certificate (GED).
2. The instructional year must be at least 180 days. There are NO sick days or absences allowed.
3. The curriculum must include as a minimum: reading, writing, math, science and social studies in grades K through 6 and in grades 7 through 12, composition, literature, math, science, and social studies.
4. The parent/teacher must maintain all educational records, these include:
  - a. A plan book, diary, or other record that indicates the subjects taught and the activities in which the student and parent/teacher engage.
  - b. A portfolio of samples of each student's academic work
  - c. A semiannual progress report that includes attendance records and individualized documentation of each student's academic progress in each of the basic instructional areas specified above (#3).

The law does not dictate the length of day, how many subjects are taught each day, the school year schedule, or the exact format for keeping records. Families who join CHASC are free to determine what works best for them in regard to

these details. However, there are no sick days or absences included in the 180 instructional days. Students must complete a minimum of 180 days regardless of circumstances. Students may complete more than 180 instructional days in one membership/school year.

Further explanation of the law can be found at:

<https://www.hslda.org/hs101/SC.aspx?State=SC&>

<http://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/state-accountability/feature-boxes/home-schooling/sc-code-of-law-59-65>

As a third option accountability association, CHASC must compile and report the number and grade level of children home schooled through the association to the children's respective school districts. This is why we ask for the school district in which your family resides and it is very important to provide accurate information.

## Joining CHASC

Joining the association is simple. First, you need to review our information and make sure that you agree with our policies and procedures and that you can work within our requirements to homeschool your child/children legally. This handbook has sections that will clarify and explain all the policies and procedures for CHASC. This section simply outlines the steps you need to take in order to join the association.

Our application form can be found on our website:

<http://www.christianhomeschoolersassociationofsouthcarolina.com/news>.

To apply:

1. Download the Application Form.
2. Print the form and complete it in ink or you may complete it on the computer if your programs will allow. Please be sure to complete all sections. Do not leave blank spaces on the form. Use NA where the question is Not Applicable to your situation. Both parents in the home must sign. Otherwise, note the absent parent or reason both parents have no signed.
3. You can mail, fax, or email the signed copy of the form.
4. Keep a copy of the application form that you send in.
5. You must include your payment at the time of application. Forms cannot be fully processed until complete forms and the applicable payment are received. Checks will not be cashed until membership is approved, but membership will not be approved without payment. If you wish to pay via PayPal, you can do so by using one of the links on our website or through your PayPal account if you click Pay for Goods and Services and use our email address: [ChristianHomeschoolersAssoc@gmail.com](mailto:ChristianHomeschoolersAssoc@gmail.com).
6. If you mail the form, please allow about one week for the mail to be delivered. If you do not hear from us in that time, please touch base just to be sure we have received the application.
7. You should receive an email notification welcoming you to the Association within 10 business days, but you may receive an email requesting more information so please watch your emails for any notices from CHASC.

Our mailing address to send paper applications, checks and/or money orders:

CHASC

PO Box 51386

Summerville, SC 29485-1386

Our fax number is (843) 638-8890

All of our requirements are based on the law and can be found on the website and in the handbook.

## Withdrawing a student from a school

If you are withdrawing your student(s) from public, private or virtual school, you will be required to obtain proof of association membership to show to the school. We will provide a school letter that not only confirms membership in the association but requests that the school give or mail the student records to you. You can request the school letter on the application or send an email to request the letter. Ideally, families should enroll in CHASC before withdrawing their students from school. If necessary, forms can be faxed or emailed and payment made by PayPal to help expedite the process, but you still should allow several days for complete processing of your membership.

# Requesting School Records

Upon request, CHASC provides a letter that confirms membership and requests that the school give or send all records to the parents. Some schools; however, will not honor this letter and will tell parents that records must be requested by the association or faxed to the association. If this happens, please get the name, fax number and any other pertinent information required for us to send the request. If the official says that records must be faxed, simply tell them that they can fax the records to the association as the letter states and if necessary, point out the fax number at the top of the letter. Please notify us of any such incidences so we will be expecting the fax, email, or phone call.

