

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[ ] Public or [X] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Michael Alan Crosby

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Savannah Christian Preparatory School- Middle School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2415 E Derenne Avenue

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Savannah State GA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 31406-2326

County Chatham State School Code Number\* \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone 912-355-2693 Fax 912-352-7397

Web site/URL \_\_\_\_\_

http://www.savcps.com/joomla/index.php E-mail mcrosby@savcps.com

Facebook Page  
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Savannah-Christian-Preparatory-School/122747461101161 Google+ \_\_\_\_\_

Twitter Handle \_\_\_\_\_ Blog  
http://scpsmsreport.blogspot.com/?zx=b40cb232c2eb509f

YouTube/URL \_\_\_\_\_ Other Social Media Link \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent\*Mr. Roger Yancey

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr.,

E-mail: ryancey@savcps.com

Other)

District Name Chatham County School District Tel. NA

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Bill Daniel, Jr.

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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**Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.**

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2013-2014 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2008 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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All data are the most recent year available.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - Middle/Junior high schools
  - High schools
  - K-12 schools
- TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. 3 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	0	0	0
<b>K</b>	0	0	0
<b>1</b>	0	0	0
<b>2</b>	0	0	0
<b>3</b>	0	0	0
<b>4</b>	0	0	0
<b>5</b>	0	0	0
<b>6</b>	43	45	88
<b>7</b>	49	35	84
<b>8</b>	52	54	106
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	144	134	278

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1 % Asian
  - 7 % Black or African American
  - 0 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 90 % White
  - 2 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 6%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the school year	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	9
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	16
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	266
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.060
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %  
0 Total number ELL  
 Number of non-English languages represented: 0  
 Specify non-English languages:
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %  
 Total number students who qualify: 0

If this method is not an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

9. Students receiving special education services: 0 %  
0 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 0 Autism                | 2 Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| 0 Deafness              | 15 Other Health Impaired                |
| 0 Deaf-Blindness        | 12 Specific Learning Disability         |
| 3 Emotional Disturbance | 3 Speech or Language Impairment         |
| 1 Hearing Impairment    | 0 Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| 0 Mental Retardation    | 3 Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| 1 Multiple Disabilities | 0 Developmentally Delayed               |

10. Use Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	13
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	6
Paraprofessionals	0
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 21:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Daily student attendance	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2013

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes\_                      No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Savannah Christian Preparatory School (SCPS) initially opened its doors in 1951, founded by the late Reverend George Akins. Today, the school is a SACS accredited, non-denominational, college preparatory Christian school in Savannah, Georgia, serving 1239 students from pre kindergarten to twelfth grade on two campuses. Attracting students from nine surrounding counties, including the border state of South Carolina, Savannah Christian Middle School (MS) stands committed to work with families, the local church, and the surrounding community in educating students how to apply biblical principles with practical everyday challenges that life presents. Increasing financial aid opportunities coupled with the middle school's location in a multiracial low socioeconomic neighborhood have resulted in attracting a more diversified student population.

Savannah Christian MS enrolls students in grades six through eight. Serving as the "hinge" between the lower and upper schools, the middle school works diligently with the other divisions in fulfilling the SCPS vision: "Developing the whole person to the glory of God". This vision is reflected in classroom instruction where students take an active role in their education through self-discovery as well as a plethora of other strategies that keep them actively engaged in the learning process.

Savannah Christian MS employs a total of 29 educators. Forty-five percent of the faculty holds advanced degrees. Teachers collaborate both formally and informally during faculty meetings, teacher in-service days and other staff development opportunities to enhance their professional skills and to facilitate life-long learning.

Administration works closely with faculty to ensure that the common core standards are integrated into the school across the disciplines. Challenges are in place to move beyond the common core with additional rigor particularly designed to prepare students for advanced college level studies. For those students with special needs, a Learning Support Program is available. Savannah Christian MS provides Foreign Language beginning in sixth grade. More than 20 percent of eighth graders enroll in high school Spanish.

In the language arts program as well as the entire curriculum, a strong emphasis is placed upon the writing process. Higher order reasoning skills with a prominence in spiraling concepts describes the mathematics curriculum. Inquiry based learning is found within the science classrooms. The history department focuses on American History while exposing students to major world events. Students choose quarterly electives such as art, band, Spanish, Latin, computer skills and chorus. Accordingly, students are given opportunities in an environmental elective class during the school day. A school garden is maintained by these students who also assist in a recycling program of paper and aluminum cans. Bible and physical education classes carry with them multiple course requirements that support the school's vision.

