



Hard Questions Every School Administrator Should Know How to Answer

- 1. Why Isn't Your School Inclusive of All Beliefs?** As a Christian community, we believe the Bible offers the best and most accurate view of life and the world. Jesus said, "I came so that they would have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10, NASB). What we teach as a school, and what we maintain in our policies and our conduct requirements, reflect this deep belief that following Jesus Christ is ultimately the only way that each person can obtain forgiveness and eternal life with God and truly flourish both in this life and the life to come. For us, to promote or teach anything different would be to fail in our mission to love others by sharing biblical truth.
- 2. You Recently Dismissed a Family Because They Did Not Agree with Your School Policies. Isn't This Intolerant?** As Americans, and a Christian ministry, our school believes that our communities are better and stronger when there are many educational options from which to choose. This is about exercising the freedom of choice. We believe that parents have the right to choose a school based upon their own values and educational goals for their children. This means freedom for parents to choose a school that provides a well-rounded education anchored in historic, orthodox Christian beliefs, or, if they wish, to choose a different kind of school that they deem to be better aligned with their goals and values. The First Amendment recognizes this fundamental right for all Americans.
- 3. Why Do You Have Religious and Conduct Requirements for Employees?** We believe that it is a basic right and fundamental freedom for private, religious schools like ours to select and employ staff who fully believe in and are committed to upholding the religious doctrines and values of the school, and that this freedom is *essential* for religious institutions to carry out the mission and purpose they were designed to perform. We believe individuals should have the freedom to work for a distinctly Christian institution and should also have the freedom to seek employment elsewhere if/when they feel that working in a different institution would better align with their personal beliefs and professional work preferences.
- 4. Why Do You Expel Students for Moral Issues?** The school's mission is to provide quality education in the context of a distinctively Christian environment that equips and encourages students to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ. The school's code of conduct is designed to reinforce the traditional Christian values that the school exists to promote, provide a guide for personal conduct, and preserve a school environment conducive to personal growth and learning. Each student and family agree to abide by the institution's policies, moral expectations, and conduct code as a condition of attendance. When a student acts contrary to these agreed standards, the school uses a range of corrective measures to guide a student's behavior back into alignment with school expectations and provide the student the opportunity to reconcile with God and with others that their conduct may have harmed. While school policy also provides for the dismissal of a student from enrollment, this measure is only used when lesser measures fail to correct a student's behavior or in the case of the most serious violations of the school's conduct code.

5. **We Think Your School Acted Unfairly in This Situation. Can You Explain Your Decision?** The facts involving individual school families and students are unique to each situation, and what is represented on social media or reported does not always include all the relevant information or the whole context of the matter. Out of respect for the students, their families, and others involved, and to respect the privacy and confidentiality often involved with information related to disciplinary matters, the school does not share all the circumstances or information it considers in a particular matter. However, we can assure you that the decisions of the school are made with the purpose of doing what is good, right, and corrective for the individual found to have acted in opposition of school policies; for the good of the school community, those who were impacted by this situation; and for the preservation of the mission, values, and purpose of the school itself.
6. **Can You Explain Why You Separated Someone from Your School Just Because They Have a Different View of Sexual Beliefs or Conduct?** The school's statement of faith, doctrinal beliefs, and conduct policies that cover the topics of marriage, gender, and sexual conduct reflect what the Christian church has taught for thousands of years and is consistent with the beliefs of major Christian traditions as expressed in doctrinal statements such as the Westminster Confession of Faith, Catechism of the Catholic Church, and the Baptist Faith and Message. The Christian faith teaches the dignity and worth of every human being, each of whom is made in the image of God and is therefore deserving of respect, regardless of their background or circumstances. Regarding sexuality, the Christian faith teaches that God created mankind in two distinctive and immutable genders of male and female; sex is to be reserved for marriage only; marriage is a covenant between one man and one woman for one lifetime; children are a gift from God. We are committed to these biblical doctrines that we believe God gave to help men and women flourish and experience a full and abundant life. We recognize that no person is without fault, and we admit that we all struggle to live up to God's standard. However, this school is nevertheless committed to doing its best to follow God's ways. Therefore, we do not allow those who are part of our school to teach, practice, or promote lifestyles contrary to our school's biblical standard and religious purpose. We believe that doing so could hinder others from following Jesus Christ and experiencing the abundant life God desires.
7. **Do You Support Those with Different Views to be Part of Your School?** The United States Constitution guarantees the freedom of religion for individuals and religious organizations, the right to express and practice one's religious beliefs, and the freedom to assemble with others who share common beliefs and purpose. For hundreds of years, Christian schools in America have provided valuable educational options for families rooted in the historic, orthodox faith shared by millions worldwide. We believe this important option for education, protected by the Constitution, is essential for intellectual freedom and the rich diversity of ideas in our society. We do not seek to impose our beliefs on anyone who would not want to join or be part of our Christian school. Yet, we strongly assert the right to express our beliefs and provide an educational environment governed by our school's Christian beliefs, purpose, and mission. As a religious entity, we expect and require those who serve as employees to agree with, live by, and promote our beliefs, doctrines, values, policies, and mission. Additionally, as an essential part of the application process and a condition of enrollment, we require families to fully support the school's purpose and mission and abide by school policies and conduct code requirements for students and families.
8. **Don't You Believe in Forgiveness?** We do, and we think the most important thing we can do is help students find God's forgiveness, which He graciously offers in Jesus Christ. By affirming our belief in forgiveness, we also affirm the reality that there are moral standards which, when violated, naturally result in both consequences and the need for forgiveness. The story of Christianity is the story of those

who recognize the love of God, admit they often fail to meet His standards, experience the consequences of such failures, repent, and accept His forgiveness, receiving the grace to be placed into a right relationship with Him. The consequences for violating our policies can range from a mere warning to full dismissal depending on what factors are involved. All disciplinary actions are designed to provide correction, grace, support, and the opportunity for growth for the individual being corrected. They are implemented to preserve the dignity, safety, and well-being of others who may be affected by the violation of policy and maintain an orderly scholastic environment conducive to the school serving its entire student population in furtherance of its overall mission and purpose.

As Christian school leaders continue to navigate an increasingly difficult cultural environment, they can take comfort in knowing that the courageous action of affirming their historic Christian beliefs and values is also a wise and necessary step which will allow their ministries to enjoy their constitutional rights and freedoms to the greatest extent possible.