## Our Membership Year

Our membership year runs from June 1 to May 31. In that time, members are required to complete the required minimum 180 instructional days. These dates were chosen based on scholarship deadlines and requirements for high school students. Some of the deadlines for senior students are earlier than May 31<sup>st</sup> so families with high school seniors must be aware of all deadlines for the association and for any colleges or scholarships they are interested in.

All members follow the same membership year to avoid confusion. However, in that year, members may choose whatever academic schedule they wish. Because section 59-65-47 does not set a length for the school day, there is no minimum amount of time required to count toward a school day nor a set schedule of classes for each day. However, families are encouraged to be sure to complete the work required for the grade level in roughly one year and this goal may shape the number of hours in each school day. Younger students may have much shorter days than older students because of the difference in workload.

If a family begins to homeschool after the students have been in a public or private school or another program or association, they may count the instructional days that have already been completed in that school or program. It is not necessary to begin counting on the first day of homeschooling in those cases.

## Forms

There are only three forms that members need to submit to CHASC. These are the Application, the Yearly Compliance Form and the Renewal Form. There is a fourth, optional Extension form that some families may need to use.

The Application is available to download from our website. The completed form may be mailed, faxed, or emailed. Every line on the Application is important and none should be left blank. Failure to provide information will at best delay the application process and at worst may cause your membership to be denied. All payments must be received before applications are finalized and approved. Once the application has been processed, a welcome email will be sent to the new member. This email will include important information including your membership number; a membership letter will be attached to that email. If requested, a school letter will also be attached for the parents to take to the school when they notify the school of their plans to homeschool.

Each year, members need to submit the Yearly Compliance Form and the Renewal Form. Both forms are available on a dropdown menu under the "Members Only" tab once the member logs in. The Yearly Compliance Form is filed between May 1st and May 31st each year. Members must complete 180 instructional days to file the Compliance Form. This does not mean that they must complete a grade level by that time. Since many families use different schedules, it is possible to complete the 180 instructional days in the membership year before completing the grade level. It is perfectly acceptable to file the compliance form if this is the case. Families with students who graduate or leave homeschooling or the association must still complete the compliance form at the end of the school year in which they graduate or leave.

We understand that there may be circumstances that make it impossible for a family to complete the required 180 instructional days by May 31<sup>st</sup> one year and in those instances, there is an optional extension form that may be completed on or by May 31<sup>st</sup>. This form notes when the family expects to complete their 180 instructional days. Within 3 days of completing the required instructional days, the member family must file the Yearly Compliance Form. If the member counts instructional days after May 31<sup>st</sup> for the current school year, they will NOT be able to count them toward the upcoming school year. Attendance days may only be applied to one school year. Because our membership year is a full year, not meeting the May 31<sup>st</sup> deadline is an exception rather than a rule.

The Department of Education has the right to audit Christian Homeschoolers' Association of South Carolina's records in order to verify association and member compliance; therefore, we must have your completed compliance forms before we can place your family in good standing, close out or begin a new year.

When recording attendance, families cannot count days completed before June 1<sup>st</sup> toward the upcoming school year if they have completed the minimum 180 instructional days. The current school year will simply have more than 180 instructional days. Many families that use a year-round schedule may complete more than 180 instructional days.

The renewal form can be completed after the Yearly Compliance Form or Extension has been filed. If the Renewal is filed after the Extension but before the Yearly Compliance is filed, the membership will not be considered current and compliant until the Compliance form is also completed. Renewal forms will not be accepted alone.

## Fees

All fees are non-refundable. Our membership fees are:

Application\* - \$40

Renewal between May 1 and June 30 - \$25

Renewal between July 1 and September 30 - \$30

Renewal on or after October 1 - \$40

\* For those families that apply on or after March 1<sup>st</sup> for the current school year, the fee will apply to the remainder of the year and the upcoming school year as long as the forms are filed on time and the renewal is filed by June 30. That is, if the family files the Compliance or Extension by May 31<sup>st</sup> and the Renewal by June 30<sup>th</sup>, there will be no charge for renewal. If the family files late, the fees above will apply.