Savannah Christian MS offers one of the most innovative elective offerings in the United States with the "Initiative Program". Designed with the intent to increase quality family time, the Initiative program is extremely popular with students and parents. Through the Initiative Program, experts in fine arts and athletics from the community provide services daily to students to earn elective credits. Students who choose Initiative Classes enjoy the benefit of taking lessons such as piano, ceramics, voice, baseball, soccer and illustration that are built into the school day rather than taking similar lessons after school. This allows more time in the evening to spend with family and the opportunity to begin homework from a college preparatory middle school where rigor and quality work are a requirement for all. Typically, over thirty percent of students participate in Initiative classes each marking period. A second unique elective program that Savannah Christian MS has adopted into its curriculum is the Cross Fit for Kids physical education class. The school proudly has taken the challenge to promote a healthier lifestyle for all students. This approach to physical development replaces the traditional paradigm of competition based lessons thus helping all students feel more successful in physical education.

The school's advisory program provides students with both adult and peer support. A Peer Helper program is overseen by the Guidance Counselor. This program welcomes new students as they begin the school year. During the summer months, "Peer Helpers" are assigned to new students to help ease the transition to a new school. They make personal phone calls, answering questions or concerns, meet at the Skating Party

prior to the first day of school and become a familiar face and friend. Guidance counseling is in place and actively tackles the issues that today's young people face including students' academic, personal and spiritual development. Students attend weekly chapel and assembly programs allowing them the opportunity to hear speakers from the community such as the Ronald McDonald House, Humane Society, Relay for Life (fighting cancer) and America's Second Harvest Homeless Shelter.

## **PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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### **1. Assessment Results:**

a)The Stanford Achievement Test has been the primary yearly standardized assessment tool used in grades 6th, 7th, and 8th at Savannah Christian MS for 25 years. The 10th Edition of the Stanford has been used since 2003. An analysis of assessment results over the past five years shows the continued academic strength of students and the high academic classroom standards of the school.

A close analysis of the 2012-2013 Stanford scores reveals consistently high proficiency at each level of testing in both reading and math, with significant strengths in Total Math Mean Scaled Scores at all grade levels. The school's overall Mean Scaled Math Scores were all above 700 and ranged from 702 (6th grade) to 726 (7th grade) over a five year period. The 7th grade demonstrated the highest level of proficiency each year and had the highest overall Mean Scaled Math Scores ranging from 720 to 726. 6th grade scores ranged from 702 to 707 while 8th grade scores ranged from 715 to 725 and showed a steady increase between 2008/09 through 2012/13.

Total Reading Mean Scaled Scores also reflect the academic strength of the school with a significant proficiency demonstrated at the 8th grade level with Mean Scaled Scores consistently at or above 706. 7th grade scored above 700 in three of the five years analyzed and 699 in the other two, showing strength and consistency. 6th grade scores show a four point increase from 2011/2012 to 2012/2013 from 690 to 694. A longitudinal analysis shows a steady increase in scores across grade levels as students progress through middle school, with 6th grade scores forming base scores of 690-695, and 7th and 8th grade scores reflecting growth at each level (699-706 in 7th and 706-712 in 8th).

b)Consistent strength in math at all grade levels can be attributed to the Accelerated Math Program that pulls 45 to 50% of our student body into more challenging math classes on a yearly basis. Highly trained, experienced math teachers guide students through a rigorous math curriculum at both the accelerated and on-grade levels. The Saxon Math curriculum, which repetitiously drills concepts within the framework of a hands-on approach, is used in 6th and 7th grades. Teachers specifically trained in the Saxon Math curriculum use curriculum mapping as a tool to ensure a smooth yearly transition for students. 8th grade offers three levels of math to meet the needs of students with emphasis on bridging the Saxon incremental developmental program with the structure of high school Algebra I and Geometry. Students identified as needing remediation are provided onsite math help from a teacher with over 30 years of experience teaching middle school math.