## Lifetime Members

When the association was first established, lifetime memberships were offered. Members who joined in 2003, 2004, and 2005 are lifetime members. Although we continue to honor that agreement, there are no new lifetime memberships because the association could not support itself unless we were to charge a much great fee for lifetime members. Lifetime members are encouraged to donate to CHASC to help support the association.

Lifetime members who do not renew by October 1 will have to pay the \$10 late fee to renew.

Lifetime members who fail to file the Compliance form by May 31 (or the extension and then compliance form) will lose their lifetime status but can apply to the association as a regular member once their forms have been completed and reviewed.

## Services Provided

As a member of CHASC, you will receive the following benefits:

Third-Option accountability according to Section 59-65-47 and legal establishment of your homeschool

A Handbook that can be read on or downloaded from the website

Letters for DMV, technical schools, and colleges as required

Letters of verification for DSS, DJJ, IRS, SSA, military, and others as requested

Members' email newsletter to keep members current on important issues affecting the association and/or homeschool families in SC as well as reminders about filing forms and keeping records

Friendly encouragement and answers to your questions by email or phone

Homeschool workshops and Open House events (open to all homeschool families)

High School Class ranking

High School Diploma

Transcripts for all grade levels (additional fee)

Graduation ceremony (additional fee)

# Expectations

Members are expected to read this handbook and ask questions if they do not understand any points.

Members agree to abide by S.C. state law section 59-6547. (Handbook p.1)

Members will keep a copy of the teaching parent's diploma, GED or other documentation with their homeschool records.

Members agree to complete 180 instructional days between June 1<sup>st</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> each year and file the Yearly Compliance or Extension Forms between May 1<sup>st</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> each and every year they are members. (Handbook p. 2)

Parents will provide all curriculum and educational materials. CHASC does not provide curriculum. (Handbook p.5)

CHASC provides a newsletter group that all members are invited to join upon acceptance and it is solely the responsibility of each member to join the group and maintain membership. (Handbook p.6)

Members will keep all contact and status information current by sending an email notification of any changes within 3 business days. This includes but is not limited to grade level, address, phone number, and email.

Members will notify CHASC by phone or email immediately if they are contacted by any official in regards to their homeschool, students or anything that may require input from or the involvement of the association.

Members will send a written request for any necessary letters or documents allowing at least 1 week for the letter or document to be completed and emailed to them. They will provide all information necessary for the letter or document.

Members will use their membership number on all correspondence and in messages.

Members with high school students must read the material on the High School page.

Members must submit grades and any necessary supporting documents for their high school students in grades nine through twelve on or before May 31.

Members are solely responsible for any and all legal fees and attorney(s) should a legal issue arise. Members agree to hold CHASC harmless of any and all legal action(s) understanding that none of the information or opinions on our website, e-mails, or phone conversations should be taken as legal advice. CHASC is a third option homeschool accountability association offering its services to homeschooling families by maintaining a professional relationship with members, school districts, and the S.C. State Board of Education. Our purpose is to allow our members the least restrictive home school environment and to maintain their privacy while ensuring members' legal compliance.

# Curriculum

CHASC does not provide any curriculum. Parents are responsible to provide curriculum and keep all records as required by the law. While we may be able to give information and guidance on some curriculum, we are not experts and are not familiar with all programs and materials available, nor do we profess to be experts on education. Parents will become the "experts" on their own children as they teach and learn with them through the years. We are glad to help facilitate that process as much as possible and support you along your homeschool journey.

Parents are free to choose the curriculum that best fits their teaching style and their children's learning style(s). Keeping in mind that, by law, the curriculum must include reading, writing, math, science and social studies in grades K through 6 and in grades 7 through 12, composition, literature, math, science and social studies. This is a minimum requirement, and parents will most likely want to add classes such as physical education, bible, creative arts, foreign language, and so on.

When designing the high school curriculum, the parents should bear in mind the requirements of any possible colleges that the student may want to attend. It is suggested that as a minimum, the high school curriculum should include the courses required by the SC Department of Education for graduation from high school. This is a minimum requirement; however, and many colleges will require more of their applicants.

# Homeschool Records

Parents are responsible to keep all records as required in the law. These include: a plan book, journal, or some other record of the activities in which the parent/teacher and student engage, a portfolio with samples of each student's work, and a semi-annual progress report which includes attendance and a progress report or report card.

The format for these records has not been established in the law. Parents are encouraged to use whatever method of record-keeping that fits their needs and style. Parents may choose to use a traditional teacher planner, one of the many homeschool teacher or student planners, a calendar or day planner, an online format, or anything that fulfills the requirements for recording daily plans and activities. The portfolio may be a binder, banker's box, scrapbook, or an

electronic format depending on the work samples to be kept. It is recommended that parents keep the current year and one year previous until high school. All high school work should be kept indefinitely and can be gifted to the children upon graduation for them to keep since they will be the ones needing the information. If parents wish to scan and keep information on a disc or jump drive, this option can provide additional storage space.

The semi-annual progress report will be done at 90 and 180 days or mid-way through the year and at the end of your school year if you include more than 180 instructional days. The report can include both the attendance report and progress report, but it is advisable to keep a separate attendance sheet as well with your homeschool records.

CHASC has many examples of forms that can be used and links to a few sites that provide forms on the website. A simple internet search will provide many more options.

One other record that parents are required to keep is proof of the teaching parent's GED or high school diploma. A transcript or college diploma or other record that shows educational status can be used if the diploma is not available. This should be kept with your homeschool records.

## Standardized Testing

Because section 59-65-47 does not require standardized testing we have no requirement for testing. There are reasons for testing as well as for not testing, so it's up to you to choose what works best for your family. Members are free to choose if testing is in their best interest and, if so, which test will best evaluate or reflect what their students are learning.

There are various means of testing available to homeschool families and some members may opt to use one of these options to evaluate their children's education. However, parents may feel that they know their children's strengths and weaknesses because they work with them daily. Others may feel that it is in the best interest to have a child experience testing so that it will not be a foreign and frightening experience.

Standardized testing can also be used for a student to be accepted into programs such as the Duke University Talent Identification Program (TIP) or SC Junior Scholars program. In addition, the SC Department of Education along with the College Board has announced that there will be scholarships available only to students who take the PSAT in 11<sup>th</sup> grade in addition to qualifying for the National Merit Scholarship Award.

Once again, testing is not required and may not be something you want to do. If you do test, however, please remember that no test can cover exactly what you have covered in school so be careful in using the scores to evaluate your program or child. You may have covered things not covered by the test while things the test covered are going to be covered in your curriculum next year.

Learn about the tests and decide on the reasons you have for testing. There may be benefits beyond the scores, like children learning how to take tests in that weird testing situation or you discovering that your child has a problem with skipping problems, or helping a child overcome mild to moderate test anxiety, etc. I have known children who never took a test before and did fine on SAT or ACT and others who needed the experience or felt it was worthwhile.

## Proof of Membership

We recommend that all members keep a copy of their application forms and membership emails that will help support proof of membership through the years. Email confirmation of membership is sent each year once the forms and payments have been processed.

Membership letters are sent to all new applicants but renewing members are required to send a written request (email is fine) for a membership letter each year. We have found that renewing members may need a different letter some years or may not need a letter at all. For efficiency, letters are sent as needed. When you send your request, please be sure to mention any specific information that must be included in the letter.

We do issue letters for students to use when they go to the DMV to apply for an ID, permit, or license. The DMV requires that membership letters be dated no more than 90 days before the date of application so be sure to request that letter within that time period to avoid having to make a second trip to the DMV. If necessary, letters can be faxed to the DMV; however, this is done only in rare cases since it would mean that you are at the DMV, they are unhappy with your current letter, I am in the office and able to create and fax a letter, you reach me by phone, and the DMV will provide the fax number. All of these variables do not happen often. If you want to let me know when you are going to the DMV, I can do my best to be available and I will most definitely pray for you and your student!