As for English/LAS, scores remain strong and consistent but growth can be attributed to the start of the 6th grade Academy, an in-house classroom structure designed to reduce the number of class changes allowing for more class-time. In the Academy, English and Language Arts were paired and students received two consecutive 45 minute class periods five days a week devoted to reading comprehension, English composition, and grammar.

One trend in scores seen over the five year period is the consistency in which 7th graders qualify for participation in Duke University's 7th grade Talent Identification Program. On average, 65% of 7th graders qualify to participate in this prestigious program. In 2012/13, Savannah Christian had 79 of 102 7th graders qualify to participate. That's 77% of the class.

Because Savannah Christian students continue to maintain high proficiency as evidenced through standardized test scores, attention can be placed on making academic adjustments rather than academic overhauls. For example, one trend in the scores of students with diagnosed reading disabilities revealed students scoring significantly below that of the school average. To address this discrepancy, the Learning Support Center was added to the elective offerings. Students in Learning Support meet daily with a highly qualified special needs teacher who works to teach academic strategies based upon recommendations in the students' educational psychological. The program is in its infancy, but already great strides are seen in the classroom as well as in standardized test scores.

Several students with diagnosed learning differences tested alternatively in 2012/2013: three 6th graders, seven 7th graders (six in Math), and one 8th grader who alternatively tested in Math and Reading. These students had documented learning differences and testing in small groups was recommended in their educational psychological reports. Grade levels were separated and tested in small groups where extended time could be given if needed. Not all students used the extended time accommodation. Not all students with learning differences chose to test in small groups. Many chose to remain in the classroom. Because of this, all scores were included in the overall Mean Scaled Scores of the school and can be found on the results summary sheet. In looking at the scores of 6th graders who tested alternatively in math, their average score was equal to the average score of the 6th grade class. Similarly, 7th graders scored only 8 scaled points below the class average and still scored strongly above the 700 mark. In total reading, the 7th graders scored only 9 points below the class average with 6th graders scoring only 10 points below. In years prior, the discrepancy in score between students with learning differences and those without, was much greater across grade levels.

## **2. Using Assessment Results:**

Savannah Christian MS administration and staff consistently utilize nationally-normed assessment results from the Stanford Achievement Test 10 (SAT10) in conjunction with yearly, in-school assessment tests to better understand student performance and work toward increasing student achievement. In addition, the Orleans Hanna Algebra Prognostic Test is used to help identify 7th grade students who are ready for Algebra I in the 8th grade.

In targeting students who are ready for rigor beyond the College Prep classes, quarterly and yearly assessment results such as quarterly grades, standardized test scores from the SAT10, results from the Orleans Hanna Algebra Prognostic Test (for math placement), and end-of-year accelerated placement tests are used to determine placement in Accelerated and Honors classes. Students are given accelerated placement opportunities beginning in the 6th grade with Accelerated Math. These opportunities continue in the 7th and 8th grade with Accelerated Math, English, and Science, with the addition of Honors Algebra I and Honors Spanish I for high school credit in 8th grade.

Those students who score below the 50th percentile on the SAT10 are monitored by the School Counselor for intervention. If classroom performance as reflected through quarterly benchmark assessments declines, students are provided necessary support to close gaps and increase achievement. When a student is identified as needing support, the School Counselor meets with teachers and parents to devise the best academic strategy for a student.

For our 7th graders, assessment results are used for qualification to participate in Duke University's Talent Identification Program, also known as Duke TIP. To qualify, students must score in the 95th percentile or above on a sub-section of nationally-normed standardized test, or the 90th percentile or above for Counselor Recommendation. On average, 65% of Savannah Christian MS 7th graders qualify for participation in Duke TIP. In 2012/13, 77% of our 7th graders qualified to participate.

Standardized test scores are also utilized by Savannah Christian MS's admission's team to determine school admissions for mission appropriate families. Students seeking admissions to Savannah Christian MS take a portion of the SAT10 that includes Reading Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, Math Problem Solving, and Math Procedures. Scores are compared to grade level averages for admissions and placement purposes. This helps ensure students new to Savannah Christian MS will be sufficiently challenged and their academic needs can be met through our rigorous curriculum. Parents and students are able to access academic progress through the school's online grade book, Jupitergrades.com. Quarterly report cards go home with students at the end of the first three nine week grading periods. Included in the final yearly report card is a copy of each student's standardized test scores. Parents are encouraged to meet with the school's counselor for questions pertaining to individual standardized test scores. In addition to Jupiter Grades, the school website contains information about school achievement including media clips, curriculum, honor roll lists, and teacher contact information. Savannah Christian MS publishes a yearly school profile for current and prospective families that clearly outlines standardized test scores.