# Newsletter

CHASC has a newsletter group that all members are encouraged to join. Invitations to join the newsletter will be sent to new members upon acceptance to the association and to renewing members each year once their forms are completed and payments are received. There are actually two newsletter groups but only one is active each year. At the end of August, the newsletter for the previous school year is purged and only the newsletter for the current school year is used. For a short while, there are two active newsletters. The one used for the previous year will continue to send reminders while the one for the current school year will be used for all important updates and information.

The newsletter is used to send updates and reminders when needed to help keep members informed of all that is going on in CHASC and any important information concerning SC homeschool laws. Individual emails and reminders are not sent out to members. The newsletter is the only and best means we have to keep members informed of all that is going on in the association and South Carolina homeschooling.

It is solely the responsibility of each member to join the newsletter group and maintain membership. It is each member's responsibility to report any problems with receiving emails. Email reminders and notices are only sent as group reminders through the newsletter group and not to individual members.

## Privacy

We assure you that ALL names, addresses, phone numbers and other membership information remain confidential; we do not sell, rent, or share our member mailing list. Additionally, all Board members sign a statement of confidentiality before serving.

## SCHEA

Because CHASC is a member of the South Carolina Home Educators' Association, members can join SCHEA for \$15 per year. SCHEA is a state-wide support group for all homeschoolers in South Carolina. They provide education and support for homeschool support group and accountability leaders, educational programs for homeschool families, serve as a resource for homeschool information, monitor legislation for those actions which may affect homeschooling and homeschoolers in South Carolina and help provide education about what homeschooling is and isn't to help increase an understanding of homeschooling among SC legislators. Members can apply for SCHEA membership on their website, [www.SCHEA.net](http://www.SCHEA.net).

## HSLDA

CHASC is a Home School Legal Defense Association discount group (299798) and CHASC members save 17% (\$20) on the annual membership fee, paying \$100 instead of \$120. This discount can be obtained when applying for membership or renewal in HSLDA. If you are an HSLDA member, please be sure to provide your HSLDA member number to us so that we can confirm your membership and maintain our status as a discount group.

## High School Essentials

Teaching high school can be very intimidating but it is not only possible to do so successfully, but to enjoy it and even thrive! We have a PowerPoint full of information for high school students that gives much more detail than I can include here. Please be sure to review that PowerPoint and feel free to ask questions. A high school workshop is available. Members who want this workshop in their area are asked to secure the location and help advertise.

One key to success is planning and learning what you need to know before your student enters the high school years. Advance planning may seem difficult because students will most likely change their minds. It is important that you as the homeschool parent do not "shut any doors". With that in mind, we recommend all students who are able to complete the workload pursue a college preparatory curriculum. This will provide the best education and the most opportunities for your student. It is possible to plan a general college preparatory schedule and adjust it over time as courses, materials and program are available and as the student expresses his/her interests. Delight directed learning can not only occur in high school, it can add to the curriculum.

You as the parent, set the graduation requirements for your high school student. You may set practical life-skill requirements as well as academic requirements if you wish to do so. We recommend that as a bare minimum, the South Carolina requirements for graduation can be used. However, we strongly encourage you to look at the admission requirements of several colleges that your student may consider attending and incorporate those in your high school plan. If your student has no idea or no intention of attending college, choose a variety of schools to see what they require. You

may choose a technical college, a State university, and a private university. You can also search online for the graduation requirements of other states as well as admission requirements for graduation.

Students can begin to earn high school credit when they are in seventh and/or eighth grades if they are capable of doing the work in a high school text. Most often these will be for courses such as math, science and foreign language. The student must be able to complete the entire high school course using high school texts and materials to receive the credit. If they are capable of doing the work on honors level, they can earn honors level; however, proper documentation must be provided for the student to receive the credit. If you wish to have your child take high school level classes in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade, please be sure to contact our office and discuss your plans. You may simply send an email to let us know. We can help give guidance but you are the best judge of your child's readiness. Keep in mind that if you do begin to teach a high school level class and your child cannot complete it, you can convert it to a 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade level class and record it as such.