### **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

Savannah Christian MS faculty and students seek to give back to the community and are found in a variety of learning venues sharing successes, experiences, exchanging ideas, and collaborating with others. Faculty attends conferences, professional development workshops, seminars and mission trips.

One Savannah Christian MS science teacher has collaborated with a local university's marine science research team and published three articles in *The American Biology Teacher*, *Science Scope*, and *Current: the Journal of Marine Education*. This distinguished teacher continues to provide lectures for PK-12 Graduate Fellows on teaching methods. The Savannah Christian MS Assistant Principal was recently published in *Cross fit Journal* and *Cross fit Kids Magazine* sharing the benefits of Savannah Christian MS's new Cross Fit Program.

Each year, teachers and staff are encouraged to attend professional conferences that include the Georgia School Counselor Association's annual conference, technology conferences, College Board workshops, and others. Teachers take faith-based mission trips as a way of putting their faith into action and truly being a Christian example to their students. In 2012/2013, the environmental studies group turned middle school campus green by sharing with faculty, staff, students and parents, the importance of being good stewards of the earth.

With the advent of the Learning Support Program (LSP), Savannah Christian MS was asked by a local school to share the tenets of the school's program. The LSP was established at the middle school in 2011/2012 after extensive research, planning and collaboration with established learning programs across Southeast Georgia. Its purpose is to better meet the needs of students diagnosed with specific learning differences. Savannah Christian MS's Learning Specialist and Counselor shared the experience of building this program by meeting with a team of teachers from a neighboring k-8 school. Savannah Christian MS collaborated to assist this school establish their own LSP.

In educating students to be active participants in learning, students also attend conferences, leadership workshops, and volunteer throughout the community. Students attend the BETA Convention, a service and leadership organization, and share their school experience with other students. Savannah Christian MS also has students on the Savannah Youth Council, a city government organization that encourages middle school students to work together to help the city's youth. For the past three years students have served as president and other leadership roles.

### **4. Engaging Families and Community:**

Savannah Christian MS has a long, successful history in working with family and community members for student success and school improvement. In addition to Open Houses that encourage families to meet teachers and learn the multitude of opportunities to become involved, the school has many other strategies to engage families. New students are invited to a special New Student Orientation prior to the beginning of the school year to become acquainted with teachers, the school counselor, and locations, and locker combinations. Peer Helpers assist with questions, tours and host a skating party to engage all new students in a casual, social manner. Quarterly Family Days are held where families come to enjoy lunch with students and meet other parents. Grade level Town Hall meetings introduce parents to upcoming changes and provide additional information as needed. The school also has an abundant parent volunteer base that supports the Parent Teacher Fellowship, as well as other groups such as the Booster and Band Clubs. Parents with artistic talents are encouraged to share their gifts by teaching classes during a special Arts Blitz week. A school wide Super Saturday event not only engages parents as volunteers, but also is an entertaining way for families to spend a day enjoying a carnival atmosphere and musical performances. The school strongly encourages the role of the family as it relates to the success of each child.

Savannah Christian MS works with community members both in school and through out-reach programs. Weekly Chapel programs frequently involve Savannah's large military population. Inspirational speakers can be heard on September 11th, Veteran's Day, and throughout the school year. Speakers range from injured military heroes to former POWs. Students often ask questions and interact with these speakers.

In addition, an annual Science Week brings area scientists and expert educators to the campus to inspire students and enrich existing science programs. Real life research information and activities are provided by associations like NOAA, The National Weather Service, and NASA. Students frequently reach out to the community as well. They serve annually on the Mayor's Youth Council and compete for the Daughters of the Revolution awards. The Chorus performs for Senior Citizens groups and at Hunter Army Airfield. Beta Club members volunteer throughout the community at places such as the Humane Society, churches, youth athletic leagues, and summer camps.

## **PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Curriculum:**

At Savannah Christian MS, curriculum begins by using the national common core standards as a foundation. However, due to the advanced college preparatory track, the curriculum reaches beyond the scope and sequence as outlined from the common core standards. Curriculum mapping, staff development, and teacher collaboration ensure that students are receiving advanced learning opportunities.

The middle grades Math department relies heavily on the philosophy of a spiraling curriculum. Concepts taught at each grade level build daily upon one another while revisiting key components throughout the year, ensuring retention of subject matter. Accelerated math classes are offered at each grade challenging students to learn at a swifter pace. Students who have been identified as ready for the challenge of Algebra I are given this opportunity in eighth grade. These students receive daily lessons from a high school math teacher with the opportunity for high school credit. This also gives them the affordability of a personal connection with the high school.

A unique approach to language arts requires all students take two separate classes in English: one concentrating on grammar, vocabulary, and composition and the other on language arts studies, focusing on literary analysis and terminology. The school seeks to improve writing skills by requiring written responses to literature, developing an awareness of audience and purpose, and application of grammatical guidelines. A variety of literary offerings help students deepen reading comprehension, heighten literary appreciation, and enhance decoding and word study skills. These interactive classes allow students to become better written and oral communicators and often incorporate appropriate technology to increase research sources and peak student interest. Accelerated classes are offered in seventh and eighth grades.

Together with the History department, students are challenged with writing assignments based on assigned historical novels that fuse the two subject areas together. History classes are designed with world history being taught in grade six. In seventh and eighth grades, American History is taught in a two year course to provide additional quality instruction and depth to our nation's history.

The Science program at Savannah Christian MS is dynamic, challenging and entertaining. Science teachers hold Master's degrees which afford them additional skills to better equip students with foundational concepts built upon the scientific method and inquiry based learning. Advanced courses are made available in 7th and 8th grades for students who are actively pursuing scientific fields of study in high school and college. Students also experience the opportunity to receive science instruction in same-sex classes. This has been found to be beneficial particularly for females. Increased motivation has been observed for a significant number of females in science across grade levels. This research based curricular approach presents a unique change of instruction for the students.

The Bible is an integral component of the school's curriculum. Bible teachers bring scripture to life as students are given real life applications from the deep truths of God's Word. Students are required during the three years at the school to complete two biblically based courses - Old Testament and Life of Jesus. The other required course is the Cross Fit P. E. course. This class emphasizes the physical wellness of the child. Building on the foundations of healthy living, instructors relay daily lessons to students closely in line with the school's mission. Competition is replaced with emphasis on personal achievement and goal setting.

Foreign language holds a place of importance in the curriculum. Spanish is offered to students in 6th and 7th grades with high school credit given to selected 8th graders. 31% of 7th and 8th grade students elect to take a second language for the equivalent of 180 minutes per week for a full year. Savannah Christian MS is in compliance with and exceeds the program's foreign language requirements. Additionally, Latin is offered to sixth grade students who wish to strengthen their vocabulary skills. Other electives include the popular Robotics class, Art, Computer Applications, I-Pad, Band, Chorus and Journalism. The distinctive Initiative classes such as soccer, baseball, piano, voice, tumbling, drawing and ceramics are additional opportunities taught by outside experts during the school day.

## **2. Reading/English:**

Savannah Christian MS's unique approach to English language study sets it apart from all other public and private schools in the area. The school requires all students to take two separate classes in English: one concentrating on grammar, vocabulary, and composition and the other on language arts studies, focusing on literary analysis and terminology. The language arts classes free the complementary English classes to emphasize grammar study, formal composition writing, and SAT vocabulary knowledge and skills. Savannah Christian MS offers accelerated English classes for students who are able to move at a faster pace. More challenging selections of literature are read, and students are instructed in writing essays that deal with logic. Students who have not demonstrated strong reading comprehension or a good grasp of grammatical and writing rules move at a slower pace, and the questions posed focus more on application than analysis. Language arts teachers for all middle grades expose their students to a broad spectrum of genres. Not only do students study novels, short stories, poems, and dramas, but also create works for publication in regional contests and class collections. Both seventh and eighth graders study Shakespeare in the spring and enact scenes from plays such as *As You Like It* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Eighth graders prepare for special plays in an annual competition, in which groups of five or six students write, rehearse, and perform modern interpretations of *Pyramus and Thisbe*.