High School does not mean hands off! Most high school students, especially in the early years will continue to need your help and guidance. This is the time to help them learn and use good study habits, scheduling projects, build upon the writing process and all those skills that will prove helpful as they continue in their education and in life.

It is recommended that you create a course record or course description for all high school courses. These will be useful if a college asks for more information about a specific course, they have been required for colleges that use the Common App, and to support your assigning honors, AP, IB or dual enrollment level to the course. There are samples available in the CHASC Newsletter site files. They contain all the important details about the course such as:

- School Name and Address
- Student Name, DOB, Grade
- School Year, Semester(s)
- Course Title
- Materials Used – include all texts and supplemental materials used
- Credit and Level of Course
- General Goals and Methodologies – what is covered and how it will be evaluated
- Grade earned – percentile
- Teacher/Administrator Signature

It is important to begin your high school recordkeeping as soon as you begin awarding high school credit to your student. Make sure that you update the records at least once every year and include all important supporting materials that will help reflect the depth of your child's high school education. These records include your journal, diary, or record of activities; portfolio; semiannual progress reports (which should include a transcript and attendance records); and any documents such as an activity resume, reading list, and lists of honors and accomplishments. They can be kept in a large binder with page protectors, in another storage system, electronically or a combination of methods. Use what works for you. Combining the binder with a disc or jump drive that contains more information will allow more complete record-keeping and most likely more information than you will ever need. At the end of high school, the binder becomes the student's permanent record and you can pass it on to them. They can review the materials included and keep what they may need in the future. Remember, children change their minds and so do adults. Students who were never going to college may find they have an opportunity to pursue a degree in an area they love and they will need at least the transcript and diploma.

CHASC sends a graduation letter to all students who graduate from the association. To receive the letter, parents must file the Compliance form at the end of the senior year and provide the date of graduation. The letter will be sent as an attachment in a final email to the family.

## Class Ranking and High School Transcripts

As an added service to our members, CHASC is now calculating a student ranking for all degree-seeking students in ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades. Degree-seeking students include all students who will earn a high school diploma. Only non-degree students (special needs or those who will not be earning a high school diploma due to exceptionalities) will be excluded from the class rank. Because rank is based on student GPA's, parents of high school students must send course titles and grades to the association on the appropriate form and include any necessary supporting materials to substantiate the designation of honors, AP, or dual enrollment (course descriptions and/or transcripts from issuing school or program). Parents who wish to have a course considered an honors-level course must



submit the course description to be reviewed in the fall before the course is taught to ascertain that the course meets the requirements of the honors-level designation. If they fail to submit the course description for review in the fall, the course may not be accepted as honors-level work.

Students that are in ninth through twelfth grades who are members of CHASC whose parents do not submit their numerical grades by the deadline will receive a GPA of 2.0 for the purposes of ranking for that school year. For the purposes of ranking, all student grades must be submitted by May 31<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.

The ranking report is generated based upon our GPA calculations. Parents may request a personal report indicating their child's rank. During the admissions process, we do not disclose the rank of students on the transcripts. However, rank is printed on the final official end of year transcript and it also available upon request.

Although parent-generated transcripts are legal and all parents are welcome to create their own transcripts, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (SC CHE) requires that all students who qualify for the Palmetto Fellows or LIFE scholarships based on class rank have transcripts that are reviewed and signed by their accountability association representative.

For those who need the association to create transcripts, allow at least three weeks for an initial transcript to be generated. You must watch your email and be sure to review and make any corrections as soon as possible. For end-of-year transcripts due no sooner than June 15<sup>th</sup>, parents of twelfth-grade students must submit course names and numerical grades along with supporting materials and appropriate payment by May 15<sup>th</sup>. Transcripts requested after these deadlines may not be completed in time for submission to colleges. Keep in mind the additional time required for mailing the final official signed transcripts as faxes, emails, and copies of the final official transcript are not accepted by many colleges and will not be accepted for state-sponsored scholarships. Any fees associated with express, priority, or overnight mail will be the responsibility of the parent and must be paid in advance.