The English curriculum places a strong emphasis on grammar. The only difference between grammar studied in the accelerated and traditional classes is the pace. For all students, a customary approach to the study is applied through written exercises and diagramming. Diagramming helps students understand parts of speech and sentence structure. By the end of seventh grade, all students can recognize and diagram verbal phrases as well as subordinate clauses. Writing rules are emphasized on all levels, and most student assessments include short compositions which relate to rules being studied at the time.

Finally, in an effort to encourage, promote, and reward student initiative, independent projects are encouraged. Students investigate and artistically respond to literature and creative thinking. Examples include videos, musical performances, artistic paintings and murals, and poetry readings. Of greatest importance, Language Arts and English teachers routinely meet with students independently to ensure the student's success.

## **3. Mathematics:**

The building blocks of mathematics mastered in lower and middle school make up the core curriculum leading to success in high school and college. Using the common core and the Georgia standards, the middle school builds upon these goals and objectives as a foundation for learning. Students are encouraged to master these skills and challenged to work at higher levels with emphasis on problem solving activities with their peers.

Savannah Christian MS uses an incremental approach to mathematics. Each skill in the building block, as well as problem solving, is explored and practiced daily. The Saxon Math series is implemented for the sixth and seventh grades. With the absence of distracting pictures, presenting only a couple of skills per day, and homework that reviews all skills up to that point, a student is never allowed to "forget" a skill previously taught.

Eighth graders are divided into three levels:

Pre-Algebra, using Passport Math (providing a bridge between Saxon and the Algebra I test used by the upper school, McDougal Littell's Algebra I)

Accelerated Algebra using Algebra Structure and Method (a classic, traditional approach)

Honors Algebra I which teaches concepts so in depth it requires a graphing calculator

Pre-Algebra and Accelerated Algebra I students are well-prepared for ninth grade Algebra I, spending most of their time on concepts and the basics of Algebra as well as critical thinking skills and analysis. Honors algebra students receive a high school unit for the course and are at ease with the graphing calculator. They are well-prepared for Algebra II and Geometry.

Adaptations are made at all grade levels for the low achieving students. Sixth graders may participate online at no cost with XtraMath, a highly individualized program. Students are required to pass all basic math facts in three seconds or less. Eighth graders use Khan Academy, another free site, with videos on many topics. Students with documented learning differences may enroll in the Learning Support Program as an elective, which offers a small number of students a highly qualified teacher. Math teachers are available for tutoring and use test analysis procedures to evaluate which skills need extra practice for an entire class, small groups, or individuals. Opportunities for high achievers include accelerated classes as well as several state-wide competitions. Sixth graders compete in the Georgia Math League. Seventh and eighth graders compete at the Beta Convention, Math Quiz Bowl, and Georgia South Math Competition.

#### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Several years ago, the school proudly accepted the challenge to promote healthy living for all students. As part of this focus on a healthier lifestyle, significant enhancements within the curriculum have been adopted that brought attention to and complemented the school's vision. In "Developing the whole person to the glory of God" Savannah Christian MS has incorporated a physical education program using the CrossFit for Kids curriculum that challenges students physically, mentally and spiritually. CrossFit for Kids incorporates everyday movements that are constantly varied and performed at a high intensity.

Savannah Christian MS is the first middle school in the country to implement CrossFit in the daily physical education curriculum to improve fitness levels, students' self esteem, and overall attitude toward fitness. The middle school gym contains the most innovative CrossFit equipment including a monkey bar rig, row machines, free weights and barbells. This equipment is used to complete the Workout of the Day or "WOD". Students can view the daily WOD by accessing the school's CrossFit website to prepare for the next day's physical challenge. Each student is responsible for creating "CrossFit Goals" comprised of physical skill and faith goals, examples ranging from nightly scripture reading to helping those in need around them. These faith goals inspire students to think about the results of daily behaviors and how to live out a Christian life.

The physical education teachers at Savannah Christian MS believe strongly in the school's vision. With this in mind, goals have been adopted to complement the school's vision which include increasing fitness levels and physical wellbeing and to inspire students to live healthy and active lifestyles. Instilling CrossFit in the curriculum enhanced the school's community and sense of purpose. Students work together and congratulate the top finishers while rallying around those who are struggling with a particular activity. CrossFit is varied and dynamic. Incorporating different skills promotes more success for a larger number of students. Physical education programs may have discouraged non-athletes in the past. Conversely, CrossFit promotes a bond between peers as competition is replaced by encouragement and team building activities. Savannah Christian MS supports the motto of being a part of "Raider Family". Developing a strong sense of community through the CrossFit curriculum has strengthened our school's commitment in reaching its vision.

#### **5. Instructional Methods:**

Students attending Savannah Christian MS are admitted based on a comprehensive entrance exam consistent to the high standards of the school. While some students excel in one area, others may experience academic difficulty. Flexibility is crucial when reaching students with different learning styles. Although regular classes at Savannah Christian MS are college prep and provide a rigorous curriculum, students excelling at a faster pace are challenged through accelerated classes which are offered in math, science, English, and foreign language. Students who have a documented learning difference have access to the Learning Support Program. Curriculum is not altered but study skills, organization, test taking and note taking strategies, and concepts taught by the student's academic teacher are reinforced. Accommodations are provided to all students having a documented learning difference and may include: extended time on testing, testing in isolation, assistance taking notes, written as well as oral directions, and preferential seating in other classes.

Tutoring is offered and encouraged at no additional charge by teachers for all students. Teachers are aware of current teaching techniques and consistently offer students the full benefits of the latest instruction and technology. Technology plays an integral role in all classrooms. Students have access to a computer

lab. Websites as well as the latest “apps” are recommended by teachers to enhance learning. Smart boards are located in all classrooms and utilized daily. Textbook CD’s are available to students who benefit from auditory reinforcement. Savannah Christian MS is dedicated to providing technology to enhance teacher instruction and strengthen learning.

Teachers anticipate areas of difficulty for students and utilize creative tools to engage students. For example, when students are studying the functions of the many organelles of a cell, students construct a three dimensional cell model catering to the visual or tactile learner. In addition, graphic organizers, process cards and concept maps are used in helping students categorize thoughts. A creative and innovative teaching style is necessary in today’s classrooms. Varying instruction is a natural instinct of effective teachers and imperative in all classroom settings. In adhering to “best practice,” teachers are diligent in alternating instruction in attempting to accommodate a variety of learning styles. Teachers conduct ongoing evaluations to assess their effectiveness. Projects, small group activities, class discussion, quizzes, tests, interactive games and writing prove successful when evaluating instructional methods. The teachers seek to recognize and understand a student’s individual learning style when implementing “best practice.”

## **6. Professional Development:**

A concerted effort is made to integrate professional development with student achievement and school improvement thus encouraging the faculty to remain lifelong learners. The school provides college tuition reimbursement for faculty who are pursuing higher levels of education. This is a very attractive option for teachers whose certifications are required to remain current and valid. Teachers are given opportunities to attend a number of annual workshops including the reputable Georgia Educational Technology Conference held annually in Atlanta, Georgia. The school’s counselor participates in the Georgia School Counselor Association Conference attracting hundreds of school counselors from around the state. Teachers who attend conferences return with a wealth of knowledge and new ideas to share formally in redelivery sessions with the entire faculty during monthly meetings and informally during planning periods. The school’s physical education teachers recently completed certification training in Cross Fit for Kids Teaching. With this new preparation, P.E. teachers continue to be specialists in their field as Savannah Christian MS holds the sole distinction of being the only school in the country to have fully adopted the Cross Fit for Kids curriculum. The faculty received professional learning units from participating in SMART board training. SMART boards are utilized by teachers in every classroom at the middle school as a technological teaching tool to benefit students across all grade levels and subjects. Additionally, peer observations and visits to other schools and within the school are conducted frequently helping to strengthen educators in making them the best they can be in their profession. In keeping with the mission, the school sponsors an annual two week summer seminar in Dayton, Tennessee. The Summit conference attracts hundreds of Christian educators and students across the nation in an effort to better equip individuals to articulate their faith from a Christian worldview. Faculty representatives return with renewed enthusiasm having been given this opportunity to attend. Professional development days are crafted into the calendar year affording training sessions for faculty and staff. Aligning professional development with a college preparatory curriculum is a dynamic challenge for each educator having the privilege to serve at Savannah Christian MS.