Parents of students in ninth through eleventh grades who wish to take advantage of the pre-paid transcript service discount program must submit their information by May 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

Parents are welcome to create their own transcripts using their own format or the templates provided by CHASC but they will not be signed or reviewed by the association representative unless the parent submits the completed template, necessary supporting documents, and payment for transcript services.

## Uniform Grading Policy, GPA, and Determining Course Level

The South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy will be used to determine GPA for the purposes of ranking. The guidelines will be used to establish if the course is College Preparatory (CP), Honors (H), Advanced Placement (AP), or Dual Credit (DC).

All courses will be assigned a College Preparatory (CP) weight unless documentation is provided to verify the status of Honors, Dual Credit, or AP weighting. This information should be provided in the fall of the school year prior to teaching the course to make sure that the course meets the requirements for the desired weighting.

Honors courses extend and deepen the opportunities provided by courses at the high school level and are designed for students exhibiting superior abilities in the particular content area. The honors curriculum places emphasis on critical and analytical thinking, rational decision making, and inductive and deductive reasoning. Homeschools may designate honors courses and give the assigned weighting under the following conditions:

1. An honors course must have a published syllabus (course description or course record) that verifies rigor sufficiently beyond the CP requirements.
2. Textbooks and other course materials must be differentiated and more rigorous than those used in CP courses.
3. Honors courses may be offered in English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Honors weighting may be designated in other content areas for the third and fourth level of the courses, provided that the two above standards are met. Honors weighting may not be designated in any physical education courses.

Dual credit courses are those courses for which the student has been granted permission by his or her home school to earn both Carnegie units and college credit for those particular courses. Dual credit is only given for degree-seeking classes and no credit will be given for orientation or remedial classes. In order to receive dual credit for courses, a transcript or report from the college must be sent to the association as supporting evidence of the grades. If the college does not report grades to the association, the student or parent must request a grade report be sent to the association at least once each year. If percentile grades are not reported, the student can provide a copy of their score reports or a letter signed by the course instructor including the percentile grade. Otherwise, the letter grade will be converted to percentile grades according to the UGP.

AP course credit can only be earned through a course that has been approved and classified as AP by the College Board. AP is a registered trademark of the College Board. A student who takes the AP exam cannot receive AP credit unless he or she takes an approved AP course. Verification of AP status must be provided.

The UGP can be found on the South Carolina Department of Education website. The most current edition will be used and when the policy is updated, this handbook will be updated so please remember to check the most current version of the handbook. An announcement will be sent in the newsletter when the handbook is updated.

This is the current link to the page that provides links to UGP and Honors, <http://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/state-accountability/uniform-grading-policy>.

If this link does not work please let us know, but you should be able to find the information if you search for Uniform Grading Policy and Honors Level on the SC DOE website <http://ed.sc.gov>.

## Official Graduation Date

The Official graduation date is not the date of the ceremony but the last official day of classes for the student. It is the date the student completed their high school requirements. Because our deadline for submission of grades is May 31<sup>st</sup>, the last official date for graduation is May 31<sup>st</sup>. Students can graduate before the Final GPA calculations and Ranking are done, in fact the graduation date should be before the date calculated date. Technically this date can be different for the different students in the association as some will finish before others. The “date calculated” date however, needs to be the same on all transcripts. That indicates that all grades/ranks are ‘locked in’ and nothing will be added or changed. This is another reason the deadline for grade submission is set and cannot be adjusted.

## Graduation Ceremony and Diplomas

CHASC offers a graduation ceremony each year. Details will depend on the number of families who are committed to attending the ceremony. Details will be shared in the newsletter each fall. Families must sign up for the graduation ceremony in the fall and a deposit will be due from each family to secure their position.

All graduating seniors will receive a free Diploma at the graduation ceremony. If they do not attend but wish to receive the diploma, they may choose to pay postage for it to be mailed to them.

Orders will be made through the website or a request form can be emailed to [ChristianHomeschoolersAssoc@gmail.com](mailto:ChristianHomeschoolersAssoc@gmail.com).