## **7. School Leadership**

The leadership of the school is overseen by a Headmaster working collectively with a Board of Trustees. This board is charged with the responsibilities of providing direction and guidance with the future, facilities, and finances of the school. An induction phase, including orientation training for new members, brings awareness of mission appropriate duties and responsibilities holding each trustee accountable to an established vision within which the school continues to abide.

The Headmaster entrusts to each school division a Principal to provide assurances and guarantees that the mission, curriculum, and standards are held to the highest degree. The Middle School Principal is described as a “coach” guiding the team through daily challenges which are presented in a dynamic and preadolescent environmental backdrop. Student achievement, spiritual enrichment, parental input, athletic and fine arts

opportunities are all focal points that the Principal believes are vital components in keeping with the school's direction and mission.

The Assistant Principal and Guidance Counselor occupy crucial roles within the administrative team. These individuals bring focus to student concerns and provide valuable insight in fostering a "Raider Family" to the student body. Thus, support groups are in place such as the Peer Helper Mentoring Program as overseen by the Guidance Counselor. The athletic department is led by an Athletic Director and an Assistant Athletic Director who work closely with the middle school Principal in intramural and league affairs including scheduling of games from the various sport offerings. Our liberal arts program which includes the performing arts is under the oversight of the Fine Arts Coordinator. Working under the auspices of collective leadership, faculty and staff assume active roles in their crucial roles within the classrooms. Valuable feedback and open lines of communication with administration are seen as vital components for attaining the spiritual and academic goals as set forth by the school's Headmaster.

Parent conference days are built into the school calendar to maintain open lines of communication. The faculty begins each year with teacher initiated communication to the homes which assist in setting a positive tone from the onset of the school year. Savannah Christian MS holds to the strong belief that encouragement and praise are more productive than criticism and working in isolation with students. Together, working closely with families and the local community, Savannah Christian MS makes a difference for "Young Raiders"!

## PART VI - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

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The purpose of this addendum is to obtain additional information from non-public schools as noted below.

1. Non-public school association(s): Independent

Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. Select the primary association first.

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status?      Yes X      No
3. What are the 2013-2014 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

### 2013-2014 Tuition

Grade	Amount
K	\$0
1	\$0
2	\$0
3	\$0
4	\$0
5	\$0
6	\$7698
7	\$7698
8	\$7698
9	\$0
10	\$0
11	\$0
12	\$0

4. What is the educational cost per student?  
(School budget divided by enrollment)      \$7698
5. What is the average financial aid per student?      \$1512
6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to  
scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?      1%
7. What percentage of the student body receives  
scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?      14%

## PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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### REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>Stanford Achievement Test 10th Edition Form A</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>6</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2003</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Pearson Education, Inc.</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	702	706	707	704	705
Number of students tested	81	100	80	123	113
Percent of total students tested	100	100	95	100	96
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>Stanford Achievement Test 10th Edition Form A</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>7</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2003</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Pearson Education, Inc.</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	720	720	722	723	726
Number of students tested	101	80	118	106	117
Percent of total students tested	97	99	99	99	99
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Math</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>Stanford Achievement Test 10th Edition Form A</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>8</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2003</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Pearson Education, Inc.</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	718	725	724	723	715
Number of students tested	80	117	103	113	119
Percent of total students tested	96	99	97	99	98
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>Stanford Achievement Test 10th Edition Form A</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>6</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2003</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Pearson Education, Inc.</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	694	690	692	693	695
Number of students tested	81	100	80	123	113
Percent of total students tested	100	100	95	100	96
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>Stanford Achievement Test 10th Edition Form A</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>7</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2003</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Pearson Education, Inc.</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	699	699	703	706	704
Number of students tested	101	80	118	106	117
Percent of total students tested	98	99	99	99	99
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**

**REFERENCED BY NATIONAL NORMS**

<b>Subject:</b> <u>Reading/ELA</u>	<b>Test:</b> <u>Stanford Achievement Test 10th Edition Form A</u>
<b>Grade:</b> <u>8</u>	<b>Edition/Publication Year:</b> <u>2003</u>
<b>Publisher:</b> <u>Pearson Education, Inc.</u>	<b>Scores are reported here as:</b> <u>Scaled scores</u>

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Apr	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	707	709	707	712	706
Number of students tested	81	117	103	110	120
Percent of total students tested	98	99	97	96	99
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Other 1</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. Other 2</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Other 3</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

**NOTES